

Subject: FW: Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming

Date: Monday, August 1, 2016 at 12:13:30 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Wilkinson, Steven

To: Witt, John, Gage, Beverly

Dear John and Bev,

I am very glad this committee has been appointed.

As you are the two people I know best on the committee I hope you don't mind my writing with my thoughts.

I signed the letter this spring urging Calhoun be renamed.

Calhoun should be renamed in my view primarily because there is a distinction between someone who was a fellow traveler in the prejudices of the age, no matter how difficult, abhorrent or unpopular we might find those prejudices today, and someone who devoted the larger part of his political career to furthering and enunciating views that are at odds with some of the core values (equal treatment, justice, non-racism) of Yale as an educational institution. In honoring him we are inescapably honoring Calhoun's role in his political project. And that central role cannot be balanced out, as it is with many other figures, with many other achievements that are more admirable.

I acknowledge that there is a second powerful argument that has also been made about renaming. That honoring Calhoun with a college in which his memory is projected causes faculty and students hurt, especially those who must live and work in Calhoun. I find that argument important and worthy of respect, but less compelling than the first set of arguments. People's feelings may be hurt by a lot of things, but that alone does not necessitate a change in policy. Moreover as an educational institution part of our obligation is not to prevent students and faculty from encountering ideas (and names) that they may find hurtful and unsettling. I realize that an argument has been made that residential colleges are different, because they should be a 'safe space,' but it seems to me that the residential and educational parts of Yale are so closely and generally beneficially intertwined that the colleges should be considered part of the educational environment.

I know that some people find the prospect of renaming deeply unsettling, a cave-in to what they see as 'political correctness.' But that ignores the fact that many societies throughout history have found renaming a very helpful way of making the built environment reflect the values of the society. In my own area of study in India there has been a massive project since independence to rename many streets and institutions after women, lower castes, and icons such as Mahatma Gandhi rather than male imperialist figures. That's a good thing, but it also has to be recognized that it's not a substitute for other kinds of change, and also that more recent Hindu nationalist renaming projects in India have actually been used to write minorities and political opponents out of the built environment. Renaming in India has not always been a benign thing.

The key of course is not to go too far, and exhaust ourselves with endless debates about whether every single name anywhere on campus reflects our current sense of what the 'right' set of political beliefs might be, and in which we throw out a lot of instructive history, as well as the wish to honor those who have been important to Yale's history and development.

What might some good criteria be for renaming?

- There has to be something better than an ad hoc and highly political process for considering these things in the future. There could be a committee on naming that can consider both new names for new buildings as well as how to balance the past with the present when considering whether to recommend changes.

- Renaming should only happen when there is a sustained, clear sense among the broader community of students, faculty, alumni and staff that the name is at odds with the stated *educational* values of the institution. So demands should reach some threshold before cases can move to the committee.
- We should not necessarily seek to rename buildings after historical figures who were fellow travelers in the prejudices of the age, but whose bad aspects were to some degree balanced out by notable accomplishments, or by a remarkable level of service to Yale. We should look in other words at people in the round, and also at their larger role in Yale as an institution.

Anyway, good luck on the committee!

Best,

Steven Wilkinson

[Professor, Political Science]

Subject: A partial principle

Date: Wednesday, August 3, 2016 at 12:16:54 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Lincoln Caplan

To: Witt, John

Hi, John: Last summer, when Peter Salovey announced the conversation about the Calhoun name on the college, what most impressed in the announcement was his challenge to the Yale community to articulate a principle against which to test any serious request or petition to take a name off a Yale facility. I was happy to learn that he has set up a committee to do that work — and he is very lucky to have you as chair.

I don't have an overarching principle to offer: I thought about that when I was learning about Calhoun for the piece I did published on the Atlantic's website last October, but in the end decided that the Calhoun story was different from others at Yale and didn't require me to articulate a principle against which to test all other situations.

It occurred to me, though, that why I decided Calhoun is in a different category might have some use in your committee's work, in case I haven't mentioned this to you.

The partial principle, I think, is that Calhoun's most prominent, now-odious-seeming ideas were not just representative of his time and place so they should be discounted as bound by the nature of his culture and society: they have continued to have strong and destructive influence right down to our time, as the basis for claims of white supremacy and black inferiority. He was the leading polemicist for slavery and for the South leading up to the Civil War; those ideas played the same role for the Lost Cause, which helped turn Reconstruction into Jim Crow; and they continue to resonate with some contemporary right-wingers, racial bigots, and so on. For that reason, I favor removing the Calhoun name from the college, as an act of restoration about the meaning of the Civil War: removing the name would provide an opportunity to emphasize that it was a war of emancipation, rather than restoration, and to put Yale on the right side of history.

In my understanding of that partial principle, I can imagine that part of an honorable renaming of Calhoun College would be the creation of a memorial at the former Calhoun to Calhoun, as the man for whom the college was named for generations, with a straightforward telling of why he was thought to deserve that honor and why the University chose to remove his name.

Best of luck with this work.

Linc

[Truman Capote Visiting lecturer, Yale Law School]

Subject: Thoughts on renaming

Date: Saturday, August 13, 2016 at 10:07:41 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Michael Della Rocca

To: Witt, John

CC: Michael Della Rocca

Dear John,

Thank you for speaking with me about the important work of the committee on naming. As you requested, I am conveying in this message some of my thoughts on this issue. I am glad to do so.

First of all, I believe that tradition at Yale, like any other institution, is significant. The community that is Yale is bound to its past with ties of memory that can help to enrich the experience of the members of the community and to further the mission of Yale. Names, of course, are an important aspect of these bonds of memory. In making the decision about whether to change or retain the name of a building or facility or organization at Yale, we should be mindful of the community-building power of names and traditions more generally. One thing that, I believe, all parties in the debate last year over the name "Calhoun" agreed on is that names have power and carry meaning.

It is important to keep in mind also that the decision to retain or change a name is just that: a decision, a choice. Unless one takes the absurd position that no name at Yale can ever be changed under any circumstances, then the option of changing a name is always a live option and is one that we choose, actively or passively, each day.

Here are a few thoughts on what the principles for retaining or changing a name on campus should or should not be.

I do not think that the relevant principle here should be that we should make something like a day of judgment assessment from a God's-eye point of view. According to such a principle, if the balance of good and evil in a person P's life is weighted toward the good, then P's name should be retained, otherwise not. This principle is highly problematic in part because of a deep epistemic worry: how can we ever be in a position to know what the overall balance of good and evil in a person's life is?

I think that moral issues are important in this context, but they should come into the consideration of naming in a somewhat different way. In considering whether P's name should be retained, we might look at how P is primarily remembered today, what P is most known for today, and what P's significance is today for us at Yale and for the broader community – national and international – of which we at Yale are a part.

In some cases, it may be that P is primarily remembered now for certain goods that he or she brought about.

In other cases, it may be that P is primarily remembered now for things that – we can now see – are bad or harmful.

In yet other cases, it may be that P is primarily remembered, if at all, simply as the person after

whom a building at Yale is named.

In the first case, there is, of course, every reason to retain the name. In retaining the name, we are both acknowledging tradition and also acknowledging the goods that P accomplished.

In the second case, there may be strong reason to change the name, even taking into account the importance of tradition.

In the third case, matters are less clear. Here tradition may become relatively more important precisely because the significance of the person's name doesn't go much beyond the fact that that name has been traditionally associated with a building at Yale. In deciding to retain that name, we are simply acknowledging that tradition.

Of course, the way in which P is remembered can change over time and thus while at one time it may have been thought to be appropriate to name a building at Yale after P, it may subsequently become inappropriate to retain that name. Such a change in the reputation of a person is perfectly natural and, as these changes occur, it is only natural for it to become more or less appropriate for the name to be retained. Throughout, of course, one must factor in the value of retaining the connection of tradition that may help to instill a sense of community. But the value of the connections of tradition within the community must be placed in a broader context of the ways in which P is remembered both in our community and in society more generally. And, further, because of this context it may well be that retaining the name comes to have a negative effect on the sense of community at Yale.

Even if the general principles just outlined are accepted, there are going to be difficult cases, cases that are hard to decide. That's inevitable. That's life.

Because the way in which figures like P are remembered can and do change over time, the appropriateness of retaining this name may change too and the issue may need to be reconsidered. Yes, the issue may at any point need to be reconsidered. That too is inevitable. That too is life. Although our buildings may be set in stone, there is no reason why a decision on naming should be.

Might it be the case that certain individuals who feel strongly that a building should not be named for P could work to change people's opinions about P, change the way in P is regarded, and thus create reasons to change the name? Sure. That's just part of what it is to live in a vibrant community which constantly studies its history and history in general. Welcome to Yale! I would also stress, though, that changing the way in which P is regarded is not as easy as it may seem. So I think that there is no danger of constant upheaval, but I also think that upheaval can sometimes be appropriate and right.

Is there a slippery slope? If we change the name of, say, Calhoun College, will we also be forced inevitably to change the name "Yale" itself? Where does the process of renaming end? The answer is quite simple: it ends where we decide to end it. And this will be a decision based on genuine distinctions in the way in which different individuals are regarded, and these distinctions will provide a principled basis on which to change or not change a name.

If there is any other way in which I can be of assistance to the committee, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,
Michael Della Rocca
Andrew Downey Orrick Professor
Department of Philosophy
Yale University

New Haven, CT
19 October, 2016

Dear John, Steve and members of the Committee to Establish Principles of Renaming:

I am really delighted that you are all working to develop and establish the principles for renaming on campus. I have been strongly advocating for a deeper look into these matters since the Spring semester and am thrilled that Yale has decided to constitute an excellent committee with your collective expertise to consider this intellectual question first (as a university should) and then implement the conclusions of these discussions.

My suggestion, made earlier this year, was to invite the Yale administration to consider periodically renaming colleges, buildings etc. Here, I would like to reiterate the same for consideration to your committee. And the grounds for periodic renaming I propose are derived from a desire to honor the large numbers of illustrious Yale alumni – women and men - who have made seminal contributions to the world and have impacted the larger public sphere with their intellectual, social, political and philanthropic contributions. And re-naming ever so often should in fact become a deeply considered but somewhat regular practice (say every 30 - 50 years, i.e. a couple of generations). Let me outline four compelling reasons that I see as justification for considering doing so.

First of all, this allows a larger number of people to be recognized, second it keeps the attribution dynamic so that we are more in sync with what are seen as valuable contributions at a given time and not crippled by some of the anachronistic issues that we are currently confronting on campus. My suggestion would be for Yale to continue considering in the mix, as it has in the past, naming even in the absence of donors and resources occasionally. For instance, the physicist Josiah Gibbs – who transformed our understanding of thermodynamics, taught at Yale for several decades, and although the Gibbs family has not donated money to Yale (as far as I know), the old Astronomy building was named after him. It stands to be demolished in a couple of years to make way for the new biology building on Science Hill. Now, this is an example of a name that was alive on campus but that will soon be phased out. In the case of Gibbs, given his stature, it would be great if the Physics Department decided to use his name for fellowships or studentships in the future.

Third, if one considers the naming rights that are offered to donors, it does seem rather odd that these are given forever. These are clearly transactional matters, as the donor is being recognized for their generosity which is deemed impactful

at the time of donation. For donors who generously gift to Yale, perhaps, we can establish at the time that the gift is pledged that commemoration via a building name for instance would be guaranteed for about 50 years and not for perpetuity. This is a step that signals that we as an institution, plan to be around in the future and strive to evolve and remain relevant. This provides the added benefit of being able to fund-raise every 50 years or so as well. Finally, the real advantage to being open-minded in this way, and being prepared to change our mind collectively as an institution, to honor in step with the mores and norms of our times, is that it is a generationally responsible and inclusive gesture. By remaining open to, and willing to change the names of individuals that we choose to honor today, we ensure that future generations of Yalies are not stuck with names that are simply handed down to them but that they too have the opportunity to recognize who they deem worthy during their lifetimes. We need to believe that they will choose and do so wisely, and by allowing renaming, we display our trust in future generations who will have the privilege of learning at our august institution. I see this is a generational responsibility for us, part of the process of handover of the ideals and traditions that we stand for.

To summarize, I would like to invite your committee to consider naming to be a transitory act, one that can be revisited after a couple of generations (it does not have to be a fixed 50 years) so that every generation is given the right and privilege to honor what they deem as worthy of recognition. I believe that it is actually our duty to enable such a handover to the future to ensure that the true intellectual legacy of Yale remains permanent.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any further questions, I would be more than happy to discuss.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Priyamvada Natarajan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Priyamvada Natarajan
Professor, Departments of Astronomy & Physics
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Astronomy
Chair, Yale College Science Council

From: David Singer

Date: Friday, October 28, 2016 at 2:26 PM

To: <john.witt@yale.edu>

Subject: Thoughts for the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming

As is often the case, Bart said it best. In his 1984 Baccalaureate he advanced:

“A sense of history is more than an instinct to look back for lessons; it is an habitual act of the mind to re-member, that is reassemble, the corpus of lost experience in order to find cause, motive or pattern, or the absence of them, so that one may live a rational, not a purposeless, existence. *Without such an act of reconstitution of what has shaped us but which we have not lived through, there can be no complementary act of making the future.*”

If one agrees with Bart’s construct, it necessarily follows that the more transparency we have into our collective journey to the present, the more rationally we can build a brighter future. The inconvenient rub comes when that transparent look into the past reveals head-scratching attitudes, some of which are downright inhumane through the lens of the present. But surely, we are all better off knowing our ancestors’ deficiencies in gory detail as we go about our work of making this place and time we live just a little bit better. As Santayan wrote, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” And for the generations that follow us, as

sure as night becomes day, they will find certain things about our time baffling or even morally reprehensible. It is the height of arrogance and pessimism to think any differently.

And it is from this logic that I find renaming any of the Colleges so counter to the core mission of Yale. In fact, the ability to have these names stare us in the face daily, to remind us that we have to do better, and to be able to talk about this all civilly is perhaps the greatest strength of Yale. Anything we do to brush over the past, whether it is Yale's past or our country's, hinders the act of making the future. Rather, we should shine a bright light on our history with the purpose of establishing the necessary preconditions for advancing.

As the empaneled committee thinks through these issues, I sincerely hope that reverence for our imperfect past, and responsibility for constructing a better future overwhelm any desire to placate our present.

I wish you courage in this work.

David B. Singer

On Oct 6, 2016, at 5:27 PM, "dejaveux@aol.com" <dejaveux@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Professor Witt,

[...] I'm attaching below the letter I sent last year to President Salovey and Dean Holloway regarding changing the name of CC - with adjustments considering it is a year later. [...]

===

Dear President Salovey and Dean Holloway,

I am neither Southern nor Black; neither I nor my ancestors have suffered at the hands of or from the stubborn beliefs of John C Calhoun. I cannot claim any skin in this game other than the fact that I was in Calhoun ('79), as were my father ('42) and brother ('94). My daughter, also CC, is class of 2020.

I grew up thinking my father, a Philosophy Professor at Haverford College, attended Calhoun College, not Yale University. He identified more with Calhoun College than with Yale College. I thought it was named for "Uncle" Bob (Robert L. Calhoun, Sterling Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology at Yale for 43 years) and "Aunt" Ella Calhoun. (Not real blood relations, just what we called close family friends when I was a child).

It was not until I was actually a student in Calhoun that I learned for whom it had actually been named, and the tainted ties associated with the man. I remember thinking it interesting and laudable that we had a Black Master (Master Davis) and a Black-in-spirit-if-not-in-race Master (Master Thompson) and assumed these were deliberate moves to compensate for the name, not only in a "lest we forget" way, but to keep the spotlight on the race issue as it evolved and the dialogue open. The Black Panther Trial and the National Guard on Elm Street were still fairly recent and growing up on the Haverford Campus in the 60s, my childhood had been rife with antiwar protests and the Civil Rights movement.

We "sat in" at restaurants that did not serve "Negroes", linked arms and sang "We Shall Overcome" in lugubrious tones, we boycotted Scott Paper and other products that did not hire Black workers. My parents refused not only to join, but to attend any social events at a local club that did not allow Blacks (or Jews) to join. (I was not permitted to attend events at these places either.) Supported by Haverford College, a Quaker college, my parents started a summer day camp to bring local black kids from "underprivileged families" to the campus in the summer to use the facilities and mingle with us faculty kids in order that we all find "common ground".

I've been Class Secretary for almost 25 years yet my emotional ties are through my residential college. Our Calhoun list serve overruns with opinions and debate on this issue and much has been said on both sides – articulately, reasonably, passionately. Obviously it is not an easy issue. However, I feel that getting rid of the name "Calhoun" altogether is like taking the "N word" out of Huck Finn and smacks or Orwellian Newspeak or Stanilesque whitewashing; keeping the thorn in our side, the "wound" open *requires* that we continue to face and discuss the Race Issue.

Rather than renouncing JCC and rejecting his name altogether, I think there is a middle ground; the best two options I've seen on our Calhoun '76-'82 list serve are:

1 - Honour John C Calhoun's *slaves*, represented in the infamous stained glass window, by "honouring someone who, but by circumstances of birth, might have become a greater stateswoman (or statesman) than John or any of the other college namesakes....This would serve as a constant reminder of the oppression of slavery, and allow us to remain 'Hounies.'" So, rename Calhoun for **Mennemin Calhoun** - the matriarch of JCC's slaves (she lived to be 112!).

2 - Hyphenate the college name. Make it **Calhoun-Green**. Richard Henry Green (class of 1857) was the first Black Yale graduate. He must have been a remarkable man.

There could be a 'renaming event' each year where this issue is discussed - seminars, or speakers or whatever to keep the dialogue going. As suggested on the List: "Much as we celebrated Trolley Night each fall, future generations of students could have a (more intellectual) celebration of the Renaming each year. They could celebrate the lives of the new namesakes... and reaffirm the repudiation of the

abhorrent views of the former namesake. And the college's traditions that developed independently of John C. Calhoun could continue to flourish."

3- perhaps consider hyphenating - Calhoun-Clay for Cassius Clay - the first one was the abolitionist, the second was the father of the fighter, and the third was Muhammad Ali. And the initials CC.

But renouncing JCC completely and renaming the college requires us to re-examine more than just Calhoun College. What about our Founding Fathers who, *in the Constitution*, declared a black slave worth only 3/5th of a person? What about those who denied women the right to vote? What about Washington, Jefferson, Madison and even Elihu Yale himself who were complicit in perpetuating slavery either by owning them or being *involved in the slave trade*? What about the actions and beliefs of Timothy Dwight, Jonathan Edwards, Philip Livingston (the Livingston Gate)? As a fellow "Hounie and Southern-to-the-Core friend wrote to me, "Calhoun's defense of slavery was merely a product of his time and was relatively insignificant." Renaming Calhoun might solve a public relations problem, but it opens a bag of worms as to what else has been "wrongly" named for whom.

This week The New Yorker had a piece on renaming Denali. Here is an excerpt on renaming:
"Andrew Jackson, Indian killer and hardened racist, gives his name and his face to the twenty-dollar bill. Should we obliterate his image from our money, as we have obliterated McKinley from the mountain? Should we rename every street, rededicate every monument, repurpose every President, to conform to our enlightenment? It's obvious—or it should be so—that we cannot rename and reorder all the remnants of the past according to the present's pieties, for the simple reason that the present's pieties will not be the pieties of the future. One of the many evils of ISIS and the Taliban is their desire to remake the past entirely in their own image; changing old names too casually is a more harmless form of blowing up Buddhas. ... So let us remove the wrong people's names and pictures from our bills and byways, while remembering that we are, or will be, regarded as the wrong people ourselves in some way we cannot yet fully conceive..."

As one our listserv members so eloquently wrote, "This country was built on a foundation of racism and genocide by free thinkers who fled religious and political persecution while nonetheless genuinely convinced of their own moral, intellectual, spiritual, and racial superiority. This unappealing but highly adaptive characteristic of human history and DNA (the self-protective enshrinement of "us" versus "them") is routinely denied in real time but commonly observed through the rear view mirror... Why should Calhoun be singled out and treated differently from others of his time and before (including Elihu Yale)... Logical consistency would require embarking upon an endless (and futile) series of additional symbolic acts to purge the names and likenesses of perhaps a majority of this nation's historic figures from all places of honor and recognition (coins, currency, memorials, museums, public buildings). This does not... comport with "lux et veritas."

But perhaps I am just trying to find justification for an emotional response. I sincerely hope Calhoun is not renamed - not just for emotional reasons but I think it sets a terrible precedent.

However if the University and the Committee buckles to pressure, Mennemin Calhoun or Calhoun-Green or even Calhoun-Clay addresses the problem with the least amount of damage while still preserving traditions and keeping the dialogue open.

Very truly yours,

Margaret Desjardins (CC '79)



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Oct. 17, 2016

To: The Committee For Renaming Principles
John Witt, Chair

Dear Committee,

I'm writing to make some suggestions with regard to principles for renaming Yale buildings and other spaces. I begin with a few brief remarks about my interest and expertise in this issue. I then offer a list of principles as well as some examples of good reasons for and against renaming. I conclude with some remarks on Calhoun College as a case study.

I. My interest. I am a graduate of Calhoun College ('93) with a BA in History and a teaching certificate through the Yale Teacher Preparation Program. After teaching in public schools for three years, I earned an MA in History and PhD in Education (History of Education) from Stanford. I am Chair of the Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Administration at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education. I specialize in educational history, history education, and the relationship between social diversity and democratic government. I'm currently a Senior Research Scholar at Yale Law School and a member of the Justice Collaboratory. I live in New Haven. I moved here in 2008 because this is where I wanted to raise my kids. My job at Rutgers is distant, but the city of New Haven is among my favorite places. I want Yale to succeed.

II. Approaching principles for renaming things should be rooted in substantive commitments to particular values as well as in the development of procedures. I should also emphasize that even values and procedures are themselves not iron-clad, but can change in significant ways over time—change that can be healthy for the Yale community. In short, I like words like “values” and “guidelines,” not “rules and procedures.” I hope that the university administration keeps this in mind as they think about what happens next.

1. *Values articulation.* Any statement of principles for renaming should begin with a statement of the university's values. Values often stand in tension, and so this list should be carefully constructed so as to signal which are most fundamental. I would submit the following as guidelines in the process of values articulation:
 - a. When in doubt, favor those without power or privilege. Be crystal clear that race, gender and sex are fundamental categories of privilege in this society. If we at Yale are a real community, an offense to one is an offense to all. Be brave on behalf of those with deeply felt objections.
 - b. The earth belongs in usufruct to the living (as Jefferson put it). Decisions that pit the old Yale (read: rich alumni) against Yale now

(the current students, faculty, and staff) have probably been framed poorly to begin with. But in any case, Yale now—especially the students now—need the edge in the balance of decision making.

- c. No name is forever. These buildings will all be dust someday. Don't fetishize naming as a form of ancestor worship or, conversely, a promise of immortality. For alumni donors, focus on the good that gifts do, not the imagined sainthood that they confer. A good name will endure because it deserves to. A poor name will need to fend for itself. Rich alumni probably respect the rhetoric of market competition. Use it.
2. In considering the name of a thing, consider *the nature of the thing*. Is the thing a dormitory? A museum? A plaza? A bench? A monument? If the purpose of the thing is not consistent with the current name of the thing, we may have a problem. People build community in a dormitory; they stare at a monument; they sit on a bench; they learn in a classroom.
3. Consider the *purpose* of the original naming. Why was the thing named in the first place? What assumptions went into the use of that particular name? Are those assumptions still true today? Is that purpose still relevant? Is it costly? Has Yale changed in significant ways since the original decision to name was made?
4. Consider the *meaning of the name* itself. In some cases, names can be associated with particular values and beliefs, while in other cases we have to dig pretty deeply to find things out about names that we never knew. On the other hand, when new understandings and associations develop over time, renaming may be in order. Bill Cosby's name was the gold standard in the 1990s and 2000s. Today we would no longer accept this name on a building for many obvious reasons. Even if Cosby's actual past has not changed, the meaning of his past has.

III. Good arguments against renaming. Stated in the positive, this would be: why keep a name? Renaming exacts a cost. Considerations of renaming should account for costs. Are the costs pecuniary? Are they bureaucratic? Do they affect marketing to alumni? Do they alienate a donor? These are real costs and so, to revert to my double negative, here are good arguments against renaming:

1. The reason is frivolous, gratuitous, or mean spirited. These are very subjective adjectives, and should be judged against our community values and principles (See II. 1a-c above).
2. The reason is for renaming is legitimate, but is outweighed by other legitimate concerns. For example, historical figures are often flawed people. Martin Luther King Junior cheated on his partner. But his achievements far outweigh this flaw in terms of the public purposes of using his name.
3. The reason is real but the cost is so great that other means of redress may be necessary. This is the nuclear option. Do we rename Yale because Eli Yale owned slaves and it was money earned in the slave trade that paid

for the books he donated to the college? My answer would be no, both for this principle and for II.3-4 above. But the university can, instead, go to great lengths (which it has not done) toward truth and reconciliation with regard to the university's role in slavery.

IV. Poor arguments against renaming. I have heard several arguments in the last two years about why we should not change names. Many of these are made in the name of history, but are surprisingly ill informed. There is an extensive scholarship on history teaching and learning, historical thinking, and public history. If your committee intends to make claims that renaming is about history education, I would strongly urge the committee to read that literature. I would not recommend the committee do so, however, for the reasons below. Here are some poor arguments against renaming:

1. *Changing names erases history.* This is nonsense. What conception of history does this notion embody?
 - a. The discipline of history constantly changes names. Science does, too. How many planets are there? What happened to the French and Indian War? The War of Northern Aggression? The discipline of history is dynamic. Names for things, notions of what is important, explanations of causality—these are all subject to change.
 - b. Public history, on the other hand, is purposefully political. Keeping a name is as political and purposeful a choice as changing it. Choosing to keep a name that is deeply and legitimately offensive is indeed educative. It shows that some people matter less than others. It eats away at legitimacy. This is not a history lesson, however. It is a civics lesson in who belongs.
 - c. Heritage is not history. Keeping offensive names on buildings is a form of heritage preservation (not historical instruction). It is interesting that the issue of renaming resurfaced at Yale when pressure mounted nationwide to remove Confederate flags from government buildings in the South. White nationalist heritage groups tried to preserve the flags as a symbol of their “way of life.” Nobody was fooled. Instead, we all knew that what was at stake was how we as a society view our identity. Who is a *real* American? That’s what the heritage game is about. Not preserving history, but preserving a viewpoint. Ask yourself, is keeping a name preserving a particular viewpoint?
2. *Names teach history lessons.* Most Yale buildings I am aware of were not named to teach lessons in history. The residential colleges were certainly, as a matter of fact, NOT named as history lessons. They were named to give each residential college a “distinctive and characteristic name, in

order to facilitate the growth of traditions around it.”¹ In short, the purpose of these names was something students could rally around, not something to teach them lessons on history. Other buildings were named for different reasons. Some, like Sterling and Beinecke libraries, were named for the benefactor who paid for them. This is not history either. Woolsey Hall was named for a popular president of Yale. But the hall is not a monument or a mausoleum to Woolsey, but a living concert hall. I am, frankly, hard pressed to think of a single building on campus named for the purpose of teaching historical lessons.

3. *Changing the name sanitizes history or is “political correctness.”* This is a popular one but quite faulty for reasons I give above. It rests on the assumptions that (1)the naming was intended to teach history (2) the name actually does teach history (3)that history is accurate (4) history does not change and (4) even if all these assumptions were true, that we would want to keep a name for the purpose of calling attention to disgusting, embarrassing, and horrific aspects of our past. If a building were physically not usable anymore, we would tear it down. How come we do not have that courage with names?
4. *Names do not matter.* This is a silly argument. If names do not matter, then there should be no strenuous objection to changing them. Usually the subtext to this argument is really “This name does not offend me so it should not offend you either.” Some argument.
5. *Renaming frightens Alumni from giving money for buildings.* This is, as far as I can tell, the real reason underlying so much of the administration’s concern. Alumni love their old residential colleges, and so to remove the name of a college, the argument goes, is to alienate the alumni. I find it hard to believe as an empirical matter, and would love to see the research on it. But even if we accept this supposed and unsubstantiated cost, we must weigh it against other values, not to mention the risk of frightening future alumni from giving because they remember old Yale as phony and racist. I would think a clever development office could rally Calhoun alumni to give to Yale as a show of support for changing the name. I would.

V. Calhoun as a case study. Keeping the Calhoun College name violates nearly every argument and principle of naming that I have listed thus far. Let me be clear. When I was a white, middle class man living in Calhoun College I was completely oblivious to who Calhoun was. There was no internet then, and so finding out would have been a chore. I never noticed the stained glass windows in the common room or dining hall, except when one of them became controversial and was removed. Even then, I did not give it much thought.

¹ Report of the President’s Committee on the Program for Undergraduate Housing, Feb. 16, 1929. Page 1. Yale Manuscripts and Archives. James Rowland Angell records

Students now know who Calhoun was. Indeed we all do. He's easy to find and learn about, as is the controversy around him. But much else has changed since I was a student: Yale is more diverse and more accepting of diversity; our society is too. Yale is now in the national spotlight and the question of Calhoun College is a major one for Yale's image not only within its own community, but within higher education generally.

So how bad is the Calhoun issue? When this controversy came up recently I began to poke around the history of Calhoun College. I was pretty astonished at just how awful the story is. Calhoun College was not just named unthinkingly for John C. Calhoun. It was named with full knowledge and acknowledgement of his views on race. Indeed the College was built as a monument to those views—a kind of Epcot for the Old South and the Lost Cause. It simply did not occur to the white men who made these decisions that Calhoun (and Yale) would one day be home to many descendants of enslaved people who would find the Calhoun theme deeply offensive and contrary to the naming purposes.

Those purposes are clear and well documented. On December 8, 1928, the Yale Corporation unanimously approved a resolution to create a residential subdivision of the undergraduate schools into "small units of housing 150-250 students each, with... facilities designed to foster a spirit of social intimacy and companionship."² President Angell appointed a special committee to explore the matter further, and very quickly a key issue emerged: how to use the college system to advance the value of diversity. Of course, by diversity (they did not use the word) the administration meant social class. "It would be highly undesirable to allow any tradition of social prestige to attach to any House. The clique such as might grow up from previous school association or otherwise should not be allowed to become traditional for any House." Moreover, the committee hoped that "Each House should represent as nearly as possible a cross section of the whole student body." It did not occur to the committee to discuss the function of race as a form of "social prestige" because there were so few African American students anywhere on campus, and because American society in general was so deeply segregationist and white supremacist. (Not until 1964, about thirty years after the opening of Calhoun College, did the university cede to civil rights demands and admit a significant number of African American men to the college.³)

And most critically, each House was supposed to have a "distinctive and characteristic name, in order to facilitate the growth of traditions around it." The committee elaborated,

² Report of the President's Committee on the Program for Undergraduate Housing, Feb. 16, 1929. Page 1. Yale Manuscripts and Archives. James Rowland Angell records RU 24 series I Box 184.

³ http://archives.yalealumnimagazine.com/issues/2006_01/old_yale.html

We ought to look forward to attaching graduate sentiment to each House. Returning alumni would naturally gravitate toward it and on Alumni Day, or at Commencement time, if the graduate was not one of a reunion class, he could hope to find himself a home in it.”⁴

I see nothing in the Yale archives that suggests that naming Calhoun College was intended to teach lessons in history. Instead, it was intended to be a name that students could rally around and identify with.

The original stained glass windows of Calhoun College provide evidence both that the university knew full well of Calhoun’s racist ideology and that they never imagined that students in the dorm would take offense. Designed by D’Ascenzo Studios of Philadelphia, the windows celebrate the life of Calhoun and the lost world of the plantation South. In the common room, stained glass marks Calhoun’s political career—the seal of South Carolina, Calhoun as a young man and as an elder statesman, floating ghost-like in front of the Capital Dome (not completed at the time of his death), a supplicant black man in chains at his feet.

The stained glass of the dining hall celebrated the plantation South. These are not accurate historical depictions meant to inform us. They are clearly examples of a white supremacist view of enslaved people that denigrated and dehumanized them. In addition to depicting the plantation house and slave quarters, the dining hall included a negro minstrel—perhaps the most powerful 19th century stereotype of the degraded slave, made hugely popular through minstrel shows. You can detect a hint of white lips that were once the staple of popular blackface images of African Americans.



The dining hall also contained an image of an enslaved woman and man picking cotton. This is the window that dining hall worker Corey Menafee smashed this past

⁴ Report of the President’s Committee on the Program for Undergraduate Housing, Feb. 16, 1929. Page 3.

spring. What was overlooked in the coverage of that incident, however, was the three panel series that included the smashed window.⁵



These people were not depicted simply as documentation of history. They are depicted between a bunny on the one hand and partridges on the other. This was a key component of dehumanizing enslaved African people and an idea championed publicly by Calhoun: the most natural place for the African was as a slave.

Moving beyond the windows and out into the courtyard of the college, we see further depictions of the face of Calhoun and the seal of South Carolina, again a celebration of his championship of states' rights that made him one of the heroes of the American Confederacy.

I recoil to think what the administration had in mind when these images were made “in order to facilitate the growth of traditions around” the name Calhoun. What songs did they imagine Calhoun College students singing? What rituals and jokes were supposed to emerge under the minstrel, or those “gay darkies” in the field of cotton?

And finally, we should consider what the name Calhoun means for the people who work in the college—dining hall and custodial staff, administrative staff, faculty, and administration. Many are the descendants of those enslaved people depicted as less than human in the windows of Calhoun. The name Calhoun, and the way it is celebrated with nostalgia, is a hostile and degrading work environment. Even if some of the windows are now gone, the bunnies and partridges remain. They were put there to tell us about the inhumanity of the people who have now been removed. How should we view them?

⁵ The center window was repaired and removed. I have photoshopped it back in place here so you can see what the three panel series looked like.

So what is the case for changing the name of Calhoun College? The college was named after Calhoun and built as a monument to the Lost Cause with the assumption that Yale students could rally around these ideas and build a close community. The university administration could not imagine, then, that a significant portion of our community would be the descendants of those slaves and find Calhoun—the man, the theme, the images—odious and insulting. The name now prevents the community from rallying around it—indeed, it alienates many students, while forcing others into a conflict about choosing their fellow “Hounies” or choosing Yale, the college they worked so hard to get into. It’s a lose-lose for everyone.

I see no argument in favor of keeping the name, frankly, and least of all, an argument rooted in teaching and learning history. Remove all the glass images and create a permanent exhibit in Sterling that explains the racist history of the college. They are important historical artifacts, to be sure, and they teach us that Yale has been a deeply racist institution. They should sit in a curated space that is designed for the purpose of teaching such lessons. Put Calhoun’s painting in there as well, his eternal frown a monument to the misery of a life lived in hatred.

And then please, let’s pick a name that suits the purpose of a residential college.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BJ', followed by a long horizontal line.

Benjamin Justice, CC '93
Professor and Chair

From: "Ellis, Jennifer"

Date: Thursday, November 3, 2016 at 10:06 AM

To: "Witt, John" <john.witt@yale.edu>

Subject: Calhoun College

Dear Mr. Witt,

I see that you have been named as the "[Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming](#)". [Sic] Charged the committee to articulate principles that could guide Yale in decisions about whether to remove a historical name from a building or other prominent structure or space.

As an alumna of Yale College 1985 I cannot express how strongly I feel the despair and disdain all people of color are being treated with, with the continued honoring of Calhoun. I am of African American descent and my family and past have been intertwined for hundreds of years with slavery and institutional racism. Would you ask holocaust survivors to donate to the Josef Mengele School of Medicine? His ground breaking work on high altitude sickness is still relevant and part of every flight we take, or perhaps do his evil deeds outweigh whatever good he might have done? Yale was a formative part of my upbringing. My father was faculty. My mother went to Yale Law School (class of 1977). I want to hope and believe as times evolve Yale too will evolve and acknowledge slavery was a source of its wealth and prominence. That debt has not been paid and the retention of the Calhoun name pours acid into a 400 year old open wound.

Thank-you for your attention

Jennifer L. Ellis, MD MBA
Yale College SM 1985

Senior Attending Physician MedStar Washington Hospital Center
Asst Professor Surgery, Georgetown University
Director Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery

Letter from Alec Ellison, Nov. 6, 2016

Yale's ties to Calhoun's nullification theory may be closer to Yale than is comfortable: To quote from Connecticut-born Margaret Coit's 1951 Pulitzer Prize winning biography of John C. Calhoun:

"The startling fact is that every principle of secession or states' rights which Calhoun ever voiced can be traced right back to the thinking of intellectual New England in the early 1800's. Not the South, not slavery, but Yale College and Litchfield Law School made Calhoun a nullifier.... [His teachers] could not convince the young patriot from South Carolina as to the desirability of secession, but they left no doubts in his mind as to its legality."

Indeed as President Salovey said in his 2015 Freshman address, "Yale's ties to the past are complicated and sometimes surprising."

Now to step back. I write as a 4th generation Charlestonian from a family which has sent 8 members to Yale in the past 40 years, including 6 of us who were raised in Charleston. Two of the eight are current undergrads. (I feel compelled to note that I am not descended from slave owners as my great-grandfather fled the pogroms of Czarist Russia and arrived in Charleston in 1883.)

With regard to the Calhoun debate, I will share what I believe is a valuable, local perspective. I personally believe that either the generations of 'Hounies' should carry the day on the name change or that a hyphenated name, which has precedent on campus, be considered.

Growing up in Charleston, the legacy of Calhoun was ever present. I note that the Emmanuel AME Church is actually on Calhoun Street, one of the 2 major east/west arteries of downtown Charleston. The church is probably within view of the top of the 100+ foot high statue of Calhoun in the central town square (Marion Square) a few hundred yards west of the church. (I also note the hospital in which I was born is also on Calhoun street).

As a young boy beginning my lifelong love of American history, I remember asking

my mother about Presidents from South Carolina. She told me both Carolinas claim to be Andrew Jackson's birthplace, but the most important politician to know of was John C. Calhoun. I learned that he was part of the Webster/Clay/Calhoun troika, that dominated the Senate for a generation, one of two Vice Presidents to serve two different Presidents, Secretary of War, and Secretary of State. I learned that Calhoun was named in the 1950's by the US Senate as one of the 5 greatest Senators of all time (the list was increased to 7 in 2004). Knowing of Calhoun's importance led to awareness of: i) his development of the nullification doctrine, for which we even today should respect the legitimate debate of the time; and ii) his defense of slavery, which demands forceful condemnation.

Charleston, Calhoun's adopted 2nd home and final resting place, was a hotbed of secession. Most know the Civil War's first shots were fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor. But only some remember Charleston as the seat of Secession in December 1860, and even fewer recall that the Democratic Party Convention of April 1860 was initially held in Charleston - at which the Party began its irrevocable split into Northern and Southern wings. **It is arguable that in 1860, Charleston was the nation's most pro-slavery city.**

Fast forward 100-150 years. Charleston's awareness of its history arguably led to its being one of the most peaceful Deep South cities during the Civil Rights movement. More importantly and recently, the City/region has arguably led the South in developing African American political leaders:

- Tim Scott (R-SC), one of only two African American Senators, hails from North Charleston,
- The congressional district of Jim Clyburn (D-SC), former majority whip, current assistant minority leader and the most senior African-American **EVER** in the US House, includes parts of Charleston.
- A tragic aspect of the shootings was that the most prominent victim was rising star State Senator and Pastor Clementa Pinckney. He shares his last name with two of South Carolina's four signers of the Constitution, one of whom was John Adams' running mate in 1800. Most likely, State Senator Pinckney was a descendant of slaves from a Pinckney family plantation.

Add in the fact that South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley (R) is an Indian American

woman, and can you imagine the reaction of 1860 Secession Convention delegates to the current South Carolina political leadership !

Clearly, Charleston progressed, coming to grips with Calhoun's legacy while maintaining his prominence to this day. Perhaps the best evidence of this transformation is how Charleston handled the church massacre. The spirit of self-examination, reconciliation, peacefulness, and even forgiveness is a model for the nation.

In his 2015 freshman address, President Salovey's asked, "Are we perhaps better off retaining before us the name and the evocative sometimes brooding presence of Yale graduate John C. Calhoun. He may serve to remind us not only of Yale's complicated and occasionally painful associations with the past, but to enforce in us a sense of our own moral fallibility."

Charleston today is the perhaps the best evidence of the positive consequences of keeping a painful past front and center.

Respectfully,

Alec Ellison
Branford '84; P '15, P '18

From: David Manners-Weber <dmannersweber@gmail.com>

Date: Sunday, November 27, 2016 at 3:14 PM

To: ls127 <john.witt@yale.edu>

Subject: Re: Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming Listening Session-12pm Today!

Dear Professor Witt,

I'm sorry for my delay here - dropped this amidst the whirlwind of the election. Below are some thoughts (adapted from an email I sent President Salovey this past spring).

--

President Salovey defended preserving the name of Calhoun College not on the merits of whether it is appropriate to retrospectively judge John Calhoun, but rather because we should not elide the darker aspects of our history. So I will ignore the "slippery slope / where do we draw the line in judging historical figures" argument that often gets brought up in these conversations.

I found President Salovey's stated rationale to be disappointing, and told him so. The "we must remember our history" argument strikes me as true in the abstract but ill-suited when applied to the case at hand. No one is talking about erasing Calhoun from our history textbooks, or erasing the fact that Yale elected to honor this man.* Rather, we are talking about keeping his name on a residential college. And in considering whether that's appropriate, it makes sense to consider the purpose of residential colleges. These colleges are - and are meant to be - sources of pride, community, and celebration.** Their names are chanted at athletic events, sung in fight songs, branded across t-shirts and waterbottles, etc. It's hard not to see the name as an ongoing honor when we are meant to feel pride in our association with it. And if Calhoun students did come to feel ambivalent about their association with Calhoun College, or thought twice before wearing Calhoun gear when home from school, it would seem to run counter to what Yale wants these communities to be (I assume, for instance, that we hope the names Franklin and Murray will be sources of unalloyed pride for future generations of Yalies).

I experienced this ambivalence firsthand when I ran some errands around town wearing an old Calhoun shirt. I was walking on the street when a man yelled at me, "Get rid of that shirt! Why are you wearing that? It's racist!" I found it tough to respond - I was wearing the shirt because Calhoun was my home for four years (and because it was long past laundry day), but others understandably saw the endorsement of a repugnant figure. I haven't worn the shirt since.

I'll leave aside the particular difficulties that students of color may experience, simply because I imagine others are better able to speak to that than I am. But fundamentally, do we expect Calhoun students to be *proud* of their association with Calhoun College? To chant in celebration and wear gear emblazoned with its name? If yes, how can we see the name as something other than an honor? If no, how does that fit with the purpose of the residential college system?***

Thanks for listening, Professor. If any of this is unclear, let me know; and if you have a different point of view, I'd love to listen to you to better understand why.

Warmly,
David

*Amidst all the talk about remembrance, at least when I was in Calhoun I did not find the name to

prompt much thoughtful public reflection about the man or Yale's history.

**The Yale College [website](#) says: "The residential colleges allow students to experience the cohesiveness and intimacy of a small school while still enjoying the cultural and scholarly resources of a large university; the residential colleges do much to foster spirit, allegiance, and a sense of community at Yale."

***Your residential college is also an important part of your identity at Yale. A smaller point (to me), but I might also ask why Hounies - particularly Hounies of color - should be asked to uniquely bear some sort of abstract burden of remembrance on behalf of the broader university?

October 5, 2016

To President Peter Salovey and the Members of the Yale Corporation:

We—the undersigned alumni, students, faculty, staff, and members of the Yale community—write to express our disappointment in the University’s decision to retain the Calhoun College name.

As undergraduates at Yale understand, Calhoun is much more than a name of a building. Like all incoming Yalies, students assigned to Calhoun are taught that their residential colleges are central to their Yale experiences. Like all Yalies, they are expected to learn their college’s traditions, songs, and chants; to don paraphernalia proudly advertising their residential college; and to compete and cheer for their residential college in intramural competitions. And, like all new Yalies, Calhoun students quickly learn that full membership in the Yale College community is contingent on your membership in your residential college (and that transferring to a different residential college is discouraged).

Yalies thus know that our college namesakes enjoy a ubiquity in our day-to-day lives on campus. The namesake of each college occupies an elevated, if not celebrated, place in undergraduate life.

This is why President Salovey’s proffered reasons for retaining the Calhoun name ring hollow. He has argued that the Calhoun decision advances Yale’s mission as an educational institution, but this decision does precisely the opposite.

Like all Yalies, students of color are eager to take advantage of the wonderful opportunities that a Yale education affords. But doing so becomes difficult when, to become a full member of the Yale community, you are expected to embrace your assignment to a community named after a man who is principally remembered as a steadfast defender of slavery.

More broadly, the Calhoun decision impedes the progress toward inclusion that, even according to President Salovey himself, Yale desperately needs. Last November, he wrote that “we need to make significant changes so that all members of our community truly feel welcome” and reaffirmed his commitment “to a campus where hatred and discrimination are never tolerated.” Notwithstanding this rhetoric, the University has doubled down on a decision Yale never should have made in the first place—honoring a man whose very legacy embodies hatred and discrimination.

Indeed, it is difficult to reconcile the Calhoun decision with the University's decision to eliminate the title "Master." In a recent conference call with alumni, President Salovey stated that the decision to eliminate the title was in part motivated by his discomfort observing custodial staff asking their "Masters" where they should place the trash. These incidents made him and the Council of Masters so uncomfortable that they could no longer tolerate keeping the title in use. The irony should be painfully obvious. It was discomfort experienced by President Salovey and the Council of Masters – not the experiences and feelings of students and staff themselves – that ultimately provoked change.

Accordingly, we reject President Salovey's arguments that we need Calhoun to further the University's educational work. As Professor Matthew Frye Jacobson recently suggested, it is doubtful that Yale would defend a "Joseph Goebbels College" as a pedagogical imperative. Indeed, there are other, more productive steps the University could take. Yale could, for example, grant departmental status to the Ethnicity, Race & Migration Program. It could add an ethnic studies distributional requirement to the undergraduate curriculum. And it could take steps to slow the exit of professors of color from the University. Far more than retaining the Calhoun name, any of these measures would help the Yale community "confront one of the most disturbing aspects of Yale's and our nation's past," as President Salovey hopes.

Over the past several months, students and alumni have resoundingly and repeatedly called for genuine inclusion at Yale. It was our hope that responses like Yale's decision to create the Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration was just the beginning of a series of steps the University would take to begin addressing the obstacles students of color face at Yale. When Yale decided not to remove the Calhoun name, the University missed a key opportunity to show students and alumni of color that despite the fundraising challenges that might ensue, Yale stands with them. To students who saw in "Dean Salovey" an ally and advocate for cultural centers, this decision was a betrayal.

Much of the Yale community agrees that it is unacceptable to continue to honor John C. Calhoun. We applaud the courageous actions that student-activists have already taken to protest this decision, and we are confident that the protests will pick up again in earnest during the new academic year. We will stand in solidarity with the student-activists until the Calhoun name is removed.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned

Hamara Abate '15
Stefanie Acevedo '15
Nneoma Adaku '15
Oluwaseyi Adeyinka '15 EPH '16
Vanessa Agard-Jones '00* & Faculty
Vanessa Ague '17
Mal Ahern GRD '15
Rafiq Ahmed '07
Ona Ahumada '98
Nathalie Alegre '08
Emma Alexander '13
elizabeth alexander '84
Jennifer Allen '16
Deborah Alterman '94
Seth Altman '97
Emaan Ammar '09
Danielle Andersen-Wood '18
Richard Anderson GRD '15
Lauren Anderson '99
Vanessa Anderson '99
Leonora Anzaldua '03
Viviana Arroyo '18
Diana Asher '78
Bethel Assefa '16
Liya Assefa '11
Morris Atta '78
Rosa Avila '09
Mary Awadallah '13
Celeste Bagley '78
Theresa Bailey '14
Debra Bakal '85
George Baker '92
Ariel Baker-Gibbs '11
Sohini Bandy '13
Neela Banerjee '86
Annie Barrett '01
William Bartlett '14
Benjamin Bartolome '16
Nicole Battaglia '13
Jessica Bauman '89

William Baxter '94*
Constance Beck-Treadway '17
Simon Beins '03
Kira Belkin '85
Ilan Ben-Meir '12
Karen Gorss Benko '94
Alexandra Bercow '11
David Berg '71
Brenda Bernstein '91
Grace Berry '06
Abigail Bessler '17
Timeica Bethel '11
Saqib Bhatti '04
Pippa Bianco '11
Michael Bilow '09
Jenny Blair '97 MED '99
Jacqueline Blaska '20
Ian Blecher '00
Victor Bloch '14
Brandee Blocker '12
Emma Bloomfield ARCH '11
Alex Blum '15 & Staff
Joseph Blumberg '19
Abigail Bok '14
Martin Boroson '83 SOM '88
Elianna Boswell '17
Jordan Boudreau '18
Wil Bowers '81
Alexander Bowles GRD '12
Michael Boydston '89
Kari Braaten '00
Rachel Bradshaw '07*
Simon Brewer '16
Adriana Briones '11
Grace Brittan '16
Noreen Brody '07
Helen Bronston '85
Charlotte Brooks '93
Skylar Brooks '11*
Sylvia Broude '04

Rashayla Brown '04
Davynn Brown '14
Elias Brown '17
Kathryn Brown '12*
Asia Brown '16
Marvin Brown LAW '16
Anne Brown '85
Vanessa Brown '91
Jyana Browne (née Gregory) '98
Stephen Bruce '09
Antony Bugg-Levine '96
Christina Bui '13
Stephen Bumbaugh '88
Silvia Bunge '96
Suzanne Burger '82
Andre Burke '85
Daniel Burkhardt GRD '21
Jarrett Burks '10
Hannah Burnett '08
Martha Burson '11
Margaret Joanna Busby '09
Nina Cabrera '11
Marie Calvert-Kilbane '10
LaTisha Campbell '12
Ofelia Canals '09*
Tracy Carlson '76
Ulises Ceja '13
Karsten Ch'ien '09
Megan Chambers '89
Albert Chang '13
Greg Chase '10
Phoebe Chatfield '18
Semi Chellas '91
Christine Chen SOM '18
Cyndi Chen '13
Valerie Chen '19
Abigail Cheung '11
Michelle Chihara '96
Clay Chiles '09
Mary Chitty '71*

Katherine Chockley '14
Susan Choi '90 & Faculty
Judeth Oden Choi '00
Jade Chowning '19
dimitri christakis '86
Andrew Chun '15
Julianne Chung GRD '15
Cyd Cipolla '04
Peter Clark '62
Molly Clark-Barol '08
Stephanie Clarke '94
Brian Clarke '74
Cary Clarke '02
Fred Clarke '91
Martin Cobern GRD '74
Noah Cohan '04
Amy Cohen '90
Correna Cohen '12
Karin Coifman '96*
William Coker '00 GRD '10
Caitlin Collins '10
Nicholas Collura '07*
Caitlin Comfort '12
Shira Concool '10
Djenab Conde '15
Elizabeth Conley '03
Alana Conner '96
Deva Content '10
Robert Cook '93
Abigail Cook-Mack '03
David Cornell '85 GRD '94
Gabrielle Cosel '02
Naima Coster '08
Joshua Cox '08
Brian Cox '08*
Terence Cranendonk '85
Hannah Croasmun '01
Phyllis L Crocker '78
Isabel Cruz '17
Georgina Cullman '02

Mark Curchack '69
Alaric D'Souza '14
Ann Daly ART '90
Kia Darling-Hammond '00
Aaron Datesman '93
Emon Datta '18
Nicholas Daum LAW '03
Fabiol Davila '15
Angharad Davis GRD '17
Shelby Davis-Cooper '14
Claire Daviss '14
Kendra Dawsey '14
Claudia De Palma '05
Nicholas Defiesta '14
Vanessa del Valle '10
Abigail Deutsch '06
Lynea Diaz-Hagan '97
Caroline Diehl '15
Jeremy Dietmeier '10
Francisco Diez '14
Grant Din '79
John Dos Passos Coggin '05
Kaji Dousa DIV '06
Edmund Downie '14
Nathan Dudley '82
Edward Dunar '08
Chris Duncan '85
Yen Duong '10
Clement Dupuy '17*
Arianne Eason '12
Vera Eastman '11
Nancy Edwards '88
Carl Ehrhardt '00
Kyle Eichner '12
Bram Elias LAW '09
Anne Eller Faculty
Shari Ellis '92
Rachel Elmer '09
Gideon Emmanuel '11
Nicole Endsley '13

Francis Engler '97
Harris Eppsteiner '12
Stephanie Escajeda '98
Katherine Eshel '13
John Evans '99
Rachel Fabi '11
Miranda Farmer '11
Carol Faulkner '91
Dominique Fenton '10
Bertie Ferdman '96*
Neil Feria '88
Fabian Fernandez EPH '15
Paul Festa '96
Amanda Feuerstein '09
Nate File '17
Emily Finn '09 GRD '17
James Fishelson '07
Maura Fitzgerald '08
Lori Flores '05
Benjamin Flores '10
Trevor Ford '11
Elliot Forhan LAW '13
Tavia Fortt '86
David Frank '07
Rachel Frankford '08
Suzanna Fritzberg '14*
Marc Frohman '82
Bonnie Frye Hemphill FES '13
Conor Furey '18
Stephannie Furtak '12
Amal Ga'al '14
Rachel Gabara '91
Anna Gable '13
Kaija Gahm '20
Maureen Gaj '10
Carol Jean Gallo GRD '09
Sydney Garick '18
Katie Garris '16
JOan Gass '12
Laura Gaynon '07*

Chris Genteel '00
Monica Gerard '78 MUS '79
Margot Gerould '15
Zahreen Ghaznavi '08
Kenya Gillespie '10*
Kerry Gilpin '85*
Lawrence Gipson '11
Jonathan Goldman '09
Rebecca Goldsmith '94
Kristjiana Gong '10.5
Kate Gonzales '11*
Leigh Goodmark '91
Adam Goodrum '10
Steven Gore '78 MED '82 & Faculty
Carly Gove '19
Zachary Graham '13
Micaela Gramelis '09
Nathaniel Granor '09
Audrey Grant '96
Sarah Greene '10
Hannah Greene '02
Monica Gribben '85
Nicole Grigg '12
Christopher Grobe '05*
Raquel Guarino '13
Lucy Gubernick '14
Jessica Gusberg '06
Marli Guzzetta '01
Jeffrey Hadler '90*
Paulina Haduong '13
Brian Hagerty '89
Shalmoli Halder '15
Connor Halleck-Dube '19
Nicole Hallett LAW '08 & Staff
Sei Han '16
Jenny Hansell '86
Keith Hansen '82
Kai Harada '98
Nick Harding '91
Jesse Harold '00

Catherine Harrington '88
Michelle Hartz '85
Amelia Hassoun '13
Lucy Hattemer '17
Bryan Haynes '89
Emily Hays '16*
Timmia Hearn Feldman '12
Jennifer Heikkila Diaz '00
Amoret Heise '73
Max Henke '13
Natalie Hennessy '98
Charlotte Herber '18
Julie Hersh '10
Angel Hertslet '08 FES '15
Zachary Herz-Roiphe '13
Mary Hess '85*
Heather Hewett '91
jillian hewitt '15
DaShawn Hickman '09
Michelle Ho '11
Kevin Ho '12* EPH '13
Linda Hoaglund '79
Nia Holston '14
Marian Homans-Turnbull '12
Jane Hong '02
D. Douglas Hopkins '78
Eliza Hopkins '17
Briallen Hopper Faculty
Laura Horak '03*
Donna Horning '13
Meg Howard '08*
Caitlyn Howell '91
Jane Hu '09*
Brian Hughes '00
Douglas Hummel-Price '09
Audrey Huntington '11
Sean Hurley '08
Elizabeth Hutchinson '88
Alan Hutchison '11
Sumaya Ibraheem '13

Louise Ing '74
Carolyn Ing '78
Erica Irving '11
Keiji Ishiguri '11
Tanya Isler '94
Susan Israel '88
Sarah Izfar '03
Keyanna Jackson '16
Nora Jacobsen Ben Hammed '10
Wendy Jacobson '85
Luke Jaeger '86
Joelle Jaffe '00
Chaka Jaliwa '11
Casey Blue James '12
Kathleen James-Chakraborty '82 &
Faculty
Sophia Janowitz '10
Irene Jiang '16
Alejandro Jimenez '14
Jessica J. Johnson '08
Anna Johnson '08
Katie Jones LAW '16
Michael Ridgway Jones GRD '95
Kathryn Jones Calone '96
Jin Su Joo '10 GRD '16
Susan Joseph '85
Elizabeth Judd '85
Francis Jue '86
Graham Kaemmer '16*
Wendy Kahn '78
Brittney Kajdacsí '11
Liz Kalina '11
Adi Kamdar '12
Josh Kamensky '97
Hee Jin Kang '96
Caroline Kanner '16
Maria Karunungan '96
Melissa Kasnitz '89
Tamar Katz '83
Mandy Katz '85

Gail Katz-James '91
Andrew Katzman '98
Eric Kawamura '76
Zachary Kayal '17
David Kearns '97*
Kevin Keenan LAW '02
Anna Kellar '12
Betsy Kellem '01
Frances Kelley '08
Margaret Kellogg '19
Alexander Kelsey '19
Matthew Kennard '06
Meegan Kennedy Hanson '88
Ross Kennedy-Shaffer '08
Megan Kenny '98
Uzra Khan '12
James Kim '11
Byron Kim '83
Katherine Kincade '85
Janet Kirby '85
Jesse Kirkland '12
Trip Kirkpatrick '93
Erlend Kjellstad '92
Marisa Knox '04
Sreeja Kodali '18
Florian Koenigsberger '14
Ava Kofman '14
Wei Jie Koh YNUS '17
Amy Kohout '04
Brendan Kolb '14 DIV '18
Nancy Kopman Rubenstein '85
Claire Kosloff '01
Jane Kozey '14
Sheldon Kraicer '82
Kate Kressmann-Kehoe '84
Adam Krok '19
William Kronick '14
Hannah Krystal '17
Sarah Kunstler '98
Ethan Kuperberg '11

Maya Kushmaul SOM '18
Bryan Kutner '97
Victor Kwansa '08
Gena Lai '95
Dianne Lake '16
Aaron Lee Lambert '06*
Van Lanckton '64
Zoe LaPalombara '13
Hannah LaPalombara '13
Susan LaPalombara '83
Christopher Lapinig '07* LAW '13
Sarah Laskow '06
Melissa Lau '02
Ryan Laughlin '12
Bernier Lauredan SOM '17
Simone Lavin '19
Vincent Law '00
Camille Lawhead '13
Margaret Lazzarini '13
Adrienne Le '14
Jessica Leao '16*
Mark Lee '04
Jaime Lee '94
Thomas Lee '05
Kaozouapa Elizabeth Lee '11
Jonathan Lehman '03
Benjamin Lempert '14
Yoav Len GRD '14
Elizabeth Cushingham Leon '00*
LaiYee Leong '94 GRD '08
Andrea Levien '12 LAW '17
Nick Levine '14
Haninah Levine '05 LAW '12
Meira Levinson '92
Elaine Margaret Lewinnek '95 GRD '05
Vance Lewis SOM '18
Zachary Liao '11
Zoe Liberman '11
Aaron Lichtig '02
Georgia Lill '13

Deborah Lincow GRD
Robert Lindquist '05*
Stacey Linwood '85
Carlene Liriano SOM '18
Sean Litsey '10
Aaron Littman '10 LAW '14
Catherine Liu '18
Carleen Liu '16
Julian Liu '98
Nathan Lobel '17
Nicholas Lobenthal '83
Annie Loeb '12
Adina Lopatin '05
Margaret Lourenco '83
Callie Lowenstein '10
Andrew V. Ly '07
Austin Lynch '98
Andrea Lynch '99
Ying-Ying Ma '07
Will MacAdams '94
Ann Mackey '85*
Faye Maison '11
Sabrina Malak '14
David Malbin '01
Alfredo Maldonado '99
Noah Mamber '00
Rafael Mandelman '96
Jonathan Manes LAW '08
Lauren Mangini '03*
Shoshana Marchand '85
Oana Marian '03 DIV '17
Peggy Marks '71
Zach Marks '10
Stephen Marsh '13
Peter Martin '10
Alexander Martone '10
Michael Maruca '11
Jann Matlock Staff
Matthew Matros '99
Sarah Maxim '82

Kate Mayans '12
Marieme Mbaye '12
Kimberly McCabe '13
Andrea McChristian '08*
Megan McDonald '91
Joy Ann McDougall '85
James McElroy '95
Miko McGinty '93 ART '98
Courtney McKinney '11
Katherine Meckel '07*
Pooja Mehta '13
Avani Mehta '15
David Meierfrankenfeld '13
Rabbi Margot Meitner '00
Miguel Melendez Varela '98
Flora Mendoza '08
Rachel Mesch '93
Marian Messing LAW '17
Chelsea Messinger '15
Hope Metcalf '96
Rob Meyer '98
Ashley Miles '09
Derek Miller '04
Donna Minkowitz '85
Rishi Mirchandani '19
Emily Misch '11
Devjani Mishra '94
David Mixter '08
Christopher Molanphy '93
Benjamin Monreal '99
gloria monti '85 GRD '00
Jeanie Ree Moore '12
Ross Morin '09
Meredith Morrison '11
Patricia Morton '78
Emily Morton-Owens '99
Andre Moura '18
Patrick Muha '07
Celia Muller '06
Allen Murabayashi '94

James Murphy '13 EPH '14
Thomas Nakanishi '05
jaime napier Faculty
Katy Naples-Mitchell '13
Radhika Natarajan '02
Omri Navot '02
Brian Necf '00
Brenna Neghaiwi '13
Steven Nelson '85
Elisabeth Nevins '97
Alyssa Newton '12
Lee Ngo '05*
TJ (Thuyen) Nguyen '02 GRD '03
Van Trinh Nguyen '11
Rhasaan Nichols '08
Amy Nichols
Rebecca Nickerson '17
Grace Niewijk '18*
Megan Nogasky '05*
Nicole Novak Staff
Mariel Novas '10
Katherine O'Brien '07
Katharine O'Connell Mora '96
Megan O'Neil '94 GRD '05
Katherine Oberlies '85 LAW '88
Yvette Odu '14
Nkem Oghedo '12
Linda Oh '17
Nkem Okafor EPH '09 SOM '09
Benjamin Olinsky '01*
Jaison Oliver '10
Adeola Oni-Orisan '09
Ivuoma Onyeador '11
Adrienne Opalka '84 SOM '90
Kate Orazem '12
Bert Orlov '85* SOM '90
Floencia Orosz GRD '18
Benjamin Ortiz '11
Ellen Owens '84
Rachel Packer '16

Ann-Catherine Padian '00
Khalid Pagan '12*
Christopher Palencia '09
Nacole Palmer '00
Rita Parikh '96
Sarah Park '13
Kate Parker '11
Kerra Partney GRD '12
Ellen Passloff '85*
Caterina Passoni '18
Rachel Pasternak '01
Rachel Payne '12
Ian Peake '12
Shibao Pek '15
Kathy Peng '09
Jeannette Penniman '12 ARCH '15
John Peretti '07
Sebastian Perez '10 GRD '18
Brooke Perry '91
Mark Peterson ARCH '15
Jenny Petrow '96
Christian Pettker Faculty
Timmy Pham '13
Siobhan Phillips '99 GRD '07
Ann Marie Plane '85
Paul Planet '96
Elizabeth Planet '96
Catherine Planey '09
Jeremy Poindexter '11
Eduardo Ponsdomenech '85
David Porter '10
Tonia Poteat '91
Katherine Pradt '91*
Marcel Przymusinski '07
Sam Purdy '10
Milton Puryear '71
Justin Quam '10*
Maclovia Quintana '11 FES '14
Devin Race '13 LAW '19
Kunal Rambhia '07

Emily Rappaport '14
Sophie Raseman '04 LAW '10
Rachel Regan '18
Jessica Reich '92
Jasmine Reid '13
Julian Reid '13
Isaac Reilly '16
Emily Reimink '18
Carol Reis Whitehead Stern '73
Aaron Reiss '10
Charlotte Renfield-Miller '10
Christopher Rhie '07
Toby Richard '82
Casey Riley '93
John Riley '10*
Noah Ritz '19
Regina Robbins '95
Ayanna Roberts '96
Phoebe Roberts '95
Eliza Robertson '17
Brittany Robinson '09
Conor Robinson '10
Tara Rodman '07
Carol Rodriguez '80
Evelyn Rojas '94
Shanelle Roman '19
Nathaniel Romero '17
Michael Rosanova '72 GRD '80
Chloe Rossetti '11
Amy Rothschild '09
Ariela Rothstein '10
Matthew Rowland '00 LAW '05
Beth Rubenstein '03*
David Rubin '96
Mónica Russel y Rodríguez '88
Patrick Rutan '13
Allison Rutledge-Parisi '85
Michael Ruvinsky '98
Adrian Ryan '09
Altaf Saadi '08

David Saavedra '00
Mahdi Sabbagh '10 ARCH '15
Wazhma Sadat '14
Paul Saint-Amour '91
Jesus Salinas '04
Julia Salseda '19
Max Saltarelli '13
Jackie Salzinger '18
Mirtala Sanchez '12
Sophia Sánchez-Maes '19
Jeff Sandberg '04 LAW '09
Joseph Sanderson LAW '15
Mark Santangelo '91
Michael Saperstein '83
Supria Sarma '89*
David Sarno '01
Max Sauberman '17+1
Aimee Sawyer '16
John Schachter '86
Ronald Scheff '83
Emily Schenker '05
Emma Schindler '14
Sophie Schlondorff '96
Alexandra Schluntz LAW '18
Lynn Schmeidler '89
Christopher Schmidt '97
Danna Schneider '93
Sam Schoenburg '11
Rebecca Schrag Hershberg '98
Jesse Schreck '14+1*
Michael Schulman '03
Michael Schulson '12
James Schulte '07
Renee Schwalberg '87
Yaron Schwartz '11
Hannah Schwarz '16
Ann Schwentker '90
Ilana Seager '12
Vina Seelam '11
Sascha Segan '96

Elizabeth Seiver '03
Kate Selker '11
Stephanie Seller '12
Aditi Sen '05
Clare Sestanovich '13
Helen Katherine (Kate) Seward '96
Becca Shaffer '01
Raphael Shapiro '12
Benjamin Shaver '15
Christine Shaw '14*
James Shaw '60
Paul Sheehan SOM '98
Matthew Shields '10*
Ji Hye Shim '12
Matthew Shipsey '11
Andre Shomorony '13
Elizabeth Shrader '82
Jed Shugerman '96 LAW '02 GRD '08
Margaret Shultz '16
Rachel Shur LAW '17
Andrew Siegel '93
Amanda Siegel '85
Marisol Silva '02
Hannah Silverstein '94
Julian Simington '07
Stephanie Singer '85*
Naunihal Singh '92
Amalia Skilton '13*
Hannah Slater '13 EPH '14
Rebecca Kelly Slaughter '03 LAW '08
Ramond Small '82
Tessa Smith '13
Tasia Smith '12
Stephanie Smith '07 EPH '08
Alyssa Smith (Reyes) '10
Susan Smulyan '75 GRD '85
Brin Solomon '14
Michelle Solomon '96
Naiya Speight-Leggett '19*
Nikila Sri-kumar '11

Amia Srinivasan '07*
Michael Stafford '00
Brandon Stallings '13
Tom Stanley-Becker '13*
Gillian SteelFisher (Steel) '95
Kari Steeves '89
Emily Stevens '09
John Stewart '62
Nicholas Stewart
William Stone '12 LAW '17
Stephanie Strauss '11
Xiaochen Su '10
Hanna Sufrin '08
Margaret Sullivan '08
Ann Sullivan-Larson '91
Xiaoguang Sun '93
Nadia Sussman '03
Colin Sutherland '13 ARCH '19
Susan Sutton '86 ARCH '91
Jessica Suzuki '04
Hannah Swanson '10
Anthony Taglienti '01
Ashley Tallevi '09
Michael Tan '15
Zong Xuan Tan '18
Sonia Taneja '13 MED '19
Brian Tang '12
Jeremy Tanlimco '19
Michelle Telfer Faculty
Leonard Thomas '14
Tamara Thomas FES '16
Erin L. Thomas '07 GRD '13
Jacqueline Thompson '08
Wells Thorne '14
Carmen Thunem '13
David Tian '07*
Brian Tippy '02
Christopher Tokita '14
James Toma '92
Sarah Tomassi Lindman '91
Caroline Tracey '13
Rachel Trousdale '96 GRD '02
Alejandra Trujillo-Elizalde '18
Van Truong GRD '16
Levi Truong '19
Rebecca Trupin '11
Tori Truscheit '04
Christine Tsang '07* LAW '13
Amy Tsang '12*
Rain Tsong '16
Gregory Tuai '79
Laura Tunbridge '13
Dan Turcza '11
Jennifer Turner '99
Mojique Tyler '19
Amanda Tyson '14
Trevor Uhl '98*
Deborah Uman '91
Katie Unger '98
Melia Ungson '14
Katherine Urban-Mead '14 FES '16
Sofia Vaccarino Gearty '13
Elizabeth Vacco '00
Emily Van Alst '16
Jane Van Voorhis '85 SOM '89
Christopher VanLang '08
Sweyn Venderbush '18
Angelica Vera '20
Andrea Vial GRD
Adam Viera '03
Kayla Vinson '11
Ali Vivinetto '14
Helkin Von Schwaab '03
Iris Vuong '11
Joan W. '13
Katrina Waiters '91
Elisabeth Walden '09
Matthew Walker '13
Scyatta Wallace '96
Robert Wallace '78*

Sharlayne Waller '14
Lily Wang '13
Simon Warren '11
Jessica Weare '02
Jerry Wei '10
Colin Weil '88
Sarah Beth Weintraub '11
Jeremy Weiss '15
Eleanor Wertman '11
Alan Wesson '11
Kimberly Wheeler '00
Thomas White '82
Rebecca Wiegand '05
Danielle Wiggins '12
Bea Wilderman '96
Stuart Wilkie '85
Sinclair Williams '17
Jamar Williams '17
Walter Wilson '19
Hope Wilson '15
Kalindi Winfield '08
Anna James Wipfler '09
Jennifer Wishcamper '96 DIV '02
David Wishnick LAW '12
Jill Witty '98
Katherine Wolf FES '18 EPH '18
Vivien Wong '15
Garrett Wong '09 SOM '17 GRD '17
Naomi Woo '12 MUS '13
Ilyon Woo '94
Anna Wood '09
Ayanna Woods '15
Shaina Wright '10
Megan Wulff LAW '13
sharon wurtzel '86
Joyce Xi '16
Angelina Xing '17*
Justin Yap '96
Nathan Yohannes '13
Akina Younge '11

Ameer Youssef '98
Lea Yu '10
Teresa Zash '99
Wayne Zhang '18
Molly Zielenbach '10
Blake Zwerling '12

* *Member of the College Formerly
Known as Calhoun*

Petition to Include Blue-Collar Representation on the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming

Decisions on whether to rename campus buildings impact all members of the Yale community, including those of us who work in them. As employees, we play an integral role here at Yale, feeding the community and maintaining facilities. Even so, the Yale Corporation did not solicit our input when it deliberated renaming Calhoun College last year. Provided that most of us are African American and other people of color, we were deeply affected by this decision and are disappointed in Yale for ignoring our perspectives and concerns.

In June 2016, Mr. Corey Menafee, a Yale Dining employee, broke a racist window depicting slavery in Calhoun College. In doing so, Mr. Menafee expressed our collective frustration over Yale's blatant disregard for creating an inclusive environment for blue-collar workers of color. Three weeks after news broke out about this incident, President Salovey announced the creation of the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming (CEPR), tasked with determining guidelines for renaming campus buildings and spaces, including Calhoun College. Egregiously, no seats were reserved for members of the Yale Community who work in Dining, Facilities, or other non-faculty and non-administrative blue-collar roles despite our indisputable stake in CEPR's work.

Ms. Shirley A. Lawrence, a Yale Dining employee stationed in Davenport College, recognized this injustice. On September 12, following the first CEPR meeting, she wrote to the Chair of CEPR, Professor John Witt, proposing that CEPR include blue-collar representation. Professor Witt responded saying that seats had already been allocated by President Salovey, and there was nothing he could do. Ms. Lawrence then reached out to the Office of President Salovey via email on September 13th and September 21st and an in-person visit on September 21st to deliver her proposal, but as of October 7th she has not received a response.

President Salovey -- we, the undersigned blue-collar workers at Yale, demand that you open a seat for us on CEPR. Our extensive contribution to the Yale community, which, for many of us, has spanned decades, should in itself warrant us representation. The very fact that our representation on the committee was never considered is evidence of its necessity. Moreover, it is especially pertinent for us to have a voice at the table given that CEPR could profoundly impact our experiences and wellbeings while working at Yale. We urge you to take this as an opportunity to acknowledge our stake in naming deliberations once and for all. We demand a chance to contribute our important perspectives.

We, the undersigned, recommend Ms. Shirley A. Lawrence to be our representative on CEPR. Ms. Lawrence has worked at Yale for over 27 years and has an impeccable work history. She is a well-respected veteran community leader, having served as a leader of her bargaining unit and travelled nationwide to conduct leadership and organizing workshops. For this work, Ms. Lawrence received a Sojourner Truth Award from the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club and the President's Award from the NAACP. She cares deeply about the Yale community, and we feel confident in her ability to voice our concerns to CEPR.

[The petition attached more than 150 signatures from Yale employees describing themselves as blue-collar employees -- CEPR]

SENT VIA E-MAIL

October 25, 2016

The Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming
c/o John Witt, Chair
John.Witt@yale.edu

Dear Committee Members:

We are writing to you in regard to the issue of renaming buildings at Yale University.

The *Change the Name Coalition* includes community leaders, student groups, faith based leaders and non-profit organizations that have come together with one primary goal: to advocate for the renaming of Calhoun College. We are aware that the charge of your committee is to “to articulate a set of principles that can guide Yale in decisions about whether to remove a historical name from a building or other prominent structure or space on campus — principles that are enduring rather than specific to particular controversies.” Notwithstanding, we strongly urge that as part of its recommendations, the committee advocate for Yale University to rename Calhoun College.

Since the early 2000s, students at the university, especially students of color, have fought for the renaming of Calhoun College. This activism again resurfaced over the last several years, with students and some faculty engaged in sustained and courageous efforts to bring about a change in the name of the college. Despite the expectations of many, last April President Salovey announced that the university had chosen to keep the name of the college intact.

The incident involving Corey Menafee last summer raised awareness of the issues and controversy surrounding Calhoun College for city residents. Many saw his arrest and termination by the university as a grave injustice infected by racial bias. The incident also highlighted the deeply racist and hostile work environment that city residents of color who are Yale employees at Calhoun College confront on a daily basis. As a result, the fight to rename Calhoun College expanded beyond the university to the city at large. City residents from all neighborhoods and walks of life have since joined the growing movement to rename the college. We are repulsed that the university has so willfully and intentionally chosen to continue to honor and celebrate – in our city -- a white supremacist and the nation’s most ardent proponent of slavery.

Many of Yale's neighbors in New Haven are descendants of slaves. Yale does not need an intellectual exercise or administrative process in determining the bounds of renaming Calhoun College. It need only think of the recurring harm, hostile work environment, and miseducation of New Haven children that the simple existence of a shrine to Calhoun creates. Simple decency towards your neighbors and honest reflection on the evil Calhoun represented in American history are all that is necessary to end decades of delay and rename the college after someone that represents Yale's better angels and not its most infamous racist.

In April of 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King wrote his remarkable "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" to a group of well-meaning clergy members who felt that he and all African Americans should wait patiently until the process set up by the institutions of the day delivered change in Birmingham and throughout the South. Dr. King responded with the following words:

There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.

The time for change has come. No process, no matter how well meaning, should be allowed to delay it.

Sincerely,

Kica Mad on behalf of the coalition

The Change the Name Coalition

Committee on Establishing Renaming Principles
Online Submissions

August 1, 2016 12:18pm
Cynthia Nethercut, Staff

After President Salovey wrote to the community about how Yale had handled the situation with the custodian who broke the "Calhoun with slave" window (which was essentially dropping and forgiving all charges), I wrote the following message to him: "Very well handled in my humble opinion. I think that having to work or live with such images on a daily basis would be very oppressive so I have great sympathy for anyone forced to do so. Likewise, I think that having to live or work in a college called Calhoun College is oppressive and is best relegated to a museum display. I hope that someday the decision to retain the name of Calhoun College will be viewed as inconsistent with other excellent steps Yale is taking and be reversed". This remains my hope. I think that creating this Committee is absolutely the right way to proceed. We need clarity and consistency around how we approach this issue. The current process seems to be a splitting-the-baby approach devoid of ethical considerations, racial sensitivities, and deep thought (e.g. we'll get rid of "College Masters" because it is a painful reminder of slavery but we'll keep "Calhoun College" so we can be reminded of and learn from the painful history or slavery and we'll split the names of the new colleges between a black person and a white person). I am so glad, relieved and excited about this approach!

Cynthia

August 1, 2016 12:43pm
Andrew Forsyth, Student

The Committee is aware, I'm sure, of Annette Gordon-Reed's "minority report" on Harvard Law School's shield, which also references Brown's engagement with the Brown family's slaveholding.*

She maintained that the retention of HLS's shield when tied to "a historically sound interpretive narrative about it, would be the most honest and forthright way to insure that the true story of [HLS's] origins... is not lost." Likewise, I would broadly support Yale's retention of historic names and symbols, together with new efforts to explain (even critique) Yale's history.

Four further quick observations:

1. Yale has a particular opportunity at this time to model civil and thoughtful engagement of the past. One specific need is to avoid equating identity with opinion. Several black friends have spoken with me about a frustration that their voices were "co-opted" by student groups, and, indeed, faculty members, in the earlier debate on Calhoun: groups and professors expressed opinions as if they held for all African-Americans, thereby ignoring, even "silencing," different views.

2. Yale has a particularly responsibility -- with its status and endowment -- to take the long view. We need to avoid a "present-ism" whereby we pat ourselves on the back for our moral "purity," and, in doing so, ignore the complex ways in which we inherit the bad and the good from our predecessors. As a gay man, for instance, I am well aware of the remarkable societal change in attitudes to homosexuality over the last 10 years. I would think it absurd if contemporary mainstream opinion on lgbt rights was to become a test for the appropriateness or otherwise of a building's name.

3. We need to think as an institution of higher education and not a business or other entity: that is to say, our principles of renaming should not concern short-term public relations. We need to think as an a pluralistic institution where people we reasonably hold different views.

4. I'm disappointed by the name of this committee, which suggests -- in advance of its meeting, it seems -- that renaming of buildings, structures, and spaces should take place. Where was the debate or consultation about that? The name suggests an inevitability to the process that caused me to hesitate to offer my observations, and signals to the broader community that the most significant decision -- whether or not, in principle, renaming should occur -- has already been decided.

* https://today.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Shield_Committee-Different_View.pdf

August 1, 2016 12:43pm

John Fisher, Alum

I am very distressed about the seemingly excessive "PC" that is going on now at Yale. Maybe Yale will stop awarding Masters degrees. As for Bachelors degrees, many better PC options exist. Please apply some historical perspective. Times change and we should celebrate our advances; not condemn our past, but be proud that we have moved forward. The events and responses of the last year or so do not add luster to Yale.

J. Fisher Yale '65

August 1, 2016 2:42pm

Jonathon Davis, Alum

You should rename Yale since it was founded by a brutal British colonialist and slave trader named Elihu Yale. You might consider 'Uhuru University' coming from the Swahili word for freedom. Don't you care about racial sensitivity and addressing historical grievances? Show it by renaming the university itself.

August 1, 2016 2:57pm

[Anonymous], Faculty

My comments below are primarily focused on the renaming of Calhoun College (the college I "belong" to as a Yale faculty member). I do not have some grand set of principles or overarching theory to espouse but rather some observations that may help the formulation of some principles (and also hopefully lead to a renaming of Calhoun). Hopefully they are relevant for more than just the Calhoun renaming issue.

(1) Honoring via giving a name

Naming a building after a person is a way of having Yale honor that person. This is quite different from having an art exhibit or panel discussion on the prior history of Yale or on artifacts or works of art at Yale that have problematic histories or even exhibiting works of problematic art in a museum where context can be provided. The issue is the honoring and lack of context. Calhoun college is not named "Calhoun college named for the rabid racist" or "Calhoun college named so we remember and don't suppress the history of racism in the US". It is just "Calhoun college" with no further context. And it honors the man Calhoun. And that is the problem since that man espoused ideas that were horrid (and a significant number of people in the US felt they were horrid even during his lifetime). We can, and should, revisit whether certain people need to be honored any more.

(2) Keeping an eye on the rest of the country

Yale has always had the tendency to think it is "special", which can lead to it being out of sync with what goes on in the rest of the US or even in New Haven. So one has to point out some obvious facts. Confederate flags are being removed in many places: that flag is now seen as a symbol of a dark past, and showing that flag means supporting a particular mindset. Some can argue with such a viewpoint saying it is dumb, simplistic, ahistorical, suppressive of the past, not scholarly, etc. But that is where Americans are going. Hence, having a long debate on whether to rename a College named after the most famous and very ardent US defender of slavery because we want to preserve historical memory makes us seem way out of touch (at best) or closet racists (at worst). Of course, we don't have to do something just because others are doing it, but we should really watch our for the on-ramp to asininity.

(3) Naming and claim to fame

Calhoun did other things beyond defending slavery (political philosophy, studies at Yale, service as a statesman and representative, vice president, etc.) But, rightly or wrongly, his claim to fame is his defense of racism. Thomas Jefferson also had slaves and a complex relationship to slavery, but that is not his claim to fame. If someone names a building after Jefferson, she or he can sensibly claim that he or she is *primarily* honoring Jefferson's many ideas and accomplishments that were not related to racism. It is important to be clear about what one is honoring: the primary claim to fame.

(4) Comparative political power and racism

If a Yale college had been named after a famous and rabid American anti-Semite and/or Nazi, we wouldn't even be considering changing its name today: it would have changed decades ago. And yet when it comes to slavery and racism vis a vis African Americans, we still don't seem to "get it". I ask you to try to imagine the same long-winded discussions, the worrying about historical memory, the waffling, the "to rename or not to rename" show, etc. if one of our colleges was named after an American equivalent of Hitler who was also a Yalie. Anti-Semitism has a long and very dark history. And so does racism and slavery in the US. But somehow we still can't figure out our sauces for geese and gander when it comes to racism/slavery in the US.

(5) Trying to keep some degree of history memory

It would be very good to mark those places where it is decided to remove/rename an object and make a brief note about what the history. If Calhoun is renamed, I very strongly advocate putting a permanent plaque or sign at the entrance of Calhoun briefly explaining the prior College name and the history of the renaming. Similarly for the soon-to-be-relocated problematic stained glass images: describe them briefly and say which art gallery/collection now houses them. More effective methods than plaques and signs should be sought and likely exist, but this is a starting point for brainstorming.

August 1, 2016 4:34pm

Charles Kenney, Student

I think the committee should consider an election to fill the extra student spot(s). Given the proportion of students to faculty at Yale, I further think that the committee should ultimately have six students for each faculty on it (source: <http://admissions.yale.edu/majors-and-academic-programs>). I would leave it up to the faculty to decide how to allot their spots, although an election would make similar sense. Naming of colleges affects all students, and so all students should have a democratic voice as to which few will represent them. Students have taken a large part in the hard work and activism necessary to come to a place where a committee like this could be formed, and to under-represent them would be dismissive of that work, and would illegitimate the committee.

August 2, 2016 3:16am

Diksha Brahmbhat, Student

Dear Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming,

Thank you to all the members for dedicating time out of your schedules to contribute to a much-needed effort on campus. As you are already aware, the renaming of Calhoun College occupied the minds and hearts of many on campus this past year, which is why I would like to make any attempt I can to share my own thoughts, which have been influenced by many conversations with my peers.

Others may have shared and will continue to share similar opinions and observations, but I felt it necessary to send an email just the same. When I first heard of the possibility of renaming the residential college, I was skeptical of the change. My initial reaction was to view the demand for the removal of the name as an over-reaction. I thought, everyone knows John C. Calhoun was in favor of slavery, but what good will it do to change the name so many years later? Will it help us remove this country's dark past or even forget the atrocious treatment enacted toward African Americans? Surely, the student body should be able to keep all of this history in mind and continue to treat it as just that: history. With Dean Jonathan Holloway as the head of college of Calhoun, we made a bold statement of renunciation of the discrimination of the past, right?

I soon realized my view was extremely limited, however. It was informed solely by what my own heritage and experiences allowed me to be exposed to. Although I am the daughter of immigrants from India and have myself experienced instances of discrimination or alienation, I was unable to comprehend how an African-American student must feel living and breathing in a space named after a man who was adamant on extermination the humanity of her ancestors. I did not initially join those on campus who spoke out against Calhoun. If, however, the college were named after Reginald Edward Henry Dyer, the general responsible for the massacre of Indian civilians during colonial rule, I imagine I would have been on the front lines of the battle to remove signs of his legacy. With this thought exercise, I realized that the experiences, sensibilities and feelings of African Americans are being marginalized by holding on to an essentially honoring Calhoun. After all, I would like to believe it is an honor to have the living space of brilliant students named after oneself. If any one of us were to imagine a residential college named after a historical figure who committed a crime against our people, I am sure the answer would be clear.

In the end, even arguments against the erasure of history should apply only to a certain categories of landmarks, locations, etc. The homes of students should not fall under the purview of the maintenance of historical legacies, especially when they are hurtful to those utilizing the building as a safe space in which to live and engage with peers. I realize what I have shared so far do not provide you with concrete suggestions with which to formulate principles on renaming, but I hope the personal experiences and observations of faculty, alumni, students, etc. will be woven into the guidelines. Perhaps a starting point is delineating the different guidelines needed based on the purpose of the building or space. Perhaps principles of renaming should be dependent on the principles of the use of the space itself.

I felt the need to get some of these thoughts off of my chest immediately, but I look forward to participating in your efforts for public and community engagement in the way forward.

With best wishes,
Diksha Brahmhatt
Yale College Class of 2018

August 2, 2016 1:43pm
Ramamurti Shankar, Faculty

Dear colleagues:

Enclosed a letter I wrote to Justice Marshall of the Yale Corporation suggesting Gibbs's name for one of the new colleges.

Dear Justice Marshall:

I recently wrote to you nominating the name of Josiah Willard Gibbs for one of our new colleges. I am attaching a slightly revised version that corrects minor typos and adds two facts I was reminded of by Professor Martin Saunders in Chemistry: that Gibbs was the first American to receive a PhD in Engineering (also from Yale), and contributed mightily to mathematics, especially vectors as we know them now. Here then is my final version:

My name is R. Shankar and I am a professor of physics and have been at Yale since 1977. I was chair between 2002-2007.

I write to nominate the name of Josiah Willard Gibbs for one of the new colleges and the following are my arguments.

First, Gibbs is universally recognized as the greatest home grown scientist produced by our country. Please reject my nomination if any credible source contradicts this. He single handedly laid the foundations of Statistical Mechanics, which explains all of thermodynamics, an area central to physics, chemistry and biology. He is still viewed very highly by the mathematics community for his contributions, especially to vector analysis. He communicated with the giants of his time: for example James Maxwell, the father of electrodynamics, on equal terms. Maxwell admired his work so much that he built and shipped him a plaster of Paris model of Gibbs' equilibrium surface and it is now in Sloane Labs. He won the Copely medal of the Royal Society in 1903, viewed as the greatest honor before the Nobel Prize was instituted in 1900. When Einstein was asked to name a physicist whose brains he would like to pick he immediately said Willard Gibbs. Gibbs's work continues to intrigue scientists even a century after. A US postage stamp was issued in his honor in 2004, the ceremony taking place at Yale. (Honored at the same time was Richard Feynman, one of the most original physicists of our times, also homegrown.)

Second, Gibbs had a lifelong connection with Yale. His father was a professor of Sacred Languages at Yale. Gibbs was a Yale undergraduate who went to Europe on graduation to learn mathematics and physics from the masters. His Yale Ph. D in Engineering was the first awarded in the US. He returned to Yale and was appointed to the faculty.

After 7 years on the faculty he was offered a professorship at Johns Hopkins which offered him \$3000 per annum. Yale countered with \$2000 per annum. Gibbs stayed back. (Till this point neither he nor Yale had brought up the question of paying him.)

We will never have cause to worry at some future date about the personal side of this great scientist. He was viewed uniformly as a tranquil and modest man, generous with his time and ever loyal to Yale.

Is it wise to nominate a white male as we address our concerns with diversity? There are many forms of diversity. Yale is not widely viewed as a haven for science or engineering even after a billion dollars of investment. We cannot pass this opportunity to broadcast to the world that one of the greatest scientists, who also embodied all that is good in man, belonged to our community.

He is buried in our cemetery (next to his father) just a few yards from where the new colleges are sprouting up. The only building in his name, the J W Gibbs laboratory, is about to be demolished. This is a fitting manner and time to build a lasting monument to one of Yale's greatest scholars and role models.

August 2, 2016 2:10pm
Andrew Lipka, Alum/Parent

I wish to thank the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming of the opportunity to be heard on this subject. As a Yale College alumnus (1978), a recent Yale Parent (twice; '08 and '14), and an active alumni volunteer (among other things, I lead the Yale for Life program), I believe I have the current involvement and knowledge of Yale that combines with the useful remove alumni possess to create a somewhat uncommon perch from which to offer my thoughts.

The comments below were originally written (and now lightly edited for this occasion) in February, 2016, as part of the Yale for Life online discussion group; therefore they focus in part on the Calhoun issue. Nevertheless, I used the specific question to consider the issue of renaming generally, with a particular focus the temporal nature of memorial.

Any memorializing, whether it is statuary, painting, architectural, naming, or some other form, is a statement made at a particular moment. The statement is an eternal one - we wish to honor or commemorate for all time - but it is made by some entity, some group of people or their representatives, at some point.

I think it is fair to say that those who choose to memorialize do so without an expectation that their erected monument will someday be revised or eliminated, any more than an author expects a subsequent generation to alter his text. This is not to say that they expect their decision to be free from criticism, or that subsequent generations may not form a different opinion of their venerated figure, but they expect their statement to stand.

I think this is particularly true when the memorializing is done at some remove from the event or person at hand. Hitler might erect a statue to himself, or cause others to name schools and streets

after him. The conquering Allies can be seen as justified in destroying the edifice of their enemy.

[On the other hand, the still-standing structures of Auschwitz exist not as a glorification, but as a reminder of evil. So there may be value in not wiping such things from the earth. Still, that is different from honoring such things, as is done when a naming or other such memorializing occurs, and I recognize that.]

In the case of Calhoun, the naming took place at a significant remove from his day. I think there is little doubt that Yale expected the name to remain intact forever. It follows, then, that one should ask - what knowledge of Calhoun is different now from that time? And in general, what needs to be different to cause a decision to memorialize something permanently to be revisited?

I have heard advocates of renaming Calhoun speak of how they feel assaulted by living in a place that honors him. To me, this speaks to an understanding on their part (mostly students) that the continued presence of the name is an ongoing honoring of Calhoun. That is, that each day that the name remains, we are re-making the choice to honor him. And, indeed, when we engage in the sort of reasoning that asks if he is now - today - worthy of naming a College after him, we are reconsidering that choice, and if we did indeed come out of such a process by deciding to re-honor him, I could completely understand this feeling of assault. I submit, however, that it is precisely for this reason that we should not - we must not - go through that process. To do so would effectively eliminate from our world the ability to honor anything in a meaningful way.

I say that because without a sense that a people have the right to honor something or someone based on their then-current values and standards, every memorial would be subject to infinite review and revision. Or do we believe that we have now reached the end-point of wisdom, that no future generation will refine or edit our standards?

This does not mean that there are no memorials that should not be revisited. However, it does mean that they shouldn't be revisited because we have decided that we are now a moral society while the previous incarnation of ourselves were immoral, or less moral. To do so is not only arrogant but begs to have our own desires to honor thrown away as well.

So when might we revisit the decision to memorialize something? I submit that there are legitimate reasons to do so. The circumstances that occur to me that would allow, even necessitate this, are:

1. It is discovered/revealed that the process by which the original decision to honor was made was corrupt.

2. New information comes to light which, had it been known at the time of the decision to honor, would undoubtedly - or at least almost certainly - have resulted in a decision to not bestow the honor in question.

By following these standards, we would not be removing or usurping the right of memorializing from past peoples; indeed, we would be protecting them from having been defrauded or disgraced by hidden truths. An example might be Bill Cosby, the recipient of honorary degrees. If it turns out that the current examination reveals that he did commit the wrongdoings in question, I think it is clear that the honorary degrees would not have been bestowed upon him had that been known. It is therefore appropriate that they be withdrawn.

In the case of Calhoun, there is little known now as opposed to the 1930's on the subject of his life. It remains, then, to consider whether the process was corrupt. I have heard it suggested that Yale decided on this honor in an effort to obtain donations from rich Southern donors who wanted their section's history "whitewashed" (no pun intended). If true, that might be considered corruption, in the sense that the avowed reasons for honoring him at the time were not the actual motivations, but we are a long way from there. However, that might be a legitimate path of inquiry.

Aside from that, however, it is a stretch to say that the decision to honor Calhoun was a corrupt one. Indeed, Yale had a proud tradition of honoring graduates who conducted themselves honorably from both sides of the Civil War. Memorial Hall (frequently - and incorrectly - referred to as Woolsey Hall nowadays), the model as we know for Maya Lin's Vietnam Memorial, was the first memorial in the North to honor Confederate as well as Union dead. Calhoun, as reprehensible as we might find many of his views through today's lenses, was certainly a man who lived by a moral code that was consistent with the values of Yale in his day. He left his virtual deathbed to attend the Senate and have a speech delivered for him (he was too weak to speak, though not too weak to write it) which he saw as intended to preserve the Union at a time when it was arguably threatened at an unprecedented level (before the Compromise of 1850). As discerning a critic as the biographer Robert Caro speaks glowingly of his leadership in his LBJ volume "Master of the Senate."

Certainly he was an enemy of abolition, and I would despise and spit on him were he to avow such things today. Nor would I name a residential college after him. But Lincoln was an advocate - and an implementer, in experimental form - of colonization (essentially deportation of the black population to - in concept - Liberia; in practice, to Haiti), and I do not want a subsequent generation to decide that this is so despicable that the Lincoln Memorial should be renamed in disgrace.

Neither do I want the Parthenon torn down - not to mention Palmyra. Not because I endorse the ethics, slaveholding practices, or any other practice of these people, but because these are records of a past people's decision to honor something or someone for all time. I submit that they had

that right, and it is not for us to take it away from them, as long as the right was exercised in the light of day and with honor.

To summarize, then, I say that memorializing is a statement at a particular time, and maintaining that memorial is not itself a statement that we would do it again now; therefore it is not an assault on anyone today. It is a record. It is our history.

August 2, 2016 4:29pm
John Encandela, Faculty

You might also consider the approaches and principles used by the South African Government in changing a large number of names of public buildings and spaces after the fall of apartheid. See the government's Handbook on Geographic Names at:
<http://www.dac.gov.za/sites/default/files/Handbookon%20geographical%20names.pdf>

Of course, whole countries are different in kind from universities, so some of the approaches, principles and reasons for changing names will differ for each. But the format and principles by which South Africa implemented this process may be useful. If nothing else, it may be encouraging to the Yale Committee to see that such a process can be conducted for an entire country and may make you feel grateful that your task is not quite so daunting.

August 2, 2016 5:20pm
Gus Speth, Faculty/Alum

when the person's life is shown by history to be a disgrace to Yale and the larger national and/or international communities;

when the person is now seen with a high degree of certainty to have led the country and/or the world in a tragically wrong direction;

when the person was a bigoted racist.

Next, can you take on honorary degrees?

August 4, 2016 9:54pm
Murray Biggs, Faculty

I'm hardly the only one to suggest Calhoun-Douglass. The historical conjunction is appealing, and Franklin College does away with the assumption that a college must be named for a Yale alum. More broadly, in these nationally and locally divisive times, a hybrid label gestures toward inclusion. It doesn't sweep Calhoun under the rug and out of sight, but visibly engages with both his times and his legacy.

Murray Biggs

August 4, 2016 12:05pm

Clay Hollister, Other

May I suggest the renaming committee be called "The Committee For Diverse Uniformity and Thought Enforcement" working subgroup could be "The Peoples Revolutionary Front For The Rehabilitation of the Unenlightened".

August 4, 2016 1:06pm

Mary Ellen Rousseau, Faculty

I am Professor Emerita

I responded to President's last letter in July that he said that the renaming committee is better served if the committee was better served if it was limited to faculty, staff & students.

Apparently Yale has already had enough input from the New Haven community. I suggested then some outside Yale be included even on this committee. I suggested an individual who has been part of the New Haven community and tangentially related to the Yale community through being a patient at Women's Center at YNHH. She more accurately brings the New Haven experience of someone who doesn't have a job at Yale that offers good pay and benefits but she has experienced having to struggle to obtain her GED, Associate's and Bachelor's degrees and T the same time raising two children. On Janury she wifi pursue Social Work degree to give back to her community.

I would appreciate your consideration.

Mary Ellen Rousseau

Professor emerita

August 4, 2016 1:42pm

Ariana Vincent, Other

I would like to suggest that you rename one of your buildings on campus after one of your graduates, Michael Laird McIver.

Michael graduated from Yale 49 years ago. He played football and lacrosse for Yale.

Here's his URL: <http://www.rolfinghouston.tx.com/> and here's his bio.

Michael Laird McIver, Certified Advanced Rolfer, NCBTMB Nationally Approved Continuing Education Provider and Massage Therapy Instructor

Currently in 41st year of practice as a Certified Advanced Rolfer.

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Chairman, Red River Region of the Rolf Institute
1989-92

Massage Therapy Instructor, Texas, 2014

Massage Continuing Education Provider, Texas, 2014

Aston-Patterning Consultants, 1977-78
Applied Rolfing Techniques
Judith Aston, Instructor

Monterey Peninsula Nursing School, 1971-72
Anatomy, Physiology, and Chemistry

Esalen Institute Massage Therapy Staff, 1971-73

Yale University, 1963-67

The Hotchkiss School, 1959-63

August 4, 2016 6:25pm
Kathleen James-Cha, Faculty/Alum

This afternoon I opened the New York Times on my phone to find an article in which my former classmate expressed concern about the direction in which Yale is going. As someone who has taught in Ireland for a decade, the idea that alumni play any role in setting policy at any university appalls me. But I am also a visiting professor, so I feel nonetheless entitled to weigh in. Returning to Yale after more than three decades what struck me the most was the degree to which replicating privilege trumped the kind of intellectual curiosity that characterised the Yale I knew as an undergraduate as well as the four large public universities (Minnesota, Berkeley, Ruhr University Bochum, and University College Dublin) where I have taught. I was also appalled by the degree to which most of the women I encountered, whether faculty or students, felt marginalised. And I was reminded of the very real racism that I witnessed as an undergraduate and thankfully have not seen to the same degree since. I lived in Pierson, where the lower

courtyard was called the Slave Quarters, and where the undergraduate dean moved a black classmate into an isolated single room when a roommate whose father had gone to Yale and who was proud of his Confederate roots called him a nigger. The classmate quoted in today's paper never did any such thing, but he did question changing the "historic" name because he believed that these buildings, erected in the 1930s, had actually housed the slaves students brought with them to Yale.

I now teach at a university to which almost all students are admitted through an anonymous exam. It is not a perfect system, but it ensures that no one is admitted on the strength of the way in which the privileges they already possess are likely to benefit the university. Too many of the alumni who call the shots at Yale majored in beer. Those of us who were not already wealthy, and especially those of us who were female or not white, were more likely to be admitted because of our intellectual curiosity (Disclaimer: I was not; I am fourth generation, and I am certain that made the difference, although my great-uncles, my father and I have had nearly as much money as my great-grandfathers). We were also less likely to pursue careers that have not put us in a position to influence Yale through our donations, and -- if we did have money to donate -- have been more likely to give it to causes that contribute in more obvious ways to social change. The students I knew at Yale who were already most privileged were also those who were most interested in the social connections they garnered there rather than in intellectual challenges; too many of the students and faculty I encountered upon my return to New Haven took for granted that this was the core purpose of the institution. Where else would a Turkish scholar's contribution to a conference on Berlin be cut short by a dean who thinks it is time for martinis, although she has not -- unlike her male predecessors -- breached the time limit she was given? And what does it say about a university -- an institution whose very purpose is to promote critical thinking -- that those who were least interested in it as students are most able to shape its policies following their graduation?

My then fifteen year old son's favourite experience of New Haven last fall was the sharp haircut he could get at an African-American barber shop on Whalley Avenue. All I could think was that such a haircut, even if he is not himself black, increased the probability that if he were to attend Yale he would be subjected to the kind of treatment Charles Blow's son was subjected. There are many advantages to a Yale education over a degree from Berkeley or University College Dublin, but as long as the Calhoun College name endures, these will be incontrovertibly sullied by having studied with faculty and students who can stand to be associated with an institution that makes crucial decisions based on money rather than ethics. One also loses the chance to learn from all those people who simply cannot participate in such an institution.

As the descendant myself of slaveowners and the relative of prominent apologist for the Old South, I believe it is critical that we should be paying more attention to why Calhoun College received its unfortunate name in the first place; Yale was trying to attract white Christian "gentlemen" from the South in place of Jews from New York and New England. This is not something of which one should be proud either. I propose that the College be renamed by Sylvia Boone, the first African-American woman to have been tenured at Yale, or for Kingman Brewster, who had the real integrity that the current Yale leadership so clearly lack. I suspect that Boone would have been embarrassed by the association, but that Brewster would have appreciated that Yale could finally officially acknowledge that he was one of the greatest heroes

in its long history. He turned down Skull and Bones, changed admission policies, staved off riots, and upheld the university as a place where academic excellence mattered. We are all in his debt, and I personally remain as well in Boone's.

Finally, I should note that I returned to Yale, and will return this fall again at least once more, despite my many reservations, in part to honour Vincent Scully, with whom I had the enormous privilege to study, and for whom the chair I share is named. Scully, too, represents the best of Yale. He was one of the most inspirational teachers Yale or any other American university has ever known. And he came from New Haven's own working class, waited tables in commons, and was voted down for tenure by colleagues because he was not one of them. Yale should place more of its faith in its academic and less in its social traditions. It is here that its real strength lies.

August 4, 2016 6:59pm
Jim McManus, Other

It is fascinating, in the 21st century, to watch Yale grapple with its history. It is only now discovering that it's Southern alumni were apologists for slavery.

What century will it be before Yale realizes that its celebration of Northerners, eg, the Eli Whitney Program and Morse College are as problematic as Calhoun College.

Whitney invented the cotton gin, which opened the door to industrial scale slavery in America. Whitney was more interested in defending his cotton gin patent than the consequences of his invention for the slaves.

Samuel Morse wasn't just the inventor of the telegraph. He was also an outspoken nativist and the president of the Society for the Diffusion of Political Knowledge. During the U.S. Civil War, Morse's Society produced and distributed reams of anti-Lincoln and anti-Emancipation propaganda.

August 4, 2016 7:29pm
Keith Brenny, Other

I am offended by the name "Yale". The school itself is named after an active participant in the slave trade. Why would you ask a person of color to have to see this name every time he or she looked at their diploma? How offensive and insensitive can you be?

August 5, 2016 9:02am
Asa Davis, Alum

If this renaming is real, then political correctness has addled your senses

August 5, 2016 9:59am
Joseph Vining, Alum

August 5, 2016

Dear Members of the Committee,

The first letter below I sent to the Yale Daily News this summer, and the second is the letter I sent by mail to President Salovey after his decision to reaffirm the name of Calhoun College.

I appreciate the opportunity you have given alumni to respond.

June 10, 2016

With hope for reconsideration of the Calhoun decision --

Some of my own class of 1959 have taken up the thought that John C. Calhoun's name should remain on a Yale college because it can be used as a teaching tool. No one can think that and actually face what Southern slave-labor camps actually were and what white supremacist terror actually did.

Eastern Europe did not leave up statues to Stalin. When I was a freshman I joined a group in New Haven teaching English to Hungarian refugees after their 1956 uprising was crushed. I remember how admired a refugee my age was for having been among those who cut through the steel boots of one of those statues.

Germans have tried to face Germany's past and have chosen many ways to keep it in view. But they would not have left a Goebbels University alone, or suggest that naming a new university for Bonhoeffer offsets Goebbels.

As we absorb what Harvard President Drew Faust is talking about in her courageous essay last December in the New York Review of Books, and what historians are revealing about us and discovering about themselves, the German and the Eastern European experiences will be the examples relevant to what monuments we keep. The shamefulness of continuing to identify Yale students' names with Calhoun's -- he or she a "Calhoun student" -- will grow as historians do the work they are doing now at last.

There is no escaping the celebration and honoring of Calhoun we do at Yale. Each morning starts a new day of celebration. Each student walking through the College entrance arch, with its "Calhoun" in fine carving above, is told Yale honors Calhoun. Teachable moment discussions are passing things. The monument to him remains, doing the job it was intended to do. Like Birth of a Nation and Gone with the Wind, monuments work. Generations die and with them die their deep assumptions. But the honoring picks out some to keep, and teaches the new generation on a daily basis.

It is not really possible to have open discussion over time as if on neutral ground while white supremacy is so normatively embedded in the landscape.

When we became alumni, members of my Class of 1959 were asked to care particularly about Calhoun College. I myself have been complicit in our general silence about the College's name over these many years. I dearly wish future alumni could be free of the taint of association with it.

Joseph Vining, '59

Joseph Vining
Hutchins Professor of Law Emeritus
University of Michigan Law School

May 25, 2016

Dear President Salovey,

The decision to maintain a college at Yale named for Calhoun taints us all. I beg you to reconsider it.

Apartheid was one of the great issues during the middle years of the lives of my Class of 1959. Today only a small minority of Americans would think of celebrating apartheid in South Africa. The world organized against it.

The only thing worse than celebrating apartheid is celebrating Calhoun's Confederacy with its slave labor camps. Choosing Calhoun's name for a college was an act of brazen Jim Crow racism in the 1930s. The College as a whole is an explicit monument to the Confederacy, with its Common Room's stained glass window of a shackled slave kneeling to Calhoun and its dining hall's stained glass of slaves picking cotton.

There is no way to escape the celebration and honoring. Each morning starts a new day of celebration. Each student walking through the College entrance arch is told Yale honors Calhoun. In the perpetuation of slavery he was the worst of the worst. The shamefulness of continuing to identify Yale students' names with his -- a "Calhoun student" -- will grow and grow as historians do the work they are doing now at last.

Your decision and its justification, continuing to celebrate and honor but for "educational reasons," demonstrate how blind my generation and yours have been and still are to what American slavery and Jim Crow resubjugation really were.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Vining '59

August 6, 2016 8:56am
Christopher Cornish, None

How about "The Winston Smith Memorial Hall" as a suggested re-naming. Maybe call the process "re-grooving," as in "take him away for re-grooving." But seriously, how did Yale end up with such a fascist mind set? That is really what you need to set up a committee to investigate.

August 6, 2016 10:40am
Miguel Hernandez, None

Orwellian practices in higher education completely defeat the purpose of attending college. I hope you reconsider this misguided option, as history won't look kindly on this Stalinist behavior.

August 6, 2016 10:50am
David Schneider, Alum

I urge you to develop criteria that allow renaming only in the most compelling and extraordinary cases. Decisions should be guided by consensus, not the most vocal minority. Part of your educational mission should be to explore the ugly, as well as the good and bad, and you should not eliminate situations which can serve as learning experiences.

Yale should be teaching about how history has been made, not expunging it, for if we ignore parts of the past, we may be doomed to repeat them. The longer a name has been used, the higher the barrier should be to eliminating it.

August 6, 2016 2:08pm
Jonathan Miles, None

To the Members of the Committee,

It would be helpful to the Yale community and the general public if the Committee began by renaming itself. I suggest Minitrue, in honor of the Ministry of Truth, at which Winston Smith worked diligently to rewrite old newspaper articles so that the record of the past always reflected today's party line.

Please do not stop at just suggesting standards for renaming buildings. Suggest how to scour Yale's past to remove shameful stains and avoid painful tears. Some Yale alumni have rather sordid records. Employ as student

(\$15.00 per hour minimum, please) at the Yale Daily News to delete photographs or references to the likes of William F. Buckley, Jr. or either George Bush. Some future researcher should always know that the archives are safe space.

Yale's name itself might best be expunged from the record. Elihu Yale, the school's namesake, was a white male, an imperialist (Governor in Madras!), and engaged in the slave trade. The name is itself a microaggression, no?

Some of you may take offense at invocations of Orwell and "1984". It is true that your mission is not to impose any new standard by force or violence.

Indeed, your work may be best compared to the softer, "Brave New World" approach, which Aldous Huxley described in a letter to Mr. Orwell:

Within the next generation I believe that the world's rulers will discover that infant conditioning and narco-hypnosis are more efficient, as instruments of government, than clubs and prisons, and that the lust for power can be just as completely satisfied by suggesting people into loving their servitude as by flogging and kicking them into obedience.

Yale is already embarked on some infant conditioning, as Nick and Erika Christakis can attest. So carry on, bravely, into a new world at [insert name here] University.

Warm regards,
Jonathan Miles

August 6, 2016 8:41pm
Bill Brennan, Other

Probably one of the stupidest things I've read about in a decade or so. Why don't you just try and prepare students for life with all it's ups and downs. It really is comical.

August 7, 2016 9:33am
Ethan Perkins, None

Please, when considering the renaming of the monuments, art projects, etc. consider the cultural context of the time in which they were made or the figure they depict lived. We do not hold those born during the French Revolution to modern ethical standards. Our conception of acceptable or even reprehensible actions has changed so much in even the past 50 years that judging those actions that took place before our time by our current ethical standards is useful only as a part of comparative history, not as a judgement of those actions. One can generate Markus Aurelius despite many of the reprehensible actions (by today's standards) he almost certainly would have take part in, and one can and should similarly consider those in our more recent history with the same contextual filter (even if we also recognize that some of the ways in which they behaved were terrible by modern standards).

August 9, 2016 10:53am
Mike Thomas, Alum/Parent

John Calhoun, Elihu Yale and many others were slave owners or traders, or otherwise profited from slave trade. It is past time to further acknowledge Elihu Yale's interest in slave trade, accept that any part of the University named to honor anyone involved in slave trading or ownership must be changed, and change the name of Yale University, colleges, and buildings to honor the victims of slavery.

August 9, 2016 11:21am
Wally Loveless, None

How about using Lincoln-wait-no-he suspended habeas corpus and was too chicken to free the slaves in the north. How about Kennedy-wait-no he was a serial sexual predator, lied about his health when running for president, was responsible for the assassination of Diem, left the Cuban invaders w/o air cover which meant death and imprisonment to all of them. Roosevelt, that's the ticket! Wait, he interred thousands of Asians during WW II, tried to rig the supreme court, slowed our troops advance in Europe so the Soviets could rape and pillage more of Germany and THEN left eastern Europe to communist enslavement for decades which killed countless numbers. How about Teddy Roosevelt? Wait he slaughtered hundreds of defenseless animals in Africa and the western US and was gleeful in the unnecessary loss of life when he charged San Juan Hill & had an ego as big as Trump. Washington? No, he had slaves & got into the revolutionary fight because the Brits took back the land they gave him for fighting on their behalf. How about Reagan? He was in favor of forgiving illegal aliens, restored confidence in the US, was instrumental in freeing eastern Europe(along with the pope and Lech Walesa) and worked across the aisle with the dems. No, the radical left at Yale would have a cow. How about Lyndon Johnson? He had that civil rights deal, didn't he? But...he did invade a peaceful country, lie to the American people AND according to Caro's book, was within an inch of being prosecuted for corruption. Ironically, the key witness was being interviewed by a senator the day Kennedy was shot. Upon hearing of the assassination the senator promptly ended the interview, took all the evidence and that was that. That passage would surely come out and you would certainly have to re-name everything. As a former neighbor of the Clintons I know you can't name anything after them. Jefferson....no....had slaves and there was that thing with Sally. Truman, yeah, wait...he killed thousands with the A Bombs. Forget the fact that he saved hundreds of thousands of American lives AND Japanese lives as well since we had been fire bombing Japan(a single attack on Tokyo on March 10th left over 83,000 dead, over 40,000 injured and 16 sq miles of Tokyo destroyed due to the 1,665 fire bombs dropped by 279 bombers) The Dresden attack only killed an estimated 25,000. How about Ted Kennedy, lion of the senate! Wait, no, he left poor Mary Jo with about 20 minutes of air in the car when he drove her into the drink. BUT, he was smart enough to avoid ANY consequence for killing her(except, of course, that presidential bid) and then there was the "waitress sandwich" with Chris Dodd. But he did strike a cord for decency and propriety with denigrating that supreme court nominee, Clarence Thomas. Dang you guys do have a tough job. If this thing catches on with other colleges and cities and states it will play heck with google maps and the whole GPS system. We may have to go to numbers. Yale could be Number 1. Wait, Harvard might object. Or, MIT. Now there's an idea. Name institutions strictly after states! Wait, Some of those names are derived from evil men.

Or indian tribes. After reading Undaunted Courage I was shocked to read of the evil deeds that tribes would perpetrate on one another-rape, murder, thievery, kidnapping! And, what about Blue Duck in Lonesome Dove? He was bad to the bone. Hey, maybe birds....but not hawks or eagles or any other predatory bird. And certainly not after Audubon. PETA would have a fit with all the birds he killed and stuffed. I guess you could say we live in a flawed world comprised of men and women who do heroic things sometimes but do have feet of clay. And are subject to second guessing by those who come behind. The only one that I can think of that is without sin is Jesus Christ. All that I have read about him indicates that he wanted to reconcile one to another and all man to his father. Of course, people have bent his words and made statements out of ignorance. But He is the only one worthy of our unconditional adoration. I wish you well in your task. I only hope that you can focus as much effort in solving really serious education issues.

Like helping the hundreds of thousands of minority children to learn to read so that they can read to learn as they get older. The shame that one feels as they grow up but can't function in society often turns to anger or depression and drugs as they have no vision for a successful life. An ancient writer once said, "without a vision the people will perish". Unless a child can read they are doomed to a dismal and sometimes short life. One thing that is attributed to Jesus is his statement about our responsibility to children. Essentially, he said, woe be unto him who fails to protect and nurture them. Part of that involved building up the family so they can give the child the tools for success as an adult. It's much easier to come up with a new name and feel good about accomplishing a task. Dealing with people and relationships is messy and takes a lifetime commitment. Good luck with your task. Get it done and move on to more consequential issues as quickly as possible.

August 10, 2016 4:50pm
Bruce Wexler, Faculty

Re-Considering Names of Our Community Spaces

Dear Committee Members,

First please allow me to briefly introduce myself. I am a Professor of Psychiatry and author of Brain and Culture: Neurobiology, Ideology and Social Change (MIT). I have worked in second-track diplomacy with the Department of State and private entities, and consulted for the Gates Foundation, all on matters related specifically to public and symbolic space in the context of cultural difference. I welcome the fact that while our discussion began in relation to Calhoun College, it has now moved to more general principle and process. My comments will follow that same trajectory.

Judging John C. Calhoun, whether in his own context or from the perspective of ours, is not one of the questions that we must now address. We must answer two other questions. First, would we today choose to name a campus building after John C. Calhoun, described as a strident supporter of slavery on the Calhoun college website? The answer is an easy and straightforward "No." The second question is whether we are able to change the names of buildings that constitute or own public symbolic space? Can we take control over the symbolic space in which

we live, work and play? Why not (with the exception of buildings where legal contracts may prevent such changes)?

For me, the answer is yes we can and should. The authority and responsibility are ours. Accordingly, I propose that we rename one building every year. If there are 50-100 named buildings on campus, any individual building would be renamed only every 50-100 years. And the existing name could be in the mix of candidate names.

In addition to making our collective public symbolic space gradually responsive to changes in our community and world, this annual renaming would make the meaning of the names of all our buildings come alive. We teach in our classrooms about public monuments, collective memory and the power of flags, images and other symbols. How can we not apply that knowledge in our own front and backyards? How much more real and lasting some of this knowledge will be if our students were to participate in an orderly, collective reconsideration of the names of the buildings they see day after day.

How would we make such a collective decision each year? Here again the “brick and mortar” provide a learning laboratory, this time for political science and philosophy. I suggest we institute four different collective decision-making processes that we use in rotation so students experience the alternatives. Here again the process will bring alive and make immediate the concepts they read and we teach.

Let me return to the question of “why not exercise our authority in this matter?” Who might object and what might hold us back? In regard to Calhoun College we heard loud cries from alumni who do not want the name of “their” residential college changed. These objections provide more evidence of the importance of our public symbolic space, and why we should review and change these symbols periodically. The symbols that surround us become part of us. We internalize them. It is problematic when these symbols conflict with other values, or other aspects of ourselves. I understand why alums want the external symbolic space at Yale to remain consistent with the Yale that lives within them. But I also understand the impact of these symbols on class after class of students who we invite to Yale, and on those of us who work at Yale day after day and year after year.

August 19, 2016 12:58pm

Harold Hammett, Alum

To the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming:

Thank you for taking on this important task to establish enduring principles “about whether to remove a historical name from a building.” My following comments raise questions I hope you will consider.

A separate but prerequisite principle should be that the people who establish name changing principles should themselves be very very knowledgeable about the pervasive extent of slavery in the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries. I am afraid that the knowledge of some who are commenting on name change is barely Twitter deep, (mine included and I don’t use Twitter).

Before establishing principles in the abstract, consider the current controversy and evaluate to what extent the belief in racial inferiority held by John C. Calhoun (1782- 1850; Yale Class 1804) and by Benjamin Silliman Jr. still survives to today. The immediate challenge is: how could one justify removing Calhoun's name and keeping Silliman's?

The Yale education of Benjamin Silliman (1779-1864; Yale Class 1796) was paid for by his mother's selling some of her Fairfield County slaves. He later became overseer of one of her farms in Connecticut, to maximize profits from the labor of her slaves, in violation Connecticut's gradual emancipation law. Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery and the Troubled History of America's Universities* (2013) p. 134. Speaking as an officer of the American Colonization Society in 1832 at the Centre Church in New Haven, Silliman warned about the demographic threat in the increasing slave population and possible insurrections, and advocated the removal of blacks to Africa as the best possible solution. Wilder, p. 272. Silliman was a great man of science, but also a racist. His active efforts and advocacy to keep blacks separate are much more a problem today than Calhoun's advocacy of slavery.

The unavoidable question is: how much should a person have accomplished to be considered worthy of a college name, despite being a white supremacist? Calhoun was definitely that, but also more. He was Vice President under two separate Presidents, Secretary of War, Secretary of State, as well as United States Senator. In the process of being an aggressive advocate for slavery, he also wrote thoughtful commentaries about how to organize government to protect political minorities. Unworkable for the United States then and now, his ideas of a dual executive and concurrent majority formed the basis of a 1998 Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland. In contrast to his indifference to the suffering of African slaves, he opposed Andrew Jackson's forced removal of the Cherokees, and to some extent, Jackson's Indian policy generally. He envisioned civilizing Indians, ahead of his times, although below today's standards of racial equality. James H. Read, *Majority Rule versus Consensus: The political Thought of John C. Calhoun* (2009) pp 139-40; 204-206.

Also, consider Berkeley College. Bishop Berkeley not only gave Yale books, but in 1732 gave his small slave plantation in Rhode Island to Yale. Yale used the rents from it to fund Yale's first scholarships for the best students in Greek and Latin. Wilder, p. 95. If Calhoun's name is removed how can you keep the name of Berkeley, who made Yale itself a slave owner?

The great evangelist Jonathan Edwards owned slaves and even used slave labor in his mission to the Stockbridge Indians. Wilder, pp 63,123. He defended slavery on scriptural grounds. Kenneth P. Minkema, *Jonathan Edward's Defense of Slavery*, *Massachusetts Historical Review*, Vol. 4, *Race & Slavery* (2002), pp 36-40. Your assignment comes shortly after Yale named one of its new residential colleges after slave holder Benjamin Franklin. Franklin never freed any of his slaves, even though he led the Pennsylvania Abolition Society. Wilder, p. 122. Will some acceptable level of hypocrisy be one of the principles? Yale's naming a new college after another famous slave owner in the midst of the Calhoun protests seems somewhat ironic. Finally, how can you ignore the name of Elihu Yale himself. Every student who steps on the Yale campus does so as a beneficiary of that successful East India Company slave trader's crucial material support of our University.

What will you consider to be the criteria to determine how, or if, a certain amount of accomplishment or doing good compensates for practicing slavery, or advocating it? If there are such criteria, how much and what, and for whom?

Considering the old saying that actions speak louder than words, can you establish principles by which one can differentiate how having advocated slavery is, by today's standards, a different

evil from actually practicing it? How can one be considered less reprehensible today than the other?

Calhoun, Silliman and the other college names mentioned above (and more) were part of the same orderly sequence of slave-holders, who founded or supported Yale, and of its graduates who gave Yale prestige by their accomplishments during its first 150 years. What principles would justify changing one name, but not others?

When you establish the enduring principles please publish them in preliminary form, subject to possible change after inviting a 60 day period for comment.

Thank you. I look forward to your report.

Harold D. Hammett, 1960

August 25, 2016 7:08am

Peggy Myers, None

As a regular citizen, it is embarrassing to me that Yale has a building named after an avowed racist and avid supporter of slavery. I understand the argument that it is important to acknowledge history and not hide it. At the same time, there is no merit in exalting hate and torture as you do in retaining Calhoun's name on one of your buildings. You certainly would not want to continue using Hitler's name on one of your buildings just because he was a part of history. Please, Yale is bigger than this

August 26, 2016 2:39pm

Hannah Silverstein, Alum

Thank you for accepting alumni input.

I believe that Yale should change the name of Calhoun College.

Yale has many beloved traditions, but why should it be beholden to traditions that no longer serve its students, faculty, and staff—or, indeed, this country? Calhoun's name was affixed to a residential college during a moment of revisionism in America that in retrospect is shameful. It was a moment when few if any students or faculty of color existed at Yale, much less had a voice in whom their college should honor.

It is one thing to honor flawed human beings who accomplished great things, and another to honor a man like Calhoun, who stood for reprehensible ideals and whose (failed) achievements were primarily in service of those reprehensible ideals.

Changing the name in no way prevents the university from preserving the history of Calhoun's connection to Yale in more appropriate ways. But it does relieve present and future students of the burden of having their college experience affiliated so strongly with an architect of white supremacy.

August 26, 2016 2:44pm

Kermit Roosevelt, Alum

I think it's appropriate to judge historical figures by the standard of their times, but important also to ask whether they were pushing in the right direction or the wrong direction. John Calhoun plainly fails this standard. He should not be honored by Yale. There is an enormous difference between acknowledging the errors of the past and celebrating the people responsible for them. The idea that renaming Calhoun college to avoid insulting, marginalizing, and alienating current students--is whitewashing the past of Yale or the nation is absurd and frankly difficult for me to take seriously as a genuine argument against renaming.

Here is Calhoun in 1837:

"I take higher ground. I hold that in the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are brought together, the relation now existing in the slaveholding States between the two, is, instead of an evil, a good—a positive good ... I may say with truth, that in few countries so much is left to the share of the laborer, and so little exacted from him, or where there is more kind attention paid to him in sickness or infirmities of age. Compare his condition with the tenants of the poor houses in the more civilized portions of Europe—look at the sick, and the old and infirm slave, on one hand, in the midst of his family and friends, under the kind superintending care of his master and mistress, and compare it with the forlorn and wretched condition of the pauper in the poorhouse ... I hold then, that there never has yet existed a wealthy and civilized society in which one portion of the community did not, in point of fact, live on the labor of the other."

Rename the college and retain an exhibit about Calhoun if you want to acknowledge that Yale made a mistake. Keeping his name on the college is a ridiculous way of showing that. Any reasonable observer would think it means Yale still believes Calhoun worthy of honor.

August 26, 2016 6:34pm
Marsha (Wendy) Reid, Alum

Keep the name. Tell the story. Stand firm on the principle that acknowledging, revealing his story is not the same as endorsing it. That truth is essential and we must face it squarely. And, find ways to accommodate these people of color who, for their own principles's sake, will not live within Calhoun's walls.

August 30, 2016 11:09pm
James Courtright, Alum/Parent

I agree that many buildings on campus have names of Yale graduates whose contributions to Yale or the nation are likely to have been minimal. The 'name' value of Durfee or Farnum is probably not significant to the students who reside there.

Nonetheless, it would seem that the path of least resistance is to retain the name until the bldg is either demolished or architecturally significant changes are made.

I would suggest the following:

Any name (either new or retained) would be to be justified for what it stands for as well as what it does not, very much like signing statements used by US presidents.

I would submit that TD college is not named for the TD's dislike of the 'philosophe' and their arguments for equality, for his mentoring JCCalhoun to a similar line of thought nor to the many ministers to the South during his presidency. Similarly Yale presumably did not name the college 'Calhoun' for his support of slavery or secession.

In the case of Calhoun, his great desire was to enable the South to achieve financial and political parity with the North. The underpinnings of this quest required more than a half century to determine the relevant genetics associated with race and nearly a century for agricultural inventions to supplant manual harvesting of Southern crops. In his own time, slavery was the one obvious means to achieve this. In short, every modern effort should be undertaken to place and evaluate a person in his own historical time.

Ideally, a building's name - if it is not to be a trivial (e.g Oak College) should reflect the standing of an individual recognized in ones own time as well as in the immediate following generations. As an example, JW Gibbs might fill this criterion for Yale. By this criterion, Persons whose views are later discredited or disproved for reasons not known during ones lifetime (eg. Lord Kelvn's on the temperature of Earth) are problematic.

Most political figures, especially those of the 19th cent, were often embroiled in partisan issues that continue to the present age and should be avoided. Calhoun's case is complex and contains a mixture of intellectual brilliance and sectional autonomy combined with a capacious view of shared scientific advances in agronomy. His political theories deserve an unbiased reading and point to the problems and an imperfect solution arising from intense political polarization.

Nonetheless, any renaming should de emphasize the importance the name. Saybrook College vs Trumbull - which college presents to students the better distinction and honor? Street Hall vs Harkness Hall? - the list can be appended.

Name retention and revisionism: Some names might likely be justifiable with regard to historical context and partisan maligning. If revision is possible, one might proceed; if not easily accomplished, the cost in both time and resources may be too much.

A college name: Named for one as virtuous as and a moral individual without avarice, bias, blemish, dishonesty, foibles, favoritism etc. If held to these standards, would any person be so perfect? Can the faults be dismissed or considered as inaccurate? How many faults can be disregarded?

At the end of the day, does the name matter, can consistency for all categories of names be achieved, and can the name or its replacement provide for the better educational and learning environment?

submitted - J Courtright YC'63

August 31, 2016 1:19pm
Yair Minsky, Faculty

I'd like to share with you a story from my own field of research. I work in an area called Teichmuller Theory, which over the decades has played an important role in modern mathematics. Teichmuller Theory originates in the early 1940's with Oswald Teichmuller, a graduate student at Gottingen who proved the seminal theorem that got the field going. Teichmuller was an ardent young Nazi, who agitated against Jewish mathematicians and is generally agreed to have been a nasty character. His own contributions came to an end after he enlisted and was killed on the Russian front.

We continue to name the field after him. Why? It is not because we have forgotten or because we believe that he in any personal way deserves the honor. Lipman Bers, a great mathematician who was the primary force driving the field in the 1950's and 60's and was himself a refugee from the war, said it better than anyone could. In his paper "Quasiconformal Mappings and Teichmuller's Theorem" (1960) he refers to the "importance and beauty of Teichmuller's result" and explains in a footnote, quoting Plutarch, "it does not of necessity follow that, if the work delights you with its grace, the one who wrought it is worthy of your esteem".

What are the consequences? For me as a Jew, it is the opposite of oppression. I feel that the Nazis lost and we survived; that Teichmuller's execrable human legacy is in the dustbin of history, and we are here to stay. His name, on my field and in every paper I write, reminds me that we won. The legacy of the name is no secret; it is passed down among us. For young mathematicians entering the field, it teaches them simultaneously about the mistakes of the past, the principle of keeping mathematics above politics, and the danger, which shows no sign of lifting, that even smart people can descend into evil.

What can we learn from this that is relevant to the committee's charge? On the one hand there are many differences between the story of Calhoun and of Teichmuller. Two important ones are these: 1. Calhoun College is not an accomplishment of Calhoun the way Teichmuller's Theorem is of Teichmuller. 2. The Nazis were defeated and their legacy is gone, but while slavery is gone its effects are still with us.

On the other hand the experience with Teichmuller shows that it is possible to take this point of view with a troubling symbol, to incorporate it and be strengthened by it. The word "queer" has a similar story in the LGBT community. This is more about ourselves than about the name.

To lapse for a moment into pure speculation: in my opinion it could have been different with Calhoun: students could have developed a culture of obstinate pride in the idea of living in the college despite its name; could have developed ironic traditions mocking the namesake of the college while simultaneously asserting their ownership of it. Under those circumstances a change of name would have been unnecessary. Through no-one's fault, this is not how things worked out, and instead the culture has developed to view the name as a painful irritant. Under these circumstances it seems reasonable, to me, to do away with the name.

With these thoughts in mind, I hope that the Teichmuller story might provide a useful upper bound to the category of situations where renaming is appropriate.

September 1, 2016 6:54am
Edward Hon, Alum/Parent

The University should drop the name Yale, because Elihu Yale profited from the slave trade.

September 1, 2016 11:40pm
Charles Musser, Faculty/Alum

I would like to share my skepticism and concern about your endeavor. First unless I am mistaken, the principle renaming issue is about Calhoun College.

The truth of the matter is, as Corey Menafee demonstrated, that the name of Calhoun College is only one aspect of the Calhoun College problem. The broken glass window representing John C. Calhoun's slaves underscores that the college was much more than just named for Calhoun. It was--and has continued to be--a shrine to white supremacy. How can we think otherwise than that this college was designed to appeal to the sons of Southern white elites when it was constructed in the early 1930s. The signs "For Whites Only" came down in the South but remained in the less explicit signs over the doorways and on the windows of this college. It is not just a name. And it has to be changed--not just the name. Its renaming is only part of the change; and in my opinion, this change should be in dialogue and response. Yale itself--as well as many Yalies--stood up against slavery in this same period.

The Amistad case is but one instance.

Unless there is some wider calls for name changes other than by the tongue in cheek Wall Street Journal, I think that setting up guidelines for renaming is potential ill-directed and even dangerous. I would like to see this committee simply state that what needs to be changed about Calhoun College is something else--something much more. As Peter Salovey reminded us (or surprised us), Samuel Morse of Morse College had positive things to say about slavery. And if these were embedded in the walls of Morse College, that would be a big problem. The college in that act would have linked Morse to a pro-slavery. And it would be Yale's action (at least first and foremost) that would have to be undone. And removing those statements from the walls might not be enough. That, however, does not appear to be the situation. In any case, taking down the Calhoun College stain glass windows is not enough. They would remain a presence even in their removal. Likewise, even removing the name is not enough. The new name will have to challenge and engage what was removed.

Finally this is a very particular moment and situation. The reason why this shrine to white supremacy has to be undone (including renamed) is fundamentally a political fact. There will be protests, occupations, broken windows and more. And each time the university itself will suffer because its refusal is at odds with the values it claims to embrace. Calhoun College is not a museum--an historical artifact: it is a place where many African American employees are supposed to work, where students of all races and backgrounds are supposed to live, and ethically committed faculty are supposed to eat, reside, and be fellows. They can't and they won't.

Or imagine a situation that seems to me ridiculous and absurd --a la the Wall Street Journal. If potential students would not apply to Yale because of its name, if New Haven residents

refused to be employed at Yale because of its name, and if prospective faculty refused to accept positions because of its name--then the university would have to change its name. But if the situation ever got to that point--much more than its name would need to be changed. And whatever guidelines you set up now would be irrelevant.

Putting aside the Wall Street Journal and its like, please identify at least four other buildings or entities that serious people are asking to be renamed. If you can't identify them without looking silly, then consider the request for guidelines premature.

September 2, 2016 2:15pm
Shyam Sunder, Faculty

Erasing and rewriting history has been a tradition in human societies since antiquity. Arguments hardly change. We cleanse the record for presentation to the young, and to distract ourselves from inconvenient truths of our past.

Does Yale have a reason to deviate from that norm?

My answer is yes. We should dare to be different, and be willing to acknowledge and live with our past—values, events, actions, practices, and policies—even if we disagree with them today. Names of institutional units, programs, buildings, memorials and monuments reflect contemporary values and norms at the time of their creation. Since values and norms change continually, it is best to leave the names unchanged.

Erasures will only prevent future generations from knowing their past.

Sincerely,
Shyam Sunder

September 4, 2016 7:07am
Morenike Irvin, Alum

Yale has a distinguished history in dealing with society's most vexing issues. You teach us not to duck, delay, disguise the real truths. I admire the way Georgetown is facing its past, and want my alma mater to also stand up and accept its role and relationship with slavery -- an "original sin". The Calhoun name is a stain on our campus, on our reputation, and a rightable wrong.

Stand up, Yale.

September 8, 2016 8:17am
Angela Burden, Staff

Hello,

It is great that you have a place to ask people their opinions, these are the questions I would ask.

1. What are the historical actions the college namesake is known for?
2. Do they align with the message Yale would like to portray to the local community, faculty and students?
3. Are there any other historical/recent (but deceased, otherwise you never know what they could get up to in the future..) Yale alumni that have done things that portray a more positive message?
4. Is the diversity of those chosen the same as the diversity you would like to see at Yale?

It would also be nice to involve the local community when making a decision, I am not sure how though. Maybe asking local school children as well as students/faculty at Yale to vote from a list of people that you have short listed for replacement college names? That way more people (myself included) can learn about the people historical to Yale who have had a positive impact and give them some say in what goes on.

September 8, 2016 11:19am
Charles O'Malley, Student

Hello,

I applaud the University for choosing to honor an individual such as Pauli Murray, who I feel is not just an inspiring Yale alumna, but an inspiring person in and of herself.

I urge the University, through this committee, to reconsider the name "Calhoun." I have followed this debate closely for the past few years, and while I understand the public statements that the University has made regarding the naming of this college, I find these declarations insufficient. In my view, and in the view of many students, friends, and family members with whom I have discussed this issue, Yalies and otherwise, to name an entity after a person is to honor that person. Full stop. That is how the convention of naming works in our culture. To keep the name is to keep the tradition of honoring that individual.

I am a white man, and I feel unsafe on a campus that names a college after Calhoun. And I have my privilege to guard me. I cannot begin to understand how this issue makes others feel.

Sincerely,

Charles O'Malley
School of Drama

September 8, 2016 11:27am
Shana Ross, Alum

I'm delighted to see the below box - my reason for logging on is a deep dissatisfaction with the way the current administration attempts to appear open to ideas and dialogue. Being able to send messages into a black box where they are not public record seems like a recipe for emotional entrenchment rather than alumni conversation, and we have only assurances that these messages will be taken into consideration, in undefined ways. When you codify process for future naming decisions, I strongly urge you to consider methods of more authentic and transparent engagement with the community. Yes, beyond a public session or two, as well. That we consider ourselves active stakeholders can be an asset, not an inconvenience, and the vast majority of us are less concerned with outcomes than honest, thoughtful process.

September 8, 2016 11:32am
Katherine Rupp, Staff

I was touched by a conversation with a Yale professor at the School of Medicine. Initially, he said he agreed with President Salovey that the Calhoun name should remain. After much reflection, he changed his mind. This happened after the breaking of the Calhoun window. He felt enormous empathy after reading about Corey Manafee:

his life, his college education, his brief interview on a website, his reasons for acting. The more this professor read and thought, the more distressed he became.. He said, "In Germany, we learn about the evils of Nazism, but all of the "Adolf Hitler Strassen" "Adolf Hitler Gymnasium" (Gymnasium means high school, Strassen means streets) names were changed, as nobody wants to live on an Adolf Hitler street or attend a school named after Hitler. Why should students and staff be forced to be affiliated with a white supremacist? Yale's long history of entanglement with the Atlantic slave trade and with slavery can still be studied and addressed, just as in Germany we all study Nazism and the horrors of our own country's history and our responsibilities to others as a result of our history. But individuals should not be forced to live in communities named after people who committed blatant wrongs. There is a big difference when it is the name of a community of people. It is okay to remove the names of people if they are found later to have done something reprehensible. No student or staff member should be forced to live under such a shadow."

September 8, 2016 11:36am
George M. Anderson, Faculty

Although the naming issue can be considered complex, I think it can be distilled into the following simple statement and question. We name buildings after people in order to honor them. Is John Calhoun someone we wish to honor?

We rarely name buildings after dishonorable folks in order to stimulate discussion about them and about issues related to their reprehensible views.

I would also like to include below a copy of an email that I have earlier sent (July 14, 2016) to President Salovey.

Dear President Salovey,

I would like to add my voice to those that have and would encourage you to reconsider the choice to leave the Calhoun College name unchanged.

Is it not understood that if Yale had received a substantial gift from Adolf Hitler in the early 1930's and had named a college after him, that his name would have been removed within the decade? Parenthetically, the removal might not have occurred with much haste, given the prevailing anti-Semitism at Yale at the time. Given Calhoun's ardent support for slavery and his denial of the basic humanity of millions of African-Americans, the Holocaust provides in some ways useful historical parallels (as does Yale's prior disgraceful anti-Semitism).

I believe the choice to keep the Calhoun name in the name of "confronting history" is misguided, harmful, condescending and beneath Yale.

Sincerely,

George M. Anderson, Ph.D.

Senior Research Scientist

Director, Laboratory of Developmental Neurochemistry Yale Child Study Center and the
Department of Laboratory Medicine Yale University School of Medicine

September 8, 2016 11:37am

Jason Morris, Alum

I believe that the name of Calhoun College should be changed. Senator Calhoun's reputation in history is based almost entirely on his apologies for slavery and advocacy of "nullification." Even in his own day, he was infamous for arguing that slavery was a positive good.

Removing his name would not be an erasure of history. Colleges are named to honor someone, not to remember their misdeeds. If we wanted to remember Calhoun appropriately, we could change the name of the college and hang his portrait upside down over a fiery pit. That would lead to some important discussions about Yale and the history of slavery.

September 8, 2016 11:41am

Erik Engquist, Alum

I'll make this brief: Calhoun College should be renamed. It's not even a close call. Yes, I know it was decided earlier this year not to rename it. I assume the primary reason was fear of losing donations from alumni from Calhoun. But if that happens, Yale will survive. It's far more important to rename the college so it doesn't glorify the name of an apologist for slavery.

September 8, 2016 11:42am

K J, Student

We cannot erase our history but have productive conversations about it. I oppose changing Calhoun college.

September 8, 2016 11:48am

Alan Kennedy-Shaffer, Alum

John C. Calhoun's prominent place in American history centers around his support for slavery and the "right" of the states that would become the Confederacy to continue the horrid practice. As such, his name should be removed from the prominent place it holds on Calhoun College. This is an opportunity for Yale to be a leader.

September 8, 2016 11:49am

Bret Haughwout, Staff

I am disgusted with the present state of the world in regards to issues like these. A Yale employee vandalizes a historic stained glass window and we are to feel sorry for him because something about it offended him? And then he gets his job back and no criminal charges are pursued. What has the world come to?

Listen to the words of Oklahoma Wesleyan University President Everett Piper, "Our culture has actually taught our kids to be this self-absorbed and narcissistic. Any time their feelings are hurt, they are the victims" and "'Safe Spaces' contradict the goal of higher education, which should be to pursue truth, not protect only some opinions. It is the job of educators to help other pursue truth, a job that must be taken on with confidence and courage" and "We are reaping the results of a broken world view... and yes, I am trying to say to others, 'Get a backbone. Speak up. Be an educator, not an enabler.'"

There are many others that could be quoted as well, but the point has been made. The idea of giving a prize to every child that completes in a contest takes away the value of winning. Giving handouts to people takes away the value and purpose of working. The value of everything in American society is deteriorating due to this terribly disturbing and damaging trend.

What is next, rewrite history so it's not offensive to _____?

What has happened to the morals, values and ethics that we used to live by?
Just keep making these types of changes and there will soon be nothing left worth valuing.

September 8, 2016 11:51am
Brandon Blaesser, Alum

Calhoun represents 4 years of friendships and experiences. From time to time I would remember Dr J justifying the Calhoun name as a lesson to learn from the past and apply those lessons to the future. While Calhoun unfortunately has taken the first position in terms of most recognizable misdeeds/beliefs, there are many other buildings/colleges (Morse being anti-immigrant and pro-slavery as one example) that have historically unfortunate names. My primary concern is the unequal treatment and evaluation of Yale names and the slippery slope Yale can end up on if we try to erase history for the sake of sanitizing the future. If Yale truly wants to change every name that incorrectly intersected with dirty moments in history, then that is the way the conversation should be framed. But using Calhoun as a scapegoat only to appease a popular opinion is both morally inconsistent and ill-thought from a long-term perspective.

September 8, 2016 11:57am
Carroll Sahddock, Alum/Parent

If you change the name of Calhoun College, please remove me from all indicators, suggestions or intimations that I have or ever had any affiliation or relationship with "Yale". Ladies and gentlemen, do what you will, BUT DO NOT CALL IT YALE. If you do change the name of Yale, I would be happy to provide suitable suggestions for the new improved institution. Thank you for considering my view.

I not only authorize the committee to "share" my comments publicly, but encourage it to do so.

September 8, 2016 11:59am

Dennis Mishler, Alum

I don't envy your difficult task. I think regardless of any decisions it is important to recognize several things, of which it sounds like you are doing most, if not all, of these:

1. The current Yale community and various members of the community. Some will be justifiably upset by the presence of names such as "Calhoun".
2. The future Yale community and their education and world views. Any decision made today should keep in mind that the decision will also impact future Yale community members, including those not currently born. What will they want to know about Yale's past, present, and future?
3. The past reasons for why buildings were named for or after the selected individuals. Our communities of the past and the members of those communities also matter. Presumably if someone has a building or college named after him/her, they were looked at positively by the community of their time or some subsequent community.

I'm fairly agnostic on a lot of these issues, but I am also a fairly privileged white male who was born into an upper middle class family. So...yeah. I could see how people would rather not have slave owner's or slavery defenders grace our buildings and colleges, I could also see how people would be offended if a renowned wife beater or rapist had their name associated with the university. This being said, we celebrate numerous founding fathers not because they owned slaves, but because they wrote about freedom and liberty and inspired future generations to go further in extending these freedoms and liberties to other members of our national or international community.

Cheers

Dennis

September 8, 2016 12:00pm

Yang Yang, Faculty

History should not be ignored and the name should be kept to remind us of the history.

September 8, 2016 12:02pm

Alison Hoppin Murchison, Alum/Parent

I support renaming of Calhoun College. The University is a living institution, and must reflect the meaning and values of names in the current context. The history of the name can be acknowledged in a prominent installation within the college, permitting appropriate recognition of the mixed history of the name and prompting ongoing dialog.

September 8, 2016 12:05pm

Ann Clarke, Alum

My late father Van Dorn Hooker, U New Mexico University Architect Emeritus, completed a manuscript in collaboration with the University Archives (which he initiated), in which he documented the many memorials, rooms, buildings, benches, etc. named for people (famous and less so) because he noticed many people did not know why the person was memorialized or the memorials were being destroyed, moved or lost. He interviewed families and wrote vignettes and added photos. The parade of humanity and its diversity across the campus over just some 100+ yrs was amazing! I am working with the UNM Press to get it printed as the the first in what ideally should be a perpetual series, but in the meantime I recommend Yale's naming committee do something similar if a similar compedium has not already been started.

September 8, 2016 12:07pm

Agatha Andrews, Alum/Parent

You have a very difficult job, not only coming up with principles of naming and renaming that will stand the test of time, but also worrying about stirring up a hornet's nest no matter what decisions are reached. In your decisions, I hope you will weigh consideration of future students and alums over consideration of the disgruntlement of current older alums. On the other hand, I hope you will simply use your best judgment of rightness, truth, and fairness rather than pandering to strong feelings of any constituency.

As you develop your principles, I hope you will include consideration of the particular role a building plays in the life of the school and the students.

For example, the name of a residential college may be subject to different considerations than the name of a classroom building.

In addition to filling out this form, I am sending a letter to Dr. Salovey that I drafted last June but never sent. Here is an excerpt, relevant to the Calhoun decision:

Dear Dr. Salovey,

I am writing to you as an alum (Saybrook '80) and the mother of a Yale sophomore (Saybrook '19). Like many other alums, I have followed the reporting of the controversies on campus over the past year with great interest. And like other parents of current students, I have been fascinated to hear the story from "inside." I have felt much sympathy for students, faculty, and administrators wrestling with these difficult issues of history, legacy, power, inclusion, and free speech.

I have followed the debates about renaming Calhoun over the past couple of years, and I read your explanation of your decision with interest and respect for the the care and thought you put into this choice. However, my gut feeling is that this choice is unlikely to stand, and probably should not stand.

The problem is not only the truly heinous role that Calhoun played in our history. If Calhoun's name were on a library or a classroom building, I agree that retaining it could serve a purpose as a provocation for thoughtful debate of the legacy of slavery and racism in our country. However, having a residential college named Calhoun is asking students to happily shout "Calhoun!" at

competitions, to hug Calhoun to their hearts, to weave Calhoun into their identities as Yale students, and that is too much to ask of any student now, especially but not only students of color.

Last year, my daughter was thrilled beyond words with her acceptance to Yale, and then so excited to become a Saybrugian like her mother before her. There may be "legacy" freshmen entering this fall who will be happy to join Calhoun with its current name. But they will be far far outnumbered by freshmen (and their parents) dismayed and angry at their assignment to this college with its shameful name. I know that if I were in their place, I would feel sick at heart and worried about my child's start at college.

I hope that you will reconsider your decision about Calhoun College, and that you will do so as promptly as possible to spare the students more heartache and distraction and to spare the university more negative attention. I believe you must look toward the future on this one.

Yours,

Agatha Andrews
Class of 1980
Parent of current sophomore

September 8, 2016 12:09pm
Jim Stein, Alum

The mere fact that this committee is even in existence is yet another sign of the decline of Western civilization. Thomas Jefferson kept slaves, should we rename the Jefferson Memorial?

September 8, 2016 12:14pm
Elizabeth Devereaux, Alum

If you begin to rename, at what point can you stop? certainly not before you change the name of Yale.

I shudder at renaming, in the same way I shudder at airbrushing people out of documentary photographs. Please, teach history, so that we can learn from it, and don't take shortcuts like renaming, or you lose history altogether.

September 8, 2016 12:18pm
Douglas Williamson, Alum

It is deeply troubling to have a prestigious educational institution such as Yale dabbling in revisionist history - an anti-intellectual exercise if ever there was one. As many have pointed out, the first ten or so presidents of the U. S. (other than the Adamses, and prominently including Washington, Madison and Jefferson) either owned slaves or were of slave-owning families. If we're not prepared to air-brush these presidents (many of them our formative heroes) from U. S. history, why pick on the likes of John Calhoun (Yale), Woodrow Wilson (Princeton), et al? The honest and honorable course of action for your committee is to disband.

September 8, 2016 12:19pm
Charles Duell, Alum

History can be broadened and expanded through ongoing research, but can not simply be changed or obliterated on a whim.

Let's add black history to white history without replacing the latter. If names and statues of slaveholders were summarily removed, Washington and Jefferson and most of Yale's founders would be undone. For any such action, the historical context must be understood. Calhoun College should never be renamed, anymore than should Yale University.... Please be careful!

September 8, 2016 12:21pm
Joshua Chapman, Alum

I do not see any reason that Yale should continue to celebrate alumni or donors whose core values are contrary to those of the university today. This is not a denial of history. We can all freely acknowledge that Calhoun and friends went to Yale, and that the political ideologies they championed were quite acceptable on campus in their day; indeed, we must do so. But that doesn't have anything to do with continuing the honor and veneration implicit in named structures. To fail to recognize the university's most egregious historical errors by persisting in this continuation is a much greater denial of history, and a distortion of the university's mission.

September 8, 2016 12:23pm
John Crowley, Faculty

I have an odd (but earnestly meant) suggestion about Calhoun College. I believe that across America and certainly in South Carolina are many persons of color carrying the name Calhoun, many of whom are likely and perhaps provably descended from white members of the Calhoun family and perhaps even (historians may know the likelihood or unlikelihood) from John C. himself.

Even a few bearers of that name who were slaves would now have many relatives living. What if such persons, all those who have either in papers or in family tradition a claim to connection to the Calhoun family to which John C. belonged, could be invited to New Haven and welcomed at Yale for a ceremony claiming or rededicating Calhoun College for their own? Since such families -- however John C. regarded them -- were integral to his success as farmer and legislator, they have at least as good -- and in some ways better -- claim on the heritage.

Finding and highlighting and inviting such persons could be a wonderful adventure for students as well as a unique way of upending a conflicted and unhappy history.

My suggestion may be naive (I'm white) but I think it might be considered.

September 8, 2016 12:24pm
Liz Jones, Alum

Yale is being presented with a tremendous opportunity to position itself as a true pioneer in this world. Renaming is a matter of moving to create a world and a society that, for the first time ever, actually reflects the people in it. It is about moving to create a Yale that reflects the people Yale wants to be a part of it -- faculty, staff, and students alike. If Yale takes these steps, it will show others that they too can take those steps. Yale can be the institution that sparks this change.

I was a nontraditional, full-scholarship undergraduate. I am also part of a few minorities that, up until recently, would never have been allowed access to the Ivy League world. Now, as an alum, I find myself embarrassed to see the institution that I love passing up this opportunity to send a powerful message to the world about who it chooses to reflect. All the time I find myself having to defend Yale, saying that Yale "is not what you think, it's not just a bunch of white straight privileged men, there are people like me there." But then people will send me an article or post about this stuff, and I have no response.

I wish I could say, proudly, that Yale affirms the existence of folks that have, for so long, contributed to this beautiful world without reaping any recognition or benefits. People like me. But I really can't make that claim anymore.

Lastly, I will say that I have heard nothing but good press about Georgetown's recent policies to right the wrongs of its past connections with slavery. I have also heard a whole lot of bad press about Yale's recent situation with Mr. Menafee. I know you are beholden to your donors and your public image, but renaming doesn't have to be a bad move for Yale. This could really shape the national conversation and, once and for all, send a lot of the kinds of messages Yale is constantly trying to convey. The messages I was told when an admissions officer encouraged me to apply. The messages I shared when I was was a Yale ambassador. The messages that I, in my personal life, struggle to convey every day.

September 8, 2016 12:26pm
David Scales, Alum

Adjudicating the actions of the past according to the moral standards of the present is a slippery slope. Slavery was a horrible institution, but not illegal at the time Calhoun was advocating for it. If we remove his name, then we should also remove the name of many of Yale's other white men who participated in similarly exploitative practices in other industries to make their fortunes.

But that does not obviate the need to rename some structures, so some guidelines are in order. First, is it later discovered that there is high probability that the person committed a crime? I specifically think of Villanova and the naming of their DuPont Arena.

Second, for future naming, it might be worth considering our practice of naming buildings after people. Why can't we name them after other lofty goals that our students and society should aspire to rather than individual people who are always flawed. What about a library named after the 13th Amendment or the Civil Rights Act?

Third, if we are going to name buildings after people, rather than support hagiographic whitewashes of an individual's history that often come with that "honor", we should scrutinize

their shortcomings and teach about them - JFK and Clinton's womanizing, Calhoun's relationship with slavery, Payne Whitney's relationship with tobacco, Harkness's relationship with Standard Oil and their rapacious practices, or what almost every individual who is honored with a building on Yale's campus did to marginalize people from the LGBTQI community in their lifetimes.

September 8, 2016 12:28pm
Jeremy Avins, Alum

I strongly support the renaming of Calhoun College as soon as possible. I completely agree with the idea, expressed by some opponents of renaming, that Yale should not attempt to hide from its history; I just don't see that as mutually exclusive with renaming Calhoun. Why not change the college's name and also have a permanent exhibit about John Calhoun in the college as a way of keeping the history fresh while explaining the name change?

More generally, I encourage the committee to develop transparent principles for what circumstances would prompt renaming, so that each decision does not have to be ad hoc.

Thank you for your efforts, and for the opportunity to provide input.

September 8, 2016 12:28pm
Gerard Doyle, Alum

I oppose any and all name changing on the Yale campus. There will be no end to such demands, up to and including the name of our university, and all concerned know this to be true. Please stop feeding this cottage industry.

September 8, 2016 12:29pm
Mary Powers, Staff

I truly believe we should not be re-naming anything. The buildings along with their names are Historic to Yale. We cannot erase history, just remember it and go forth without making the same mistakes.

September 8, 2016 12:31pm
Kendra Dawsey, Alum

I'm not sure what the hesitation is to change the name, a name that was only cemented in the 1930's. I thought Yale had enough money to change the names on the plaques.

September 8, 2016 12:33pm
Dr. Douglas Lewis, Faculty/Alum

I'm still holding out for a consideration of Yale's very distinguished alumnus, NOAH WEBSTER. (Not necessarily as a replacement for John C. Calhoun -- since I regard the present name of Calhoun College to be perfectly acceptable, as well as sanctioned by almost 75 years of use -- but for any other opportunity the Committee may discover.)

DL (BA 1960, MA 1963, Ph.D 1967; assistant in instruction 1962-64)

September 8, 2016 12:36pm
Lynn Harrison, Alum

I am frankly disheartened by Yale's seeming willingness to rewrite its own history in very selective ways. Shall we rename Calhoun College for its namesake's involvement in and defense of slavery in a different era but not consider renaming the University as a whole for Elihu Yale's similar stance on that issue? I also believe that Yale is duplicitous in feigning to support diversity as a concept when in fact they are confining "diversity" to a difference in racial and ethnic backgrounds, but only as long as the individuals share the same liberal worldview. Is there a voice of conservative thought among faculty members at Yale? Do they dare speak? We would do well to remember the words of Nobel laureate Richard Feynman: It is better to have questions that cannot be answered than answers that cannot be questioned.

September 8, 2016 12:45pm
William Yedor, Alum

Don't rename anything. If you do you must rename everything up to and including the name of the University. Where will you draw the line? How egregious did the behavior need to be? Exactly what is Yale trying to accomplish by sanitizing itself? Can the institution ever be pure enough to say your work is done? Erasing history is a very troubling idea. Rather than running away from Yale's past the University should learn from it.

September 8, 2016 12:46pm
Dwight Arn, Alum/Parent

The naming of a building or monument is a conscious act by one generation to speak to following generations. It is a memorial so that what was or is important to that generation is not forgotten or consigned to oblivion.

Deletion of memories should not be the act of an educated community. In fact, deletion of memories is the quintessential mark of a barbaric culture.

One need only consider what happened after the barbarian invasions of late antiquity or, more recently, in the mass renaming projects of the USSR.

What was once a pleasant or benign memory can, over time, become painful or be subject to reevaluation. That process of reevaluation is an important part of development of a civilized society. Our views of aspects of Imperial Roman or Czarist Russia have certainly developed. But to obliterate the name of Caesar or St Petersburg would be to flee the past not to engage with it.

Similarly, our views of Americans like Jefferson, Washington, Columbus, Woodrow Wilson and (yes) Calhoun have changed and will continue to change. But we should not forget them by obliterating their names.

September 8, 2016 12:48pm
David Johnson, Student

I think we should leave names as they are. It's history. Each generation finds people in prior ages with whom they fiercely disagree. Changing names every 30 years makes no sense. When I was in Berkeley College, I did not become a follower of Berkeley's philosophy, nor did anyone believe I became so. By renaming, you suggest that every building must be named for a person with whom this generation agrees. That gives to the name a current political and philosophical force it does not deserve.

Next, we'll be pulling down statues and removing paintings from museums. Relax. It's just past history.

September 8, 2016 12:55pm
Joseph Ruby, Alum

I was disappointed in the decision not to rename Calhoun College.

If a person has done something significant and positive that is worthy of commemoration, it is appropriate to honor that person by naming a building or institution for them. This is so even if that person has a stain on their character that must be acknowledged and discussed.

But if a person's life was dedicated to the advancement of a doctrine or institution that, in our eyes, was destructive of human dignity and worth, then that person should not be honored, no matter what heights of office or acclaim they reached during their lifetime.

For example, although George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were slaveholders, we do not honor them for their slaveholding. But if you do not honor Calhoun for his tireless work on behalf of slavery, then there is nothing to honor.

Calhoun is known today only for his racism, his denial of human rights, his opposition to democracy. The argument that honoring his name is a positive way to "confront, teach, and learn from history" is worse than unpersuasive. It is disingenuous. I hope to see more honesty in the administration's future discussions of this issue.

September 8, 2016 12:59pm
Jeanne Devine, Alum

I suggest that a "do no harm" standard be applied, first and foremost, to any current or prospective name for a structure or a space on the Yale campus.

Does the name currently applied, or proposed, at least do no harm to those persons with whom it will interact? Beyond that, does the name represent a life consistent with the values of Yale?

Does its bearer represent a commitment to building up the human community, increasing knowledge, striving for justice? Does its bearer have a significant connection with Yale?

I realize that the decision, incorrect in my view, has already been made to retain the name of Calhoun College. I also realize that the decisions regarding the names of the two new residential

colleges have been made, although the bearers had at best tangential relationships to Yale. Future decisions, however, can and should be guided by principles that are clear, consistent and public.

September 8, 2016 12:59pm

Tim Vlamis, Alum

Yale is a special place with a deep history.

Students and faculty are particularly well-suited to engage in thoughtful and deep exploration of our history. I strongly believe that we should resist the temptation to actively change the names of buildings, institutions, organizations, and places that are based on an individual person. We are all complex and multi-faceted. People are not symbols, people are not one-dimensional, people are not wholly good or wholly bad. Changing symbols is not the same as changing a name associated with a person. If a student doesn't want to attend Calhoun College, then he or she can apply to transfer to a different residential college (or indeed a different university). Leave these as personal, individual decisions. There literally is no end to the evaluation of historic persons and the judgement of their "worth" at a specific moment in time.

September 8, 2016 1:06pm

James W. Hartman, Alum

Do NOT rename Calhoun, other colleges, or the established buildings we know and love. What a namesake did or did not do centuries ago is completely irrelevant to the purpose and symbolism of the structures.

Furthermore, the ease with which Yale has allowed themselves to be cornered into action by a loud and overly sensitive minority opinion is appalling. I ceased alumni contributions this year following Yale's shameful capitulation to the ethnic houses following the highly publicized and embarrassing acts of disrespect and intimidation in the Silliman courtyard. The response to fork over millions in additional funding to serve such a closed community and reward the acts was shameful. I've spoken to many fellow alumns and not a single person agrees with the University's position. I predict continued alumni withdrawal from the community if Yale can't find the backbone to put its foot down and say enough is enough.

September 8, 2016 1:09pm

YouYoung Kang, Alum

If the committee decides to change the name of Calhoun College (and there are principled reasons to decide either way, I think), the first guiding principle should be that the name has a solid connection to Yale. As an alumna of Yale College and of the University of Pennsylvania (as a graduate student), I was frankly embarrassed for Yale by the naming of one of the colleges after Benjamin Franklin, who has no connection to Yale but ample connections to U Penn.

September 8, 2016 1:11pm
Maude Wahlman, Alum

Yes, rename some colleges after people like Benjamin Franklin.

September 8, 2016 1:12pm
Terry Rothermel '60, Alum

I was not proud when I learned in the YAM how Yale chose Franklin as the name for one of the new colleges. It has the appearance of a name that was selected by money. That should not have been, and should not be the case. Yale should not appear to be bought, at least in naming of our residential colleges. There are so many Yale-degreed notables that could have been so honored.

September 8, 2016 1:24pm
George Garvin, Alum

All of the residential colleges should be renamed, including Calhoun, even though its name was recently reaffirmed, and the new one just named after a civil rights leader few have heard of (no disrespect intended). All of the colleges should be renamed to represent the highest ideals Yale stands for. Preference should be given to the greatest scholars in Yale's history or to graduates of Yale who have had a historic, universally recognized, important and positive influence on humanity (which would rule out Calhoun). Essentially, the purpose of renaming all of the colleges should be to create a new legacy embodying values worth remembering and emulating.

September 8, 2016 1:37pm
Tom Neagle, Alum

This whole thing is a sure focus on the trivial. Are there no important issues facing the world today that Yale is qualified to address? So we have to waste time on revising the past?

The joke in the Soviet Union was that the future was always certain according to Marxian deterministic theory; but the past kept changing according to who was now out of favor. View any of the airbrushed pictures of the Politburo for confirmation.

Tom Neagle PC 70

September 8, 2016 1:41pm
John Carsley, Alum

While in favour of renaming offensive historical bits of Yale (whether bricks and mortar or programmes), I worry about where to draw the line. There is no doubt that Calhoun must go, but what about less egregious examples - philanthropic industrialist greenhouse gas producers;

venerable 19th century Protestant clerics with less than ecumenical pronouncements? The list might be very long.

So my advice would be to tread softly, but firmly. And, for Heaven's sake, rename Calhoun. How much better to be able to say, "This is Whatever College, formerly known as Calhoun. Even though it took Yale over 75 years to realize it was an awful choice, we finally did the right thing", rather than, "This is Calhoun College. Yes, he was a prominent supporter of America's lasting abomination, but he seemed great at the time and keeping his name there reminds us never to forget that slavery was bad". Reply: "Oh, that's interesting, I guess the College was named before the Civil War, then..."

September 8, 2016 1:41pm
Kate Kaynak, Alum

Having something at Yale named for a person is an honor, and we should honor people whose accomplishments and contributions reflect our highest principles. Individuals like John Calhoun do not reflect those principles--while he was a towering figure in early 19th century politics, his pro-slavery advocacy (and ownership of slaves) does not reflect well on Yale.

September 8, 2016 1:47pm
Jeffrey Lewis, Alum

I am strongly in favor of renaming Calhoun College. Not only was Calhoun a slaveowner, but he was an ardent apologist for and advocate of slavery. This is not a free speech issue, nor should it be an issue of preserving traditions. Traditions must change in light of new understandings of history.

September 8, 2016 1:51pm
Joel Laseter II, Alum

As a student in the 1970s I was not generally aware of the biographies of the people for whom buildings were named. Starting with my first experiences of the campus I accepted the building names without further reflection, and felt I was joining a community of people, past and present, with shared experiences of these wonderful, precious places. With renaming there is a danger of severing some of the ties that bind us together as a community. Please be cautious. Thank you,

September 8, 2016 1:52pm
Diana Fisher Gomberg, Alum

This is a tough project you have taken on. I know it can be a slippery slope since no-one (alive or historic) is perfect, but I do think we have a responsibility to avoid honoring people who have done major harm to others. A Yale honor carries a lot of weight in the world.

It's embarrassing when my alma mater honors someone who worked to make the world a worse, not better, place. It must be even harder for current students.

September 8, 2016 1:55pm

Brian Walsh, Alum

Concentrate on naming for the present and the future and on people who have a distinguished connection to Yale. To begin renaming buildings would be an unending precedent. One can find some fault in every person for whom a building is named, which leads to deciding how bad is bad and denying those remarkable accomplishments of those originally chosen.

September 8, 2016 2:19pm

William Dial, Alum

When I was a student at Yale (Yale College class of 1961) I scarcely knew nor cared about the persons for whom the buildings on campus were named, including the residential colleges such as my own, Davenport. For me they were just identifying nomenclature to allow me and others to distinguish one from the others. As a history major, I became aware that the events and personages of the past are constantly re-evaluated by reference to the current social and political culture, sometimes disguised as "newly discovered facts" through scholarly research. For me, this does not give sufficient cause to re-name buildings or places. No doubt one could find, or interpret, something in Elihu Yale's past that would be considered unseemly or offensive today, but should the name of the University, which has come to be recognized and stand today for much, much more than an honor to an obscure early 18th century person, be changed because some find it offensive to their present day sense of right or justice? I would hate to think so.

Please do not start changing the identification of buildings and places because of some current perception of displeasure with the person or event for whom they were named. There is benefit in a long enduring identification of a place, institution or building which provided the foundation upon which many of us built our lives and beliefs. We cannot change what happened in the past, but as has oft been said, to deny it is to condemn us to repeat it.

September 8, 2016 2:54pm

James Carney, Alum

I am opposed to renaming. Yale should not follow the example of the Soviet Politburo in the 1950's and doctor up photographs to remove the pictures of those no longer in power. One cannot change the reality of history or rewrite it to fit our current view of political correctness. The fact that a large number of the founding fathers owned slaves or participated in the slave trade should not lead us to condemn them.

We may say today that their views were wrong but we would not be here today but for their efforts. Even Lincoln stated that if could save the Union by freeing not one slave, he would not free one slave. In addition, we must remember, contrary to Roots, that most Africans who were

sent to the Americas were enslaved not by whites but by other black Africans. If one is concerned about the impact of racism in American society, one should use one's energy to try to deal with present problems rather than engaging in dramatic but meaningless efforts at demonology.

September 8, 2016 2:58pm
Chris Molnar, Alum

Let the existing names stand, and get back to the core business of education.

September 8, 2016 3:09pm
Kristjiana Gong, Alum

I'm glad that a process is being put into place, and wish it had been done sooner. It's time to give ourselves a chance to rename Calhoun. As a teacher of history who believes in teaching resistance and nuance, who encourages her students to ask, "What drives a good person to do a bad thing?" I find Calhoun a particularly unusual character in American history about whom very little good can be said. Our historic willingness to laud his actions in the name of racism is, frankly, embarrassing. There are so many other heroes we can celebrate. I'm proud of the students who have so openly, bravely, and passionately fought for the need for our institution to make change. They make me proud to be a Yalie.

September 8, 2016 3:20pm
John Ringwald, Alum

I am in favor of renaming Calhoun College. I never found the argument compelling that the name was being retained to stimulate discussion. If it is renamed it's likely that discussion will continue for some considerable time. I realize that many ship's captains derived considerable income from the slave trade, but there are few people in the civil war era who argued more fervently for slavery (and more disparagingly toward African Americans) than Calhoun.

September 8, 2016 3:22pm
Jocelyn Van Tuyl, Alum

Rename Calhoun College now, and remove all visual and verbal glorifications of slavery.

September 8, 2016 3:29pm
Kate Kressmann-Kehoe, Alum

New name for Master = fine

Keeping the Calhoun name - NO. Maybe for a lecture hall because history did after all happen, But not for people's home. And certainly don't put art about the horrors of slavery in what is in effect their living room.

New college names -- Not great. You couldn't find people who had really strong personal connections to Yale? Like having gone or taught there?

September 8, 2016 3:33pm

Thomas Midney, Alum

Don't rename anything. From your own statement: "Woodward Report, which codified the university's commitment to freedom of speech, and the university's mission statement, which commits Yale to the free exchange of ideas in a diverse community."

It appalls me that while diversity is encouraged, diversity of "interpretation and impression" is not. Enough of the PC-fanaticism - leave well enough alone. Diversity of opinion naturally can lead to offensiveness - but that's what we're supposed to be about!

September 8, 2016 3:33pm

Edward Collins, Alum

In my opinion it is utter nonsense to rename historic sites and buildings at Yale. Here is why. History is history. It has nothing to do with the social norms of today or tomorrow. It has to do with the glorious past of the institution, and the foot prints of those long gone who helped to make it what it is today. It is our history, and let no one cast it asunder.
Edward Collins, Yale College 1974

September 8, 2016 3:34pm

J. Scott Etheridge, Alum

In most cases I believe Yale institutions should retain their historical names. At the same time, Yale should encourage discourse on the positive and negative aspects of the historical figures whose names have been affixed to these institutions. In the case of residential colleges, students should have the option of requesting reassignment if uncomfortable with the history of the person for whom a particular college was named.

September 8, 2016 3:35pm

Jesus Tirado, Alum

I, for one, am for the name change. Being a part of the Calhoun means a lot to me and defined my Yale Experience. It still does.

But I cannot say that there still isn't an awkwardness there or an uncomfortableness that comes from the name Calhoun. I don't wear my Calhoun gear in public, or at least rarely, and I can't

say that I'll miss the name if it leaves. While I am against the erasing of history, I am also against marginalizing people for being different. If we, the collective we as Yalies, are going to combat the ways our institution benefited from slavery, then we need to remove the name of a Slaveowner and fierce defender of slavery, from one of most venerated and valued parts of our community, the residential college system. I hope that we can find a name that promotes the continued fight for social justice and to defeat these legacies. Thank you

September 8, 2016 3:39pm
Betsy Mendelsohn, Alum/Staff

If a Yale place name changes in response to the needs of Yale's community, the former name should be remembered publicly, such as with a plaque or history exhibit in the lobby. I think the lived history of a place should be honored in its heartfelt changes as well as in the elements that endure unchanged.

September 8, 2016 3:42pm
Evelyn Rojas, Alum

Should be based on positive people who did some great things, like Nobel Peace prize winners, and/or anyone who endured great struggles, like Anne Frank, Helen Keller or Harriet Tubman.

September 8, 2016 3:50pm
[Anonymous], Alum

I can understand why people find some of the views of some noteworthy historical figures odious. As a gay man I accept that the great majority of such figures would have viewed me with repulsion or pity. But I believe that they must be seen in the context of their time - as we also will be judged by posterity - and their 'failure' in one or several ways should not detract from their achievements. We must be compassionate enough to understand that.
Don't rename Calhoun.

September 8, 2016 3:52pm
Leslie Reese, Alum

Yale needs an overriding theme that covers both naming and renaming. It should begin with requiring a significant Yale connection, more than just having passed through or provided money or material things. That certainly was evident in the naming of the first 12 colleges, but not in the two new ones. Franklin will always be publicly linked to Penn, not Yale, and Murray, while hitting a lot of current liberal checkpoints and doing good work, was and will remain unknown to the public and most prospective students. As to renaming, the issues of the Calhoun controversy are truly unique, and any other such issue will have to be decided on its own merits. I don't know how a policy can define how such decisions are to be made, with competing valid interests of history, tradition, and evolving societal standards, but an acknowledgement of the validity of

those interests in all things Yale is a good idea. As an old alum (Class of '66), I also have to express concern that students, who are temporary participants, not rule the day in preference to the more permanent factions: faculty, administration, alumni, supporters and the massive tradition that is Yale. Listening to students and giving serious consideration to their thoughts and feelings is important, but at some point, they need to be reminded that while they are certainly part of Yale, they don't own it and they are easily replaced if they should choose to leave. (Try to say it more respectfully than I just did.)

September 8, 2016 4:00pm
Warwick Cairns, Alum

Many universities and colleges are the product of a history that might not necessarily conform to today's attitudes and norms. Many Oxford and Cambridge colleges, for example, were founded by or named after people who would be subject to widespread condemnation if they lived in the 21st Century. Henry VIII was a monstrous tyrant who was personally responsible for the deaths of more than one of his wives. But it is a mistake to try to erase history: it makes us poorer and less connected to the broad sweep of human progress and development. Unless we remember where we came from it is hard to see how far we have come. So I would strongly advise Yale NOT to rename Calhoun College.

September 8, 2016 4:07pm
Karen Kantor, Alum

Rename Calhoun, as you should have long ago....

September 8, 2016 4:10pm
Jacqueline Austin, Alum

I urge you not to rename anything at Yale. Renaming is 1984-ish revisionism. It is, worse, ridiculous, as every name carries a huge freight of unwelcome history. Instead, use names and terms as a springboard for public discussion. Have the courage and presence to transform unwelcome names into names our community can be proud of, as any parent of a newborn given a freighted historical name learns to do. In addition, to make a whole campus into a "safe space" is not workable. If my child (or I, for that matter) were to leave a college or work arena WITHOUT having experienced and transformed uncomfortable and controversial situations, that college would not have done its job. We must create safe spaces within a broader context of humanism and transformational pedagogy. Thanks.

September 8, 2016 4:16pm
Henry Dick, Alum

Renaming buildings, monuments, colleges, schools is a misguided and reprehensible attempt to rewrite history. Judging figures in the past by the standards of today is a sad offshoot of political

correctness that is both inappropriate and unfair. Moreover it presents a continuously moving target as what is societally approved of changes. For example, relative to Eli Yale, Mr Calhoun was a bit player in the history of slavery.

The former was both a slave holder and a slave trader, and by today's standards a reprehensible character. By the standards of his day, he was a good man who established a great college. So this committee, before renaming anything else, should consider the option, benefits and negatives of first renaming the university.

September 8, 2016 4:17pm
Judith Forrest, Alum

I don't generally support renaming in order to obliterate something objectionable. So many building, street, and city names memorialize or contain vestiges of outmoded or even despicable social constructs. Instead of renaming, we should use them as an opportunity to raise consciousness about how much has changed. Let their names remain, as a reminder of the outrages of a bygone world. Our cities, our world, even each individual's consciousness and personality is better perceived as onion layers that evolve with an evolving world. Let us instead focus on building new things and naming them for current and more enlightened leaders, values, and outlooks.

September 8, 2016 4:37pm
James Hadler, Faculty/Alum/Parent

I am an alumnus of the YSPH (MPH 1982) and the Yale sMedical School (Infectious Disease fellowship 1980 and Preventive Medicine residency 1982), currently Clinical Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health and a parent (Peter Hadler, Yale College, 1999). While I haven't formulated a principle, here is my thinking on whether to rename Calhoun College (both my son and I thought the previous decision was "lame").

I'm sharing it in hopes it will contribute to your formulation of principles for renaming. As I understand it, Calhoun College was named many decades after Calhoun's death purely to recognize his achievements, particularly his being a Vice-President of the nation. There was no family money involved. Assuming this is true, it seems to me he has had his day in the sun. Few people other than Yale alumni who lived in Calhoun College recognize the name and many other Yale alumni with no ties or endorsement of slavery have achieved more distinguished honor since then. Since there are only so many named colleges to go around, there should be a process to periodically routinely review and consider renaming Yale colleges to honor more recent, recognizable and, by current standards, more deserving Yale alumni or other notable figures in history. In this particular case, I think we don't need to prolong the reminders about our country's past with slavery – those reminders are as prominent as they ever have been. I think Yale can come up with much more constructive name for what is currently Calhoun College.

September 8, 2016 4:56pm
Laura Couchman, Alum

Thanks for inviting input. Regarding renaming Yale University because of concerns with Elihu Yale's behavior: I don't personally favor making a change. However, I do think it's a good idea for the renaming committee to publicize the details of the story of how Yale University came to be named for Elihu Yale. The tale I heard was that an enterprising fundraiser from the embryonic CT-based school traveled overseas to raise money, and the bourgeois Eli Yale gave some funds and books in exchange for "naming rights". I might be wrong, but Elihu didn't seem to want or need to influence Yale's values or policies, for good or for ill, and Yale has in no way grown up in Elihu's image. Yale University made Elihu Yale famous, not the reverse; and I think Yale's long and positive track record with the name far outweighs Eli's brief and (perhaps) negative one.

If I'm wrong about this story, more publicity should correct it; and if I'm right, more publicity should make it more widely known and perhaps generate greater sympathy for having Yale keep its well known and, frankly, priceless name and brand.

September 8, 2016 4:57pm

Bill Kenney, Alum

No person noted in history has ever been perfect. To dig around and reevaluate past decisions about naming buildings and institutions simply raises the entropy of the universe, and subjects the university to the fads of the times. Are going to start with asking whether Yale is an appropriate name? I would suggest that asking the Admissions Dept. to find a way to accept more resilient students would be a better start.

William F. Kenney 1955

September 8, 2016 4:59pm

Samuel Spivy, Alum

Don't rename anything.

Don't rewrite history.

Don't burn the books in the library whose ideas or authors you don't like (I don't like Karl Marx but Das Kapital should not be banned).

Don't censor speech by faculty, students, or alumni (e.g., the former Master of Silliman College and his wife).

Don't allow anyone to destroy University property without consequences (it was wrong to continue to employ the man who wrecked the stained glass window in Calhoun because he didn't like what he saw).

Get back to being a great institution of learning.

With kind regards,

Samuel O.J. Spivy
B.A., 1973

September 8, 2016 5:06pm
Ben Johnston, Alum

Now that the Josiah Willard Gibbs Laboratory is slated for demolition, it would be the perfect time to name something besides a lab after him. He received the first doctorate in engineering in the nation, was the peer of Maxwell and Boltzmann, and was called the greatest mind in American history by Einstein. As the most unassuming of men he would likely care little about such honors, but it is wrong that only a handful of chemistry students have any idea of his genius. Yale was very slow to appreciate him in life; he worked for nothing for a decade, and was offered \$2000 a year only after Johns Hopkins offered him \$3000. It is long past time for the university to make amends, and it is absurd for Yale not to make the most public claim possible to one of its most brilliant and loyal graduates.

September 8, 2016 5:22pm
Lorraine Wang, Alum

I believe, of course, by renaming on a case-by-case basis. However, in the case of Calhoun College, there is very little to recommend keeping the name. John Calhoun basically stood for all that is diametrically opposed to current Yale values. Whatever sentimental or traditional value the name has is vastly outweighed by this.

September 8, 2016 5:27pm
Leah Greenwald, Alum

While I do not wish to "erase history", I feel that if, after due consideration and conversation, there is a meaningful consensus that the person for whom a Yale building or program is named has been strongly associated, by his/her own acts and expressed beliefs, with positions and events that have grievously harmed multitudes of people *without GREATER countervailing positions and events that have greatly helped multitudes*, that renaming the building or program is appropriate WHILE retaining a clear and publicly-visible record, on the same building or as part of the same program's mission, of the original honoree, his/her accomplishments, the reason for the original naming and the reason for the re-naming. Re-naming should not be undertaken lightly or frequently, but should indeed be a possibility and privilege for the Yale community.

September 8, 2016 5:30pm
Dorothy Potter Snyder, Alum

The first principle is that there should be no building or college at Yale named for someone who was connected with oppression of black people, native people or indeed any people. Now this is difficult in that women were oppressed by all men until really quite recently, so it is without a doubt that all the buildings named for men at Yale who lived before a certain are oppressors. Because native americans, women and black people in particular have a mixed relationship with Yale, historically, it should be on these groups that renaming is focused. I am grateful that you are reaching out to all stakeholders. Frankly, I would like to see a building named after the Clintons, but that's just me. Mostly particularly our next President, the first woman President of the nation. Or maybe others feel the same? My best regards.

September 8, 2016 5:37pm
Walter Guterbock, Alum

Frankly, I think this is a huge waste of time.

Elihu Yale dealt in slaves. Are you going to rename the University? Slavery and the cotton economy were financed by New York bankers. George Washington owned slaves and they built Mount Vernon. Are we to change the name of the nation's capital and the state of Washington? Rename Jefferson City, Missouri? Are we going to pull down every statue of Robert E. Lee? Slavery and our history of mistreatment of Native Americans, African Americans, Japanese Americans, Irish immigrants, German immigrants during WW1, the dropping of the atomic bomb, dropping napalm on Viet Nam and Cambodia, these are all parts of our history. If we are to improve, as we have, we need to be able to discuss these misdeeds openly and be reminded of their part in our past along with all the positive parts of the American experience. Renaming Calhoun college or renaming Rhodes scholarships does nothing to increase people's consciousness or improve their conduct. Focus on teaching the history and creating opportunities for all, not making meaningless and expensive gestures.

September 8, 2016 5:38pm
Gerald Fields, Alum

Where do you stop. ? Scour for named awards going back 100 years to see if they measure up to today's standards?

September 8, 2016 5:56pm
David Storrs, Alum/Parent

I believe that Yale's foundation includes its traditions, building names, songs, and alumni memories, and the more those are changed the more Yale loses its foundation and history in favor of short-termism and being au courant with today's values and preferences. Yes, John Calhoun owned slaves and eagerly supported slavery, but at the time the college was named he was a respected name in American history. George Washington owned slaves; Thomas Jefferson owned 331 slaves and cheated many people; the Vanderbilt family monopolized railroads, etc. I would be very slow to erase our history and very quick to use it as a source of at-hand teaching

about American history and both its glories and blemishes. To wipe Calhoun out of our history is akin to Russia's efforts to remove leaders no longer in favor from their history, for Japan to deny the Rape of Nanking, or Texas's clumsy attempts to change the history the present in state-mandated textbooks. We are better than that.

September 8, 2016 6:00pm
Elizabeth Stringer, Alum

When I heard the explanation for keeping the name Calhoun College, I could see the rationale. However, the more I imagined how I might feel as a student of color living there every day, the more I disagreed with the decision. Changing the name prevents no one from teaching about Calhoun's history. The proposed sculpture for the courtyard would still invite people to reflect on the college's history. The history will be erased only if people let it.

September 8, 2016 6:12pm
Harry C. Blaney III, Alum

The one name that is vital and paramount for Yale to use in its naming effort is The Rev. Doctor Martin Luther King Jr.

Rev. King has done more for equal rights and social justice than just about any person in the 20th century in this country and had a major global impact for social justice and against racial discrimination. He Founded the non-violent SCLC the point organization against racial hate and for integration. He received the Nobel Peace Prize, and an honorary doctor's degree from Yale University. I am proud to say I witness the event on the Old Campus. He is thus an honored member of our "community." People with far less accomplishments and indeed some record of support of slavery like Calhoun, still have a college name for them and it is a disgrace to our University when other institutions have acted to remove the symbols and names of those who advocated for slavery and profited from the slave trade.

Nothing less than a college name in my opinion is required. Why does Yale stand apart in this moral issue when its claim to its existence is its Christian heritage, to impartial learning, its profession of non-discrimination, equality of all humanity, and not least justice and its search for truth? We should not let the bigoted and prejudices of the past and those that still hold these discriminatory views determine and undermine our great University from doing both the right and moral act at this time and this place?

We teach that our University seeks those who come out of Yale will serve to better the country, our world, and the University. We were all asked to use our given knowledge for justice and truth and for us to act with courage for the greater good rather than for hate and bigotry.

September 8, 2016 6:13pm
Isidro Beccar Varela, Parent

“Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about. All democrats object to men being disqualified by the accident of birth; tradition objects to their being disqualified by the accident of death. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man’s opinion, even if he is our groom; tradition asks us not to neglect a good man’s opinion, even if he is our father.” GK Chesterton In my opinion the oligarchy in this case is not even composed of all people that just happens to be alive. It is composed of a well-financed network of organizations that are trying to reshape our society. They take George Orwell’s 1984 not as a cautionary tell but as a “how to” manual, as Glenn Reynolds likes to say, and by trying to control the past they want to own the future.

On moving day, I met a few protestors that were expressing their manufactured outrage about the latest spat on Calhoun College’s name. I asked one of the participants why he was focusing on Calhoun and not on Elihu Yale who was also a slave owner (and trader). I doubt that he had thought of that before and after a pause he responded “we will deal with it one at a time”. Thank him for his honesty...! More candid than the propagandists organizing this circus. If we start judging people by their worst aspects I think that no one, dead or alive, historic or present would be worthy of admiration...! If we start to put litmus tests on our historical figures, why stop as slave ownership?

There are plenty of other defects that maybe we could start investigating about them. And we will end up having a “Comite de Sante Public” a la Robespierre which will certainly end up eating the ones that started it.

Progressives live in a crystal house as a lot of their heroes have unsavory pasts. They would do much better not to start throwing rocks...

September 8, 2016 6:18pm
Harold Friedman, Alum

As someone with excellent judgment once said: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." The people for whom the Colleges are named surely did something worthwhile in order to have a College named after him/her. If s/he also did something that is considered bad by today's standards, that is not a reason to change the name of the College. History cannot be changed unless it is a legend and not factual. George Washington is still to be well regarded for what he did for the United States even though he was a slave holder. Thomas Jefferson should also be well regarded even though he had children out of wedlock with a slave. Can you be certain that all of the people who are lobbying for changing the names of some of the Colleges have never done anything for which they should be ashamed? Even saints make mistakes. Why are you wasting your time with this nonsense?

I also find it foolish to change "Housemaster" or "Master of the College" to "Head of College". It is my recollection that the "Head" of a naval vessel is the toilet. Why does anyone think that the Master of a College should become a toilet joke?

September 8, 2016 6:44pm

Robert Ray, Alum

the clear explanation of the gap of understanding the naming of the college, with the committee [named] and the date of the event [the years that follow this event, with probably zero opposition should reveal the university's thinking at the era of diversity and educational mission. It would be a historical monument to state an error has sullied all that has given Yale a world-wide station

September 8, 2016 6:46pm

John Edelson, Alum

I think current naming decisions are vital to making a statement about Yale's broad mission and community. So far, there are 12 colleges named after American White Men. Straight men. I think the opportunity in adding two new colleges is to create some balance by being inclusive of representatives of other communities important to Yale.

It is from this viewpoint that I was disappointed, very disappointed, to hear that Ben Franklin has been selected for one of the colleges. He is another white American man who hardly needs more attention. Let's show that we can be agile and, now that we've thought harder about it, make a change. There are so many candidates and representatives of communities worthy of recognition that Ben Franklin just feels like a huge wasted opportunity. How about some foreign (Chinese?) distinguished alumni? Maybe some browns or blacks or females or gays but please, not a 13th white heterosexual American man.

How do I feel about renaming colleges? I think there are two possibilities for Calhoun:

- Keep the name but put up some plaques that explain who Calhoun was and what he stood for including an admission that Yale selected him despite what he represents. The plaque should explain that his name is kept as a reminder to us of how short we have fallen in pursuit of our ideals and how fallible and weak we are. It is a tribute to our evolution as an institution including the admission that we have some history that we are not proud of but which we would like apologize for. But not bury.
- Drop his name and pick someone that we have far more respect for. Again, put up a plaque detailing the history.

John Edelson, Proud Son of Pierson, Yale '80

September 8, 2016 7:13pm

Joel Fetzer, Alum

I strongly support the renaming of Calhoun College and was very surprised to discover its name when I first enrolled at Yale in 1990. Calhoun's actions and views were shameful, and he does not deserve to be so honored. One should note that I speak as someone whose home state is Virginia, the site of the former Confederate capital of Richmond.

Joel S. Fetzer, grad '96
Professor of Political Science
Pepperdine University
(affiliation for identification only; I do not speak on behalf of my university)

September 8, 2016 7:25am
Howard Dean, Faculty/Alum/Parent

I am currently a Senior Fellow at Jackson and I am in my seventh year of teaching mostly undergraduates in various seminars one term each year.

I am not an expert on naming, and I grant that this is a complicated problem both ethically and politically.

I do know a lot about Yale students, and about politics in general.

My advice is simple. At some point you are going to have to re name Calhoun College. It will continue to be seen as the right thing to do by the majority of both applicants and undergraduates. Ultimately we will lose some well qualified students, and perhaps potential faculty if we don't make these kinds of changes.

In politics if you have a losing position, the best thing to do is cut your losses early and move on. To drag things out won't change the ultimate outcome, but it is likely to harm the University more than the outrage among some older Alumni and the threat of withholding of donations which has accompanied every significant decision Yale has had to make in my 50 year association with the place, such as eliminating quotas for Jews, recruiting people of color, co-education. and so on. History marches on, standards change, and Yale must adapt or suffer.

I hope this is helpful. Sincerely, Howard Dan

September 8, 2016 7:32pm
Emily Jones, Alum

Naming matters in at least two ways: (a) expressing the institution's values; and (b) positively or negatively triggering associations for students, faculty, staff and alumni. Yale is an educational institution. We should not expect that a young person -- eighteen years old, stepping away from home for the first time -- will make herself comfortable and settle in for her best learning in a residence named to honor someone who made his place in American history by vigorously advocating for the enslavement of her ancestors -- or, for that matter, anyone else's ancestors. Calhoun should be rigorously discussed in the classroom; Calhoun should not be honored with a residential college in his name. This is not about avoiding painful history; this is about putting that painful history in its correct place within the life of the Yale community.

September 8, 2016 7:55pm
Anne Kemper, Alum

First, do no harm--if a name is actively distressing a group because of a history of oppression, why keep it? Prioritize the concerns of current students over those of alums.

September 8, 2016 8:58am

Anne Fadiman, Faculty

I do not believe that changing a name need be an erasure of history. In fact, I suggest that if any name is changed, its history be preserved in perpetuity with a permanent exhibit installed in a conspicuous location within the college or building in question. For instance, if the name of Calhoun College is changed (as I believe it should), an exhibit at the front of the dining hall could include a portrait of Calhoun; a framed bio of Calhoun that mentions both his achievements and his involvement in slavery and white supremacy; and a framed collection of documents--articles from the YDN, the New York Times, and conservative periodicals, along with letters pro and con the name change--that would allow future generations to understand the history of the controversy and to read the views of both sides. The curation of the exhibit could be a fascinating project in which a couple of Calhoun undergraduates might collaborate with a historian and a Yale University Art Gallery staff member. Eventually there might be several such exhibits in different Yale buildings whose names had been changed. The bottom line would be that Yale could both do the right thing (by changing the most egregious names) and take a stand against the suppression of free speech (by publicly preserving multiple viewpoints).

September 8, 2016 9:33pm

Jack Lattimore, Student

I sincerely believe that the fundamental principle to consider when naming (or renaming) any space associated with the college or university (but especially a residential college which is at the center of students' lives) is that of equitability and inclusiveness. All students ought to feel comfortable and at home in their living environments and be able to say, with pride, that they are a member of their residential college (or in a more general sense that they feel comfortable in whatever building in which they happen to be). Buildings, but especially residential colleges, named after discriminatory figures such as Calhoun severely jeopardize this sense of security for a large contingent of the student population. Hence, I believe that, overall, we must shift our paradigm to value these principles as the most valuable when we consider naming and renaming, for, ultimately, that leads to the kind of diverse and tolerant campus culture which we most desire.

September 8, 2016 10:19pm

Jack Lerner, Alum

Here are a few principles to address naming complaints – Names should honor individuals who have made a special academic contribution or a non-academic contribution intending to improve Yale as an institution, or the local, national or world community of people. People so honored,

though of a particular time, place and culture, have made an individual achievement worthy of recognition.

If the challenge to a specially named building or other entity is on account of conduct of the individual that now would be viewed as reasonably offensive to some in the Yale community or otherwise worthy of criticism, consider:

What was the original rationale for which the individual was selected for a naming honor? Is the offensive conduct now giving rise to the challenge connected essentially to that rationale?

Is the offensive conduct reasonably defensible to others in the community or now generally recognized as contrary to fundamental principles for coexistence at Yale?

Was that offensive conduct merely typical of many in the time, place and culture in which that individual lived, or particular to the individual?

Does renaming have collateral economic consequences for the University? Will the failure to rename engender continued protest or, in contrast, would retaining the name promote the brand or other economic value for Yale?

Here are a couple of examples applying these principles:

Should the name Calhoun be dropped from Calhoun College?

The challenge to Calhoun is that he is now most remembered as the leader of the pro-slavery faction in Congress before the Civil War and he was the intellectual father of the principle of “states rights,” which has been a key tool for those opposing civil rights movements in modern times. Many in the Yale community today would reasonably view this conduct as offensive or at least, not worthy of honor. Others might defend the naming selection because, while a fierce advocate of slavery, he fought to avoid a civil war and to maintain a Union that permitted diverse views among the states on slavery, working with anti-slavery proponents in Congress in forging the Missouri Compromise and later the Compromise of 1850. He was a Yale graduate who contributed greatly to the defeat of the British in the War of 1812, and continued to dedicate the rest of his life to public service, achieving many high national offices, including Vice President. Moreover, in earlier times, the Yale community included a great number of people with pro-slavery sympathies.

Based on the principles above, the name probably should not be retained, though to many today it would still be a close question. Calhoun was himself a member of the Yale community, achieved fame and high office in his time in part because he was a man who successfully worked with those who disagreed with him to seek peaceful solutions to problems that proved after his death to be intractable. His pro-slavery views were commonplace for people in his time, place and culture. Nevertheless, Calhoun’s position on slavery is now so repugnant that it is fairly

viewed as contrary to fundamental principles for coexistence at Yale, and is so closely connected to the core of his achievements (dedicated service in national government) that, while he is worthy of study, he is not worthy of a naming honor in our times. In contrast, Princeton might more readily argue that the contributions for which Woodrow Wilson is worthy of honor, principally his promotion of an early system of world peace and justice, warrant retaining his name for a school of international affairs, despite his execution of Democratic party policies of promoting segregation in the military and bias against minorities in federal hiring, practices that now are highly offensive to most people in academic communities.

Should the name Yale be dropped from Yale College?

Elihu Yale was a shipping merchant who almost surely profited from the slave trade. His gift of a small library of books was central to the early success of the College and the selections were so powerful that they caused great intellectual debate and division among the faculty. I gather that the rationale for renaming the College in honor of Yale might have been a clear quid pro quo for a second gift that Yale later provided.

Based on the principles above, the name probably should be retained. The gift itself exemplifies the importance of philanthropic support for academic inquiry and if the rationale for naming at the time did include a quid pro quo, that promise probably should continue to be honored. While many people did object to slavery at Yale's time and in his place and culture, many also did not. Philanthropists before Yale and since have wealth that is in part raised from dirty sources. Provided that wealth is not entirely or largely the product of now-offensive conduct and the gift itself is not directly the product of the conduct (contrast the problem Georgetown now has), Universities and other charitable organizations do not, and probably are not required, to look too hard behind every wealthy donor's money. And the name "Yale" is the brand.

September 8, 2016 10:44pm

David Zwerdling, Alum

Not only should prominent apologists for slavery, or significant allies of slavery, not be honored by having buildings named after them, but much more needs to be done. Yale should study what other prominent universities have already done/ are planning to do about this, including Brown and Georgetown Universities. This is a pivotal moment in US History, brought about by #Black Lives Matter and others, the growing realization across the USA of how racism remains a terrible problem for our country, and very soon, the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington. Let Yale seize this moment!

September 8, 2016 11:37pm

Dahlia Rudavsky, Alum

I was very disappointed both at the decision to retain the name of Calhoun College, and the rationale for doing so. The name is an embarrassment. If I were assigned to that college,

especially given the recent publicity about Calhoun's advocacy of slavery, I'd be ashamed to admit the affiliation, and would likely seek to transfer.

History can be recognized with information about the former name. It's time to honor the unsung heroes and heroines of our history. Traditions should change when they're based on discredited ideas (and worse).

September 9, 2016 12:11am

Brian Earp, Student/Alum

I was an undergraduate in Calhoun, graduating in 2010. I am now in the graduate school pursuing a PhD in philosophy and psychology. I was ambivalent about the name "Calhoun" while I was an undergraduate, but figured it wasn't a big deal either way. If anything, I thought that those who were criticizing it were making a mountain out of a molehill. It wasn't until I received President Salovey's email to the Yale community explaining why Calhoun would not undergo a name-change that I flipped my position: his reasoning just didn't add up, as I saw it, which made me realize just how tenuous the arguments in favor of keeping the name really were/are. First (as I recall) he said that the name "Master" could be changed to "Head" because the former was only introduced in the 1930s, and so was not a part of the deep history of Yale. But (a) the case for changing "Master" to "Head" was relatively weak, since we still issue "Masters" degrees, which has the very same linguistic root, as I understand it (with no connection to slavery), and (b) the name "Calhoun" -- for which there is a much stronger *prima facie* case for a change, due to the odiousness of Calhoun's views, and their distinctiveness even as judged against the moral standards of his time -- was introduced at the very same time, with the erection of the residential colleges, and so is similarly not a part of the deep history of Yale. Why was "not a part of the deep history of Yale" an adequate reason for changing "Master" (which is *prima facie* less problematic) but not "Calhoun" (which came about at the same time, and is *prima facie* much more problematic)? Second, the naming of Murray College was framed as a great honor: it was emphasized what a wonderful woman Murray was, and how we should all be happy and proud to associate her name with one of the new colleges. But if having one's name on a college is such an honor, then surely keeping Calhoun's name on Calhoun College is a way of honoring him, too. But no, we were told, in the case of Calhoun, it's more about being careful not to whitewash history -- we need to be reminded of the stains of the past, lest we repeat them (etc.) -- which was the one argument that I thought initially was pretty solid for why we should not re-name Calhoun (after all, fascists and the like are the ones who like to tear down statues and re-write history in light of changeable contemporary mores, and we don't want to be like that). But there's a problem here, too. And that is that President Salovey said he was also commissioning an art piece/ educational display to help out with the not-forgetting-about-history part ... in which case ... why not just leave it at that? If the point is that we should remember the sins of the past, then, sure, go ahead, build some kind of educational exhibit about the man Calhoun and put it right in the middle of the courtyard if you like -- but don't leave the name on the college, unless you want, not only for us to be confronted with Calhoun and his views, and learn from them, etc., but **also** to honor him (because, recall, naming Murray

College after Murray was a way of honoring her). Basically, make up your mind. Two final thoughts: (1) I might not have reached this conclusion had Franklin College been named after someone other than (yet) another white, slave-owning, colonial male (who had, moreover, only the thinnest of ties with Yale, and who is already famous and honored and recognized enough); there was a great opportunity to name TWO colleges after persons from underrepresented groups, to right the balance just a little bit more, but by bowing to the white, male donor's white, male role model, Yale was left with just one moving variable -- Murray College -- to create better representation of marginalized groups, and so made what almost seems like a tokenizing decision: picking a black, queer, woman, like checking so many boxes to make up for choosing Franklin when all of the other colleges were already named after white men ... That said, if it had to be done, to honor the donor's request, without whose generosity, presumably, the colleges would not have been possible, then all the more reason to consider Calhoun a loose variable again, and replace the worst of the worst in terms of marginalizing figures with someone who would make people who don't happen to look like me feel a little more welcome on this campus. And (2) I find that I am not convinced by the "slippery slope" argument, which holds that, if we re-name Calhoun College, we'll have to re-name all the other colleges, and even the University itself, since most of those guys owned slaves as well (or did other things that we now see as morally highly objectionable). The reason for this is that Calhoun, *even by the standards of his day* was inordinately supportive of the institution of slavery, and, today, is mostly remembered for just that fact (which shapes the symbolic meaning of having his name on the college); whereas, someone like Franklin -- and Yale -- is mostly remembered for a great many other things apart from his owning slaves, and his support for the institution seems to have been much less extreme (as judged by the standards of his day).

It is true that future generations may judge us harshly for things we take for granted -- for example, I think it's not unlikely that anyone who eats meat today will be seen by our grandchildren as someone who participated in a systematized holocaust of sentient beings -- but (a) if they do us the favor of judging us by the norms of our own time, then perhaps they will be forgiving; and (b) someone who not only eats meat, but goes around giving speeches about the positive good of slaughtering animals, and later gets remembered primarily for that very thing (I am trying to analogize Calhoun) might well deserve to be judged extra harshly by future generations, and they might well decide that, while it is good to remember and be reminded of his views and actions (to learn from history, etc.), they needn't put his name in a place of honor, since - by their lights - his views and actions are no longer rightly seen as honorable, on balance (even accounting for "baseline" moral standards of today).

September 9, 2016 1:41am

Ben Artin, Student

I have two comments. First: I am glad that we are trying to find with a systematized solution to this problem, rather than a series of ad-hoc approaches.

Second, my position on naming of buildings (and many other things that aren't within the scope of this committee) is that we must try hard to avoid path-dependent decision making. My reason

for this is that path-dependent decision making results in outcomes that are based on assumptions that were valid in the past, not those that are valid today or will be valid in the future.

To that end, the way I would answer "should we remove name X from a building" is to first ask "would we name a new building after X today?". If the answer is "no, we wouldn't", then we should remove their name.

If name X was representative of values of the past, but is not representative of the values of today, then it belongs in a historical exhibit (where it can be put in its propose historical context) — but we should not be forced to carry out that historical exhibit in our names, our homes, and our daily lives.

September 9, 2016 2:23am
Hsiao-chiung Li, Alum

We should not rename because a historical figure does not conform to modern standards of morality or otherwise becomes unfashionable. As an academic institution, we value discussion and debate.

All the people whose names are on buildings and whatever they may have stood for are proper subjects of debate. We should never give the impression that people or concepts depicted are somehow exempt from criticism, or that any person or idea has only one facet, or that they exist in isolation. Even if having a name adorn a building is an honor, it can be viewed in the historical context and as a fact in the history of Yale. They all are topics for discussion and study. If any student feels offended by seeing a name or a portrait, that is a learning and teaching moment. Students should be encouraged to engage such learning opportunities, and not be protected from them through erasure of challenging stimuli. In sum, I support the decision to stay with the Calhoun College name, and endorse the reasoning given. I hope you hold firm on this and any similar calls to rename. It is perhaps the normal role of students to rebel and demand. It behooves the adults in charge to uphold and advance the educational and intellectual mission of the university.

September 9, 2016 7:03am
Nacole Palmer, Student

That the committee should chose to rename Calhoun college is, to me, a no-brainer. Last year's decision not to change the name was purportedly made to honor the history of the college--warts and all. However, I feel that this was at best misguided and at worst cowardly.

The history of the college and its namesake and the lessons we can and should learn from both would not be erased by a changed name. It will forever be the college formerly known as Calhoun; and that will beg the question, "why?" And that will engender the conversations that we and future generations can and should have about the painful history. But let it be known that Yale University stands on the right side of history in acknowledging and addressing its injustices

so that they can be undone and not re-done to every student lucky enough to walk its hallowed halls.

September 9, 2016 9:01am

Denise Meyer, Staff

The university should be genuine when it solicits input from the community. To solicit names on the colleges, etc... when they are predetermined does more harm than good.

September 9, 2016 9:46am

Jackie Horne, Alum

I feel strongly that names that link Yale to slave owners create a hostile environment for African American students on campus. Studies on stereotype threat show that when reminded of negative stereotypes of a group, members of that group perform less well than they would if such stereotypes were not encountered. Being reminded every time they walk into a building named for past slave owners, especially those who loudly espoused harmful stereotypes of enslaved men and women in order to justify the practice, does more than just create an unwelcoming environment. It actively interferes with a student's ability to succeed on campus.

Yale's past association with slavery and slaveholders should not be forgotten or erased. But neither should values that it no longer holds be thoughtlessly perpetuated through honoring through naming those whose values we now find appallingly offensive.

September 9, 2016 9:56am

Margaret Gallagher, Alum

If this is to be more than a meaningless exercise in bowing to fashion---it has to start at the top. Change the name Yale if we can no longer name our university buildings after slaveholders. Otherwise its just a cheap stunt. Live with history or don't live with history but don't say your commercial brand is more important than your so-called principles.

September 9, 2016 10:47am

Leslie Harris, Alum

I am actually a graduate of Calhoun College, Class of 1983. I was disappointed that the name was **not** changed during the last review. I do not accept the stated reason for maintaining the name, that "Calhoun College" reminds us of the controversial views of John C. Calhoun and the nation's brutal history of enslaving captured Africans and denying them their human rights. I believe that naming a residential college or a building after a particular historical figure honors that person, and we should consider carefully whether the person deserves such an honor. Here are some questions that I think are relevant when choosing to name or to rename a building or college:

1. Is the person under consideration historically significant?
2. Did the person promote views that respected the dignity and inherent value of other human beings, regardless of the various categories of human identity that have developed over time (race, religion, gender, sexual orientation)?
3. Is the person truly deserving of the high honor of being memorialized in this way?

I believe that John C. Calhoun fails to meet the second and third criteria I listed. If we want to remind future Yale students of the controversy, we can

rename Calhoun College (and remove any prominent portraits of John C.

Calhoun), but perhaps provide a plaque stating that the residential college was **formerly** called Calhoun College, but it was renamed (I hope in 2017) to reflect a new understanding of the principles of choosing names for buildings and colleges.

September 9, 2016 10:57pm

James Luce, Alum

Dear Professor Witt and members of the CEPR, Some Proposed Principles

From James Luce, YC '66

1. History and Tradition are not synonymous.

History includes everything that has happened in this universe starting some fourteen-billion-years-ago up to and including one-second-ago. In contrast, the first appearance of tradition can be dated to a paltry twelve-thousand-years-ago and thus is a relative newcomer to history. One might think of tradition as “bits and pieces of exclusively human history memorialized for specific groups of the living”.

2. History must be kept intact and inviolate, whereas tradition need not be.

The evil of expunging history or rewriting it is emphatically demonstrated in books, such as Orwell's 1984, and by actions, such as those taken by the Taliban and ISIS. In contrast, the expungement of many traditions over the centuries has been a positive good for humankind, including trial by torture and burning at the stake. The list of bad traditions is lengthy, but includes the traditional subjugation of women, enslavement of various ethnic groups, various sectarian inquisitions and other forms of propagating ignorance, the attribution of illness and misfortune to “sinful” conduct, the rape of our environment for commercial purposes, and invidious prejudice practiced against a multitude of peoples. Many of these traditions are still alive in the 21st-century and are worthy of obliteration. However, many traditions are either benign or beneficial.

3. Traditions should be protected so long as they historically were not intended to do harm, continue to be useful, and are honored by the community from which they sprang.

A prime example of tradition-in-trouble is the burning issue now facing the Yale Community and which is one of the subjects pending resolution before the

CEPR: Should the names of the colleges and other edifices/spaces/icons be changed because they cause emotional distress to some individuals within the community? Based on the above listed principles, the answer is a clear and emphatic “No”. Here's why.

All twelve of the colleges with alumni attached to them were named after slave owners, sympathizers with slavery, or places where slavery was practiced*. Yet none of these colleges were named after these people or places with the intention to honor slavery. Instead, all of the names were given to honor sterling accomplishments or historically relevant-to-Yale locations. The Washington and Jefferson Memorials on the D.C. Mall were not erected to honor them as slave-holders but rather for their essential contributions to the founding of this country. The Lincoln Memorial does not mention the fact that Lincoln believed that black people were mentally and socially inferior to whites and should all be deported to Central America for their own good. Are the Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln Memorials nevertheless to be renamed because of their namesakes' historically "racist" attitudes?

The turmoil on campus arises from the fact that many students of color say that they are emotionally disturbed by the historical fact that Calhoun was an evil Simon Legree-style slave-owner and that the images in the stained-glass windows of the college offend them. There are numerous similar images in the various art galleries at Yale. Are these also to be removed to avoid emotional upset?

As a member of a persecuted minority (I'm an Atheist) do I and my fellows have just grounds to remove all sectarian symbols and names in the churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques at Yale? If not, why not? Well, the "why not" is simple. All those sectarian icons and names are traditional, were not intended to do harm, continue to be useful to some, and to be honored by some. The fact that I consider all such icons to be very disagreeable and even currently harmful to many, they do not represent traditions which should be removed.

Furthermore, the legal/equitable principle that a person moving to the nuisance has no standing to object to it applies here. Students and faculty come to Yale voluntarily and have no standing to complain about an otherwise lawful name or icon being present. If they object to the tradition they are free to go elsewhere...albeit I can't think of any major university in America that is freer of racism and bigotry than Yale.

4. "Re-writing" history and "righting" history are not equivalents.

Progress in the eradication of invidious prejudice and brainless discrimination is not assisted by removing reminders of our past but rather progress is made by keeping the memory of our past in our present. What if the removal of all the "objectionable" names and icons resulted over the decades in a situation such as is now being faced by Israel and the Jewish community? After years of expunging from European schools and public places all remembrances of Hitler and the horrors of the extermination camps there are now ignorant bigots claiming that the Holocaust never occurred. If the institution of slavery were to be similarly forgotten and/or denied, on what basis would black people have a valid claim for retribution and affirmative action? Absent slavery and the racist beliefs that institution spawned black people are just another demographic largely stuck in poverty for reasons apparently of their own doing...there being according to defective and deficient collective memory no other causal reason.

* The Twelve Colleges "denounced"

Berkeley College...George Berkeley, slave owner, Whitehall plantation, Rhode Island Branford College...named for Branford, CT where Yale was briefly situate. Residents owned slaves.

Calhoun College...John C. Calhoun...slave owner, various plantations in South Carolina
Davenport College...John Davenport, clergyman, spoke against baptizing slaves, supported slavery as God's Will
Ezra Stiles College...Ezra Stiles, clergyman, owned at least one slave whom he named "Newport" (Stiles hypocritically spoke out against the evils of slavery.)
Jonathan Edwards College...Jonathan Edwards, evangelical Christian, believed in slavery as God's Will. Also actively supported censorship of improper thoughts
Morse College...Samual Morse, inventor of Morse Code, pro-slavery, writing a treatise claiming it was God's Will. Also he was virulently anti-Catholic.

Pierson College...Abraham Pierson, clergyman, approved of slavery as being God's Will
Saybrook College...named after Old Saybrook, CT whose residents owned slaves and slaughtered Native Americans
Silliman College...Benjamin Silliman, scientist who spoke in favor of slavery as God's Will
Timothy Dwight College...Timothy Dwight, opposed the disestablishment of the Christian Church in Connecticut and supported Connecticut's pro-slavery constitution.

Trumbull College...Jonathan Trumbull, first governor of Connecticut, enforced state laws condoning slavery

September 9, 2016 11:07am

Katie Hoyt McNabb, Alum

Below is a piece I posted to my blog: christianmiddle.com While I speak from a faith perspective that is not relevant to your study, I hope that my points may still offer a provocative context for your consideration.

What's in a Name?

This past week I read an article* updating the ongoing drama plaguing many older universities over the issue of renaming college buildings. Those advocating for change argue that commemorating men like John Calhoun at Yale, who supported slavery in his era, amounts to endorsing the practice.

I disagree. We need to remember Orwell's cautions from 1984 where the "Ministry of Truth" conscientiously rewrites history in order to suit the sensibilities of the current regime. However bitter our history tastes in the present, it remains the only compass by which we can orient ourselves to where we stand now.

According to historian David McCullough, Thomas Jefferson saw history as a series of missteps highlighting paths not to take. While we can certainly appreciate that truth, the reality is that world history, as well as our own life stories are a mixture of good and bad. One of the challenges of self-understanding involves sifting through our individual and cultural legacies in order to glean the worthy and try to rectify the wrong.

A key component of dealing with the past is the search for truth: not merely in knowing a series of names, dates, and events, but also in apprehending the players' perception of what happened and the aftereffects of that lens.

Just as I worked with students in literature to see the nuances of characters – that the hero was never “all good,” nor the villain “all bad” – we need to develop an appropriate balance of outrage and compassion for what happened in history. This doesn't happen when we try to whitewash or purge the past.

Science fiction writers love to imagine the possibilities of “going back in time,” especially with the prospect of changing the present and future. But God keeps the past “frozen” with good reason.

God's answer to our past is forgiveness; we're relieved of the guilt of our transgressions, but not the consequences. The Lord isn't about “do over's” and our crazy optimism that if we had the chance to erase the past we could “get it right” the second, or third, or nth time around. Instead, God offers us a chance to do differently in the future.

Improved actions speak louder than new names.

* “The College Formerly Known as Yale” by Roger Kimball published August 8, 2016 in the Wall Street Journal

September 9, 2016 11:12am

Gary Kitahata, Alum

I am deeply disappointed by Yale's decision not to rename Calhoun College. Keeping the name as a "learning experience" is incomprehensible to me -- should we have a perpetually-burning cross on display as another "learning experience" and name another college after Pol Pot for ethnic and international balance? I can see how the administration is stretching to seem balanced, especially to older white male alumni donors, but the need to rename seems clear to me. Maybe it is because while I am older and male, I'm not white. And race does matter, especially in how one views this issue. (Yale MPPM '83)

September 9, 2016 11:19am

John Adams, Alum

Names should be chosen, not to reflect the largess or the perceived accomplishments of alumni which (as in the case of Calhoun) can change over time, but to commemorate people, events or locations connected to the history of the University.

September 9, 2016 12:01pm

Mark Armour, Alum

Remove Calhoun and erase his racist legacy at the university.

September 9, 2016 12:04pm

Kristin Krebs-Dick, Alum

Did the committee or President Salovey consider broadening the scope of this group to include developing criteria for future naming?

I ask because personally I am on the more reluctant or conservative side of renaming buildings and other places that already were established in the past. At the same time, I feel very strongly that buildings and spaces being created and named now and into the future should reflect our current community and our collective thinking which is very different in many ways that it was 20 or 100 years ago.

Perhaps there should be criteria established for future naming in addition to renaming pre-existing spaces. I think only focusing the committee's efforts on renaming and not including future naming may divide the various groups unnecessarily. You may also get a more holistic approach and result to naming as well if future naming is included.

September 9, 2016 1:18pm

Stephen Brown, Alum

I am concerned at our predisposition to polarize everything--there are good guys and bad guys. We are all a complex mixture of good and bad. I also do not believe that people should be judged by standards other than those of their own time. That said, why do we give some people a pass. Elihu Yale engaged in the slave trade, was a profiteer, and a corrupt government official, yet I have heard no one call for changing the name of the university.

September 9, 2016 1:32pm

David Toole, Alum

Discuss history but don't try to change history.

September 9, 2016 1:44pm

Esther Portyansky, Alum/Staff

I believe that Yale can only thrive and flourish by moving forward, not by trying to hold on to the past. In establishing these principles, our primary consideration must be what values we want this institution to embody in the future. The university's past, and the values it represented in the past, can inform our judgment and perspective, but must never hamper the possibilities for change and growth.

In other words, the fact that the university has always valued continuity with the past must not impede our ability to make decisions that are best for the present and future. Many alumni worry that renaming Calhoun College will damage the institution's connection to its history, but this is far from the case. Rather, it will more fully acknowledge Yale's roots while simultaneously giving the university's newest generations room to blossom to their fullest potential.

Establishing the principle that all members of the Yale community -- students, faculty, staff, and alumni alike -- can have their voices heard on the topic of renaming will send a powerful message: that Yale is a place where everyone can argue for their beliefs, where peers and colleagues with differing opinions can debate amicably in a fair and open forum. is the essence of Yale's most fundamental principle: to be a haven of free speech and intellectual progress.

September 9, 2016 1:53pm
Anne Savarese, Alum

I am a proud alumna of Yale College (BR '80) and spent four more years in New Haven as a resident in Pediatrics and Anesthesiology ('86-'90).at the Yale-New Haven Hospital / Yale SOM. Since then I've been a faculty member in the (public) University of Maryland School of Medicine at Baltimore, engaged in teaching and clinical practice in a city struggling with issues of race, poverty, violence, pervasive substance abuse, family disintegration, etc. My adult experiences as a physician in the "inner city" have made me believe more than ever in the essential goodness in people; I am not jaded or discouraged, rather I see every day the real potential in our citizens if they are given the chance to live securely, be nourished in body, mind, and spirit, and participate on a truly level playing field of educational and economic opportunity. Yale is to be admired for offering scholarships and a "leg up" to youth of color from cities like Baltimore. Yet when "minority" students arrive on campus they find not just beautiful buildings and leafy green spaces...they find the celebration of political power, wealth, influence, and even racism in the naming of those places. Recently, naming and re-naming of colleges and universities has, in my opinion, gotten out of hand....names are literally for sale to the highest bidder / donor...especially in graduate and professional schools. I am not so naive as to expect lavish donors to not be rewarded for their gifts...but great care and reservation should inform those decisions. Institutionalized racism and prejudice is real, and is at Yale, as it is in so many places in our nation. I recommend strongly to the committee to invite the Georgetown folks to talk to them about the excellent job they are doing in acknowledging their history, and more importantly, creating their future. I think many Yale community members feel Yale "blew it" with the recent decision to keep the Calhoun name.The great thing about life is that opportunity can strike twice if you just seize it! So use this "second chance" to show our community and the greater public that Yale is a university capable of critical self-examination, guided by moral intelligence, ethical principles, irreproachable integrity, and sincere commitment to genuine excellence in education. Listen.....don't speak until you have listened! Evaluate your recommendations as if you had to convince your grand mother or grand children of their merit.. not just trustees or a board. Let your best minds and souls guide you.

September 9, 2016 2:14pm
Acheampong Atta-Boateng, Alum/Staff

Considering Yale's effort to achieve global excellence, through scholarship and community engagement beyond North America and as reflected in the ever increasing diversity in students, staff and faculty, I petition our distinguished committee to consider honoring in particular lesser known names of persons who made outstanding contributions to the field of inquiry whether or not American or Yalie and whether or not academic, public or private servant.

September 9, 2016 2:20pm
Katherine Kunz, Alum

I fully support renaming of any residential college or other building whose name promotes a sense of alienation among members of the student body. Names are fungible, and as historical perspective shifts, what was once an appropriate honorarium for a distinguished individual may become an embarrassing (or outright offensive) accolade. The decision to rename a building needs to be made by a broad coalition of individuals affiliated with Yale, not just those at the top (who may not have a full appreciation of the reasons why a building should be renamed). If Yale has a goal of being an institution for all who merit admittance, that needs to be reflected in the names of its physical institutions.

September 9, 2016 2:42pm
Pamela Ozaroff, Alum

I feel strongly that Yale should rename Calhoun College.

September 9, 2016 2:46pm
Stephen Shiffrin, Alum

We are all a victim of history and the times we live in. Nonetheless, Yale should not name its facilities after persons who life contradicts the values that Yale cherishes. In my mind, any facility named after an advocate of slavery or discrimination should not be a name on any Yale facility. There are many, many deserving people (alumni, politicians, educators, authors, etc.) whose names could adorn Yale facilities.

September 9, 2016 2:50pm
Ann Reynolds, Alum/Parent

I'm in favor of augmenting names, rather than changing them. In the case of Calhoun, for instance, you could add the name of a prominent abolitionist of the time. That adds to debate, adds to the awareness of history, and doesn't try to pretend that we are moral arbiters of what happened hundreds of years ago. As a parenthetical, I was unnerved to find, in my Yale Alumni Magazine, that the decision on naming Benjamin Franklin college was apparently a done deal as

soon as the pledge was made -- I feel that asking for our ideas "to name the new colleges" was disingenuous at best. I need to feel that Yale is honest in any dialog with students and graduates.

September 9, 2016 2:53pm

Roger Horchow, Alum

I am concerned that the new committee will try to reverse the administrations resolve, previously stated, NOT to rename Calhoun. The committee can function for the future, but should not be used to overturn the decision.

September 9, 2016 2:54pm

John Meyer, Alum

This renaming trend is very dangerous. Leading renamers historically include the Soviet Union, and the radical phase of the French Revolution. Renaming destroys history and is confusing. Furthermore, Yale history encompasses many eras and this era should not presume a monopoly of wisdom, but should allow past Yale eras to be represented. There could be a few names so repulsive that they should be considered for change, but these would be names condemned not just by the current generation, but by a long consensus of history. For example, I would rename Adolf Hitler Hall or Joseph Stalin Hall, if they existed, or a name that is offensive in and of itself, such as White Purity Hall, but with the exception of monsters like Hitler and Stalin, I would oppose renaming anything named after a historical figure.

September 9, 2016 2:56pm

Margaret Loss, Alum

Please take to heart the statement by the University of Chicago strongly placing academic freedom above political correctness.

September 9, 2016 2:57pm

Charles Griffis, Alum

While this is an interesting exercise, I worry that imposing subjective judgments on "renaming" in 2016 for the earlier subjective judgments at the time the names were assigned sets up the wrong example and establishes a bad precedent. What is PC now may not be PC in 2066. My opinion is that each era has to take responsibility for the names it assigns.

But if you are going to be thorough in the process of establishing renaming principles, then you need to start with the name "Yale" to determine if the university would/should be renamed under the principles to be established.

<http://digitalhistories.yctl.org/2014/11/01/elihu-yale-was-a-slave-trader/>

September 9, 2016 3:10pm
Diana Benoit, Alum

As a Class of '81 'Hounie, I look back with enormous pride and affection at my residential college community -- I loved it then and I always will! It is precisely because I care so much that I am writing to urge the University to rename Calhoun, in order to remove from my beloved community the stain of the uniquely egregious John C. Calhoun legacy, and all that is implied by appearing to honor it. We do not need the name to remain in order to learn from history and from this experience: we will learn more, and in a much more exciting and joyful fashion, by coming together to usher in a new name, a new era, and a new level of respect for today's student community in all its diversity and its inclusive spirit. Let's do it -- it's long overdue and nothing of value will be lost!

September 9, 2016 3:11pm
Paul Calzada, Alum

Dear Renaming Committee,
Thank you for all the work you do. I've been following the developments regarding student housing, and I too am torn by arguments on both sides. I do not envy your task, but I am confident you will do the best any group of people can do since I believe there is no right answer or perfect choice.

My suggestion is to include more recognition of the original inhabitants of New Haven and the Yale campus when naming buildings or sites. Since it is problematic to say the least to find any individual who some one will not find fault with, it might be worthwhile to explore the possibility of finding potential names from the original Native American languages that convey exemplary concepts or principles. For example, what is the translation of "Lux et Veritas" in Mohegan?

I'm reminded of Georgetown's recent example of acknowledging their history with slavery, and that acknowledgement has inspired them to make real efforts to broaden and deepen their sense of their institution's history.

It's also moved them to create relevant programs dealing directly with that history, which will bring them closer to realizing their institution's ideals. I think a good naming choices could do the same for Yale, and there is no more tragic part of our nation's past than how it dealt with our first peoples, who are still largely forgotten and unacknowledged.

Thank you for your time.

Best regards,
Paul Calzada
FES 1997

September 9, 2016 3:15pm
Franklin Conlan, Alum

I was taught at Yale '57 and previously at GROTON '53 that history and historical events were not a matter of opinion, but rather a compendium of absolute facts. Historical opinions have value in setting the tone and atmosphere of activities but not the veracity of them.

I am distressed to hear of the political correctness atmosphere at Yale which makes "interpretation" of greater value than authenticity. It really cheapens the educational experience to make it subject to comforting trendiness. It's a shame to see a great university subject to puerile accommodation.

September 9, 2016 3:19pm
Eugene Van Loan III, Alum

I think that the "Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming" should be renamed the "Doublethink Committee" and that Calhoun College should be renamed Orwell College.

September 9, 2016 3:38pm
Kevin Thornton, Alum

I look forward to the Yale Committee to Scrub Inconvenient People from Photographs.

September 9, 2016 3:44pm
John Tabor, Alum

Naming should hold up *contribution* over *success.* Contribution means leaving the world better a better place through one's actions. Success is a measure of self: one's development and drive, manifested in personal achievements. Contribution is a measure of one's dedication to, and legacy of, helping others.

John C. Calhoun would not pass this test...his personal success was built on the subjugation of others.

September 9, 2016 3:46pm
Fred Levinger, Alum

This priority of renaming colleges etc is so ridiculous that Yale alumni should stop contributing to Yale until the administration leaves.

Unbelievable priority when the need is so great on other issues. Why are tuitions so high supporting this kind of "priority "

September 9, 2016 4:10pm
Jonathan Treadgold, Alum

Dear President Salovey and Committee Members, In 1837, John C. Calhoun wrote, "I hold that the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are brought together, the relation now existing in the slaveholding states between the two, is, instead of an evil, a good. A positive good."

If we have the courage to be honest, we would recognize that Calhoun's political and jurisprudential brilliance in advocating "minority rights" was merely hifalutin blather in defense of slaveholders. If the notion of minority rights has praiseworthy aspects, it is certainly not Calhoun we should thank for it. Consider recent scholarship that demonstrates Southern slave labor camps kept pace with the rate of growing Northern industrial productivity with no greater technological innovations than the pistol and the bullwhip. Treasure extracted by torture and paid for in blood: this is Calhoun's true legacy.

With all due respect, there is no justification for continuing to lionize one of history's great racists. A direct line can be drawn between Calhoun's racial theories and the writings of Madison Grant, Yale College class of 1887, and Hitler's favorite author. Grant's seminal tract of scientific racism, "The Passing of the Great Race," inspired Hitler to write a letter to Grant, declaring "this book is my Bible." Grant, in fact, coined the term "Nordic race." I need not mention the consequences of *that* legacy.

Madison Grant was also one of the United States' greatest, earliest, and most significant wildlife conservationists. Does this fact rehabilitate his memory? Of course not. Nor should Calhoun be offered a similar pass for achieving high office. The time for a reckoning is long overdue for our beloved school, and regarding Calhoun's legacy with opprobrium is merely the first step.

Sincerely yours,
Jon Treadgold, DC'06

September 9, 2016 5:01pm
Stuart Gardner, Alum

The naming of a college is a honor, role model, and a standard of values that residents and other students aspire to and remember. Thus Calhoun is a travesty. Do we really need a reminder of our history of racism and slavery? It's all around us in the events of daily life! Or does Yale believe we just have too many tokens to justice, honesty, decency, freedom- the students are going into finance anyway. Do you know the meaning of respect for others?

September 9, 2016 5:09pm
Connie Gersick, Alum/Parent/Other

Yale has twelve residential colleges, and there may never be more.

Only

ONE is named for a woman, though a significant proportion of Yale's distinguished community, past and present, is female.

Pauli Murray is an excellent choice, but ONE AMONG TWELVE IS ONLY A TOKEN, painfully incongruent with the fact that women are 50%, not 8.3%, of humanity. The visibility or invisibility of women in power has a tremendous effect on the expectations that everyone has for them. Yale should be raising those expectations.

John Calhoun clearly advocated for slavery, and the college should be re-named. I fervently hope this last opportunity to name a residential college for a woman will be seized, not squandered..

September 9, 2016 5:55pm

Arthur Shippee, Alum

When the Calhoun defense came out, I read it with interest. It immediately struck me as wrong-headed. I think the problem is one of point of view: it was an argument that made sense from an administrator's office. But ask this of yourself: say you are a young black woman or young black man, and someone asks where you live. You'd have to say, my home is Calhoun. Suddenly, it's clear. Calhoun can't be the name of someone's home at Yale.

Calhoun, and Wilson, too, who bedevils Princeton, aren't just those who share the ills of their times. They seemed to give priority to making it worse.

That puts them in a smaller group deserving higher scrutiny & perhaps the presumption of removal.

September 9, 2016 7:36pm

Scot Johnston, Alum

Recognize that (i) every individual born before 1900 (at least) had at least some views that would today be considered reprehensible and (ii) it's likely that every individual alive today has some views that will be considered reprehensible at some point in the future. If you start getting into calculating various people's relative badness - or, worse, trying to assign scores both for badness and goodness - you're engaged in a fool's errand. You'd be unlikely to get agreement between any two random scorers, much less an entire community. The only policy that could be applied consistently would be to rename everything periodically, or to eschew dedicatory names altogether in favor of the purely descriptive or arbitrary ("Classroom Building with Grass on Two Sides," "The College With Four Courtyards," or "Building 12"). Oh yeah: or just don't rename anything.

September 9, 2016 8:03pm

Joseph Turner, Alum

I was disappointed at Yale's recent decision to retain the name of Calhoun College, invoking the rationale that Calhoun was part of Yale's history. There are other ways to acknowledge Calhoun's relationship to Yale other than by honoring him by continuing to have a residential college bearing his name. I find it incomprehensible that such a fierce advocate for the practice of slavery continues to hold such a prominent place of honor at Yale.

September 9, 2016 8:06pm

Victor Kilgore, Alum

When I lived in Germany, I was moved by the efforts made by the German people to not forget the horrific deeds committed by the nation during World War II. The concentration camp museums are grim places.

I heard stories about how visitors young and old, Jewish and gentile, often break down and cry as they walk about the grounds of these preserved camps and learn about (and sometimes remember) a time that is increasingly distant for most people. I contrast this German national determination to remember the past with my experience living in Japan. Either by design or mere disregard, Japan as a nation has few memorials of war crimes committed by their people. One can suppose that, unlike Germany, most Japanese atrocities were committed beyond the nation's shores so there are few physical reminders of criminal acts against non-Japanese people. But whatever the reason(s), the difference in the availability to the public of memorials to a shameful period in the past has had discernible effects in how each nation's people remember the war: young Germans, without feeling any guilt for what had happened generations ago, know about the horrors of the Holocaust and the inhumane treatment of various targeted groups of people; young Japanese, in contrast, know little about the atrocities committed by their nation, and generally view the war as a horrible event that happened upon their grandparents. Ironically, neo-Nazi groups have a palpable presence in a Germany that painstakingly memorializes its dark acts of the past while a Japan that is forgetful of its once fascist past has few violence-oriented social elements. But it is likely that, in some distant future, if a neo-fascist group were to arise, few Japanese would remember enough the danger of such ideology to oppose its spread. The reasoning is circuitous, but I believe we--Yalies--should also memorialize our past, even the parts that are almost too painful and awful to think about. If we over-sanitize our memories of the past, future generations may not be equipped with the knowledge to defend against the resurgence of ideologies that once had led to disastrous results. The memorials to our unconscionable acts and beliefs of the past (as well as to the heroic) tell us not only about who we were but also serve to guide us to who we become. I vote to preserve the name of Calhoun College.

September 9, 2016 8:48pm

Bruce Ludwig, Alum

As a member of the Class of 1973, I had great years as a resident of Calhoun College but I think it was a mistake not to rename it. I completely disagree with the President's rationale to maintain this shameful tribute to a racist .

C

September 10, 2016 12:00am

Nicholas Gladding, Alum

Peter, please let us not submit to the continuous cries for reversal of centuries of tradition in the name of current political correctness! Yale needs to evolve but also needs to know that traditions and memories are just as important as some current student's and faculties' strongly felt beliefs. We need to leave Calhoun College named as it is, and not change other Yale Colleges' names because they may have been named for former slaveholders.

Otherwise, Yale might have to consider petitioning Congress to rename the Jefferson Memorial as just one example!

Thanks, Nick Gladding, former President and AYA Current Representative, Yale Club of the Suncoast.

September 10, 2016 2:58am

Timothy Clemm, Alum

Freedom of speech and thereby the freedom of a buildings name (Calhoun College) should ALWAYS trump the political correctness of honoring those with hurt feelings. We should not revise away our history with a thin whitewash while seriously eroding free speech and the lessons of the past that our buildings historical names provide.

September 10, 2016 9:55am

Steven Hudson, Alum

In many ways our country has perpetuated the conditions that slavery imposed on the black people, who were brought to this country in chains and considered to be property.

Calhoun was an active participant; let's rename the college for someone who did not participate

September 10, 2016 11:00am

Louis Fishman, Alum

I favor removing the 16-foot statue of General Robert E. Lee from his prominent place atop a huge pedestal in the heart of New Orleans. There are several reasons. First and foremost, the evidence is that the statue was erected, and the venue renamed Lee Circle, as a 20th century affront to African-Americans. That alone would be sufficient reason, but there are others. Second, "traitor" is too strong a word, but Lee certainly turned his back on his country in favor of his state (Virginia, of course, not Louisiana). Third, Lee never fought in, and perhaps not even close to, Louisiana during the Civil War. Finally, my personal belief is that Lee's great skill caused a horrific war to be extended by two or three years, doubling the casualties and the post-war hostility that contributed greatly to Southern racism. I respectfully suggest that, absent

reasons that reach the above levels, and particularly the first reason, which amounts to blatant racism, names should not be changed or monuments removed. To take the issue to extreme proportions, I'm sure Americus Vespucci committed acts we would today deplore. Do we therefore rename two entire continents? I was appalled to learn recently Elihu Yale was a prominent figure in the slave trade (and that the Jesuits at Georgetown raised funds by selling slaves). So must we rename Yale (or Jesuit High School, one of the finest in New Orleans)? If so, where would we stop? Many, perhaps most, of our Founding Fathers owned slaves or somehow tolerated the institution. Clearly the Constitutional Convention, against strong opposition from Mr. Franklin, condoned, if not supported, slavery. Must we rename every eponymous reminder of any of those forebears?

September 10, 2016 11:10am
Seth O.L. Brody, Alum

Please, no more "pay to play" !
Don't rewrite history based on the emotions of the present.
A person for whom a residential college is to be named should have been an undergraduate at Yale; surely there are enough distinguished candidates to meet the need now and in the future.

September 10, 2016 11:33am
John Fosseen, Alum

Establishment of a renaming committee gives the impression that there are circumstances under which Yale associated buildings ... should be renamed. my first reaction is "this is crazy". After some thought I came to the conclusion that the renaming committee should be disbanded. Absent that the committee should be disbanded, establish the principal that Yale should not establish any principles under which things should be remained. In particular the culture of today should not ignore history by renaming Yale things. Instead one should use the original name to remind us of what history is behind the name.

September 10, 2016 1:07pm
William Moonan, Alum

Renaming a building because today's values don't match the values of the person for whom the building is named is short-sighted and revisionist in nature. The original name was chosen for specific reasons to honor a person important to Yale. To remove that name is to lose the continuity of Yale's history and to indicate that every name is subject to current cultural fads. As a letter in "The Wall Street Journal" pointed out, Elihu Yale was a slaveholder. Because he was, maybe the name of the University should be changed.

Changing the name of the University is nonsensical. For the same reasons, changing the name of a college makes no sense.

September 10, 2016 1:26pm
Sarah Shapiro, Alum

First thing, rename the new college after someone NOT associated with another Ivy League university in Pennsylvania and, even more important, NOT associated with the company of the donor. I love that students are calling it Aretha Franklin, but honestly something better needs to be done before that becomes permanent.

September 10, 2016 3:44pm
Jeffrey Wilkens, Alum

Do not bow to the ridiculous pressures to change the name of Calhoun College. Anyone's political views have to be taken in a historical perspective and not judged against correct contemporary views. Are we going to "Un-name" Washington as president because he kept slaves?

Lincoln because he was willing to allow the holding of slaves until later in the Civil War? Yale's approach to this has been an embarrassment to the school.

September 10, 2016 4:19pm
Allison Dickin, Other

Yale needs to be more progressive about this, and not be so deferential to individual donors--if a donor refuses to give a building a name other than one belonging to a white male, well guess what?

Yale doesn't need that building. Also, Calhoun should be renamed out of respect for all students, faculty, and the community at large. Saying you're keeping the name as a way to remind us of our history is a poor excuse to avoid dealing with the reality of the world we live in. Non-white students and faculty have made it very clear they don't feel comfortable on campus and Yale has come up with every excuse in the book to avoid taking any responsibility for it. You can rename a building, create safe spaces, respect the unique needs of people from all backgrounds AND also confront difficult topics and encourage personal and educational growth. It's not one or the other.

September 10, 2016 5:32pm
Benjamin Kirkup, Alum

The principle of naming in perpetuity is a unique institution which creates positive value for people who may achieve recognition in a variety of ways. Even the suggestion of renaming is caustic and destructive. The presumption that people in the present time are somehow given authority to re-dispose of everything set by their predecessors is unwarranted. We academically re-evaluate achievements and institutions - and do - but de- or renaming should not be on the table.

September 10, 2016 8:32pm

Robert Jensen, Alum

Yale has become a global institution. It is time to consider renaming colleges with a mind to represent international champions of freedom, such as: Nelson Mandela, or Mahatma Gandhi.

September 10, 2016 8:45pm

Howard Belove, Alum

In my opinion the principle should be that a name which would be an embarrassment if the decision were being made for the first time today should be changed. I also believe that whenever the name of any physical structure is changed a plaque should be installed which gives the original name and date of the naming, the reason that name was chosen, and the reason and date of the name change.

September 10, 2016 9:32pm

William Bell, Alum

I have a bit of personal perspective here. My great-great-grandfather, also William Bell, was a prominent businessman in New Orleans. While not a slaveowner, he was certainly part of the slave-based cotton economy of the region. He is a central figure in the Edgar Degas (his brother-in-law) painting "A Cotton Office in New Orleans."

More to the point, this William Bell was also one of the organizers of a post-war New Orleans militia which briefly fought the "carpetbagger" Governor's troops after the Civil War. As such, he and his colleagues were honored, many years ago, by a statue in the city of New Orleans. In recent years this statue was moved to a less prominent location in the city. More recently, it was removed to a warehouse, presumably never to reappear.

Am I offended by this removal? Of course not. Our public spaces should not honor those who took up arms against our country's government after Appomatox.

However, we are not a point of removing the statues in Southern towns of those who fought for the South in the Civil War.

And Yale should not be removing from campus the names of prominent graduates whose beliefs we now (Thank God) recognize to be reprehensible.

Clearly John C. Calhoun was the intellectual leader of those in the U.S. Senate who sought to justify slavery. His statements with regard to the alleged inferiority of persons of darker skin are abhorrent. It is unfortunate that Yale chose to name a College (of which I was a 1960-1963 resident) after him.

However, we cannot deny history, unless we wish to descend into an Orwellian world. John Calhoun is also recognized as a member of the Great Triumvirate, along with Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, of U.S. Senators. Such was his stature that Yale chose to honor him.

For Calhoun College to be re-named is to remove the enduring lesson that Yale and other great institutions make mistakes. If such a re-naming takes place, this issue will then fade away in a few years. Far better to accept the fact that for many years slavery was acceptable in much of our young nation, to applaud the role of the Northern abolitionists (much of Uncle Tom's Cabin was composed not far from my home in Maine), and to focus on the ever-evolving advance of human rights in our nation.

September 10, 2016 9:52pm
Daniel Hack, Alum/Parent

Whatever criteria for renaming are adopted, please abandon the argument that renaming amounts to whitewashing (e.g., "Removing Calhoun's name obscures the legacy of slavery rather than addressing it."). Renaming is exactly a way of addressing the past, indeed a particularly powerful one; it should not be equated with an attempt to erase the fact that a particular name had once been chosen and had long been in place. There are many other, better ways to acknowledge and explore that past. This is so obvious that it is disingenuous to suggest otherwise.

Indeed, President Salovey's plan to commission a work of art "that responds to the realities and consequences of Calhoun's life" is one such way, and there is no reason such a work of art could not serve this purpose by being displayed on the grounds of a renamed Calhoun College. The same is true of the other initiatives he describes. I can think of many cases in which patently stronger arguments against renaming will be available, and I hope the administration invokes those instead.

September 10, 2016 11:14pm
Tina Pihl, Alum

Prior to the committee establishing principles on renaming, I would like the ability for students and alumnus/-a to review draft recommendations of possible principles and provide feedback prior to any approval of principles.

September 11, 2016 8:05am
Carol Reis Whitehead Stern, Alum

Please rename Calhoun. It is an "environmental" aggression to our African American students and staff on campus. So glad this renaming is being considered.

September 11, 2016 8:22am
Jeff Bakal, Alum/Parent

If a decision is made to change the name of Calhoun, I would like to see Grace Hopper honored as its namesake.

September 11, 2016 10:17am

Meredith Benson, Other

While I am happy that this committee is taking a serious look at how and what to do in this situation, I also feel like it's unnecessary. You already know slavery was wrong. You already know it's a hard issue to dissect because of the money that was made by slavery, the country was built on it and that it was a system built on racism. You know these facts already. What it seems your contemplating is the impact a decision to change the name will have on alumni, the future of your endowment and how you will be perceived by other Ivies. You already know the name has to change.

Stand up against this injustice and be a leader. You want the community in New Haven to see you as leaders in medicine, law, the arts, research, education, etc. yet taking important steps to speak against slavery and bigotry, you need a committee to do that? You are going to offend many people who have ties to Calhoun College. That's a fact. But you will also offend those who are part of Calhoun who want to stand for liberty and justice for everyone even though that was not the forefathers original intention. It's almost 2020 and your staring the future in the face. Who do you want to be?

What does Yale want to stand for? Yes, you have a code of ethics that says we will not discriminate against race, sexual orientation, etc. etc. But a wise man, Dr. Salovey once said,"that just means we won't break the law. But there is more to it if we want real diversity." I am raising a son in the Yale community, I Have worked at the University, it's a part of our lives. This is extremely important to me and what decision you make will deeply affect my future relationship with the University. You know what the right choice is.

Be brave enough to make it.

September 11, 2016 2:56pm

David Salsburg, Faculty

When dealing with a problem like the name of Calhoun College, why not do what they did with King County in Washington. During the Civil Rights Movement, it was pointed out that King County had been named after Rufus King, one of the founders of the state of Alabama and a long time senator from Alabama who was a strong supporter of slavery before the Civil War. They renamed the county after Martin Luther King, Jr. Can't you find a Calhoun who was a New England merchant or some minor public official in New Haven and name the college after him?

September 11, 2016 3:52pm

Clarence Blair, Alum

That the committee is tasked with establishing principles on "renaming" says much about its goals. Judging historical figures by the academic standards which seem to prevail today makes no more sense than judging the Ford Motor Company because the Model T contained obvious safety flaws which surely contributed to numerous deaths. Let us acknowledge that the figures of the past were imperfect, and let us also acknowledge that those rejudging them today may also be imperfect.

September 11, 2016 10:32pm

Barrie Koegel, Alum

I would love to see Calhoun renamed. Racism persists, by no means only at Yale, but certainly it's no exception. Symbols and words matter.

Unfortunately this no longer will be a bold move, since it's unclear how it didn't happen either in the 60s or when the slaves were removed from the stained glass, but it's better than the flaccid limpness we've seen so far.

It was a mistake to name it for him in the 30s and has been an embarrassment since to anyone paying attention. So fix it with whatever decisiveness can be redeemed. If you have conviction, it's not a slippery slope.

The principle should be that if it brings shame to the school it should be renamed. Yale is an entity and brand in and of itself and now entirely removed from the person. Not so with Calhoun.

September 12, 2016 9:18am

Ralph (Denny) Bates, Alum

Having just returned from my 55th reunion, the images and memories are fresh and vibrant. I know our world is complex and changing. For sure there are a myriad of topics before us. For me, Yale is an emblem and standard for our nation as an institution of higher education, scholarship, and image. I was thrilled to see ROTC graduates again celebrate their education this past spring. I am very concerned about the whole concept of political correctness in our nation. I think the term "American Exceptionalism" has been punctuated by the institution we know as Yale. As Yalies we celebrate history, values, brotherhood, and the future with confidence. I sense there is a tendency to have the minority drive the majority to the point that the values of the majority may be minimized or abandoned for the sake of pleasing the minority. I think this is a tragic mistake. We need to celebrate Yale as a bastion of American values, remember all of our history, be it good or bad. Let's look for the good in all of our members and focus on the positive contributions. Have I said enough that you capture the gist of my feelings? I hope so. I continue as one who interviews candidates for our school. These are exceptional young people. I want to celebrate who they are and provide them with the opportunity to grow and contribute to continuing to make Yale ever better so that our nation will be stronger and represent all people especially the majority.

September 12, 2016 10:59am

Cotesworth Pinckney, Alum

Renaming buildings and programs is a fundamental departure from a university's history. I believe it should be done only if the majority of an institution's various constituencies explicitly favor it.

An institution should avoid being swayed by the organized pressure of segments within one or two constituencies. Also the committee should keep in mind that if, for support of slavery or other racial issues, names identified with the southern part of the United States are changed and names of northerners who supported slavery are retained, many may feel this is hypocritical. Yale has been a national institution since colonial times. It should avoid action that would make it less of a national institution.

September 12, 2016 2:13pm

Kenneth Schneier, Alum

I am a 1974 Yale College graduate with a 1977 JD from Cornell. I have been active in alumni activities in NJ and, over the past 7 years, in Sarasota FL, where I am now the President of the 140-member Yale Club of the Suncoast. I am not a letter writer but felt this should be an exception. While I find racism abhorrent and know that we have not been a perfect society in the past, we learn from the past by examining it, not denying it; changing names is a form of denying our past, or at least failing to recognize that we are able to change for the better. John Calhoun was not honored for being a slave owner, but for being a great American who owned slaves when it was common and legal, as it was for most of human history.

Then, of course, what about Washington, Jefferson...?

September 12, 2016 2:49pm

Win Vitkowsky, None

Hi, I am curious who is on this committee and if there are meetings that are open to the public?

September 12, 2016 3:24pm

Benjamin Miller, Student

I was very disappointed that neither of the new residential colleges was named after Edward Bouchet 1874 GRD 1876 or Grace Hopper GRD '34. I hope the committee will recommend renaming Calhoun College after one of these eminent Yale alumni.

September 12, 2016 5:24pm

Tom Trowbridge, Alum

I am opposed to renaming tangible or intangible Yale property, including buildings, endowment funds, fellowships, professorships and the like. To honor its benefactors, Yale wished to name properties for reasons that were valid and sufficient at the time. Because some find these names

offensive based on some present day standard, is not sufficient reason to change the name. We might wish to change some aspects of our history as an institution or as a nation, but historical facts stubbornly remain. An open society should live with them. Tom Trowbridge YC `60

September 13, 2016 11:33am

Daniel E. Harris, Alum

My comments are directed only to the issue of Renaming.

Quite likely, every person after whom a Yale building is named has some quality or characteristic which would be totally unacceptable under standards of today. These people, in their day, achieved a measure of greatness sufficient to merit being identified with a Yale building. From the founding of Yale into the early 1900s, there was wide spread bias against African Americans, Jews, immigrants from countries other than England, Scotland, and northern Europe, and homosexuals. These biases were found in private clubs, academia, employment practices, housing, and many other fields, and were tolerated, if not actively engaged in, by many of our greatest leaders in government, industry, science, and literature. Yet, I would not judge one of these leaders by today's standards. My college was named after Jonathan Edwards, perhaps one of the most intolerant religious leaders of his day, but I would never suggest that the college be renamed. We cannot cleanse our history of its hateful and deplorable aspects. Rather, I suggest that we acknowledge and accept the fact that our history has been imperfect, and in so doing, we can try to make our future a better one.

Daniel E. Harris, 1959E, 1962L.

September 13, 2016 5:08pm

James Courtright, Alum

Might I suggest that for any individual, the commonly and widely held views in ones' own historical era should be removed from the character evaluation, thereby leaving one with some approximate essence of the individual.

Individuals of high character and accomplishment, separated from the then accepted norms of their respective historical period, are those for whom Yale buildings could be named. I call this the 'subtractive principle'.

This approach may avoid the problems of tying a naming decision regardless of arguable historical positions (e.g. religion, political philosophy, industry, exploitation of native peoples, immigration, etc. Conversely, if in all cases a person needs to have made significant historical achievements and needs to present individual impeccable moral credentials, the reality may be that few can meet such a standard.

In a likely case before the committee, that of JC Calhoun, one might be able to remove his stance on slavery since it is in many respects not different from many others at that time, e.g Henry

Clay. So the principle simplifies to whether the honorific attributes of an individual, <> of known [incorrect] views, are sufficiently meritorious as to justify semi-permanent recognition at Yale.

As an exercise, could any name of a Yale graduate, with identical slaveholding status and political accomplishment similar to that of Henry Clay, ever be acceptable for Yale building?

September 13, 2016 5:44pm
Carrie Flynn, Student

In regards to Calhoun College, the argument that it is a history lesson is a farce. If you wish to impart a history lesson, I encourage you to remove significant memorabilia from the college and put it on display in a history building as part of the ongoing legacy of racism at Yale. To suggest that the very people who study this history and decry its effects today wish to erase or suppress it is both illogical and offensive.

Calhoun College is not a history lesson, it is a monument. Its purpose is to honor Calhoun. If you do not believe this, merely ask what the response would be if a residential college was named Hitler College and contained stained glass windows depicting Auschwitz. Would we maintain the name in order to avoid "erasing" history? Of course not. The name of a building is a place of honor and should not be defiled by the likes of John Calhoun.

September 13, 2016 6:07pm
Lisa (Lucy S.) Adams, Alum

I believe that the name of Calhoun College should be changed. Would we tolerate a college called Speer or Hitler?

However, there should be a place to explain the rationale for the naming of the college after Vice President Calhoun, his role in government, the Civil War and his ownership of slaves. It should also explain why the college name was changed.

September 14, 2016 7:09am
David Hoffman, Alum

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important topic. I propose that the Principles on Renaming should be as follows:

A) The Yale Corporation should establish an advisory committee consisting of four faculty representatives, four alumni representatives, one undergraduate student nominated by the YCC, and one graduate or professional student nominated by the GPSS. Of the four faculty representatives, three should be chosen from three different departments of the Arts and Sciences faculty, of which at least one should be a department in the humanities or social sciences and at least one in the natural or quantitative sciences, and the fourth should be chosen from the professional school faculties. The four alumni representatives should be chosen from four well-

spaced class years, should include two alumnae, and should accurately reflect the diversity of the racial and ethnic composition of Yale's alumni. Taken as a whole, the ten members of the committee should include at least three males, at least three females, and one member from each of at least three distinct racial or ethnic minority groups.

B) The advisory committee should also have a non-voting secretary. In addition to the usual duties, such as arranging meetings, the secretary is responsible for receiving proposals for name changes from members of the Yale community, evaluating them according to these principles, and distributing to the members of the Corporation those which meet the initial evaluation criteria. A proposal may be accompanied by an explanatory statement of up to two pages in length, which shall be distributed with it at all stages of the process.

C) Any proposal received by the secretary which is passed on to the Corporation shall be distributed in writing to its members for approval of its consideration by the advisory committee, which approval shall be in writing. A proposal shall be considered approved for consideration if it is not disapproved by two or more Corporation members, with abstention counting as approval. To be clear, approval for consideration in no way constitutes endorsement or recommendation of the proposal. Its purpose is to reject out of hand any proposal which appears to at least two members of the Corporation to be frivolous, outrageous, contrary to these principles, or not in the best interest of Yale. The advisory committee may not consider any proposal which has not received this initial approval of its consideration by the Corporation. In extraordinary cases, the Corporation may debate in person the referral of a proposal to the advisory committee, in which case a majority in favor will suffice for its referral.

D) Any proposal must always be to change an existing name to some specific alternative. This excludes a two-step process, in which it is first decided if a name ought to be changed, and only then, if the answer is affirmative, is a decision made about what it ought to be changed to. The secretary shall return any proposal not meeting this criterion to its proposers, with an explanation of the required form.

E) The advisory committee shall evaluate any proposal referred to it according to a list of factors, of which some weigh FOR a proposed name change, some weigh AGAINST it, and some are prohibited from being considered either way. The factors are listed in (P), below.

F) The advisory committee should recommend adoption of a proposal for a change of name only if the factors in favor of the change CLEARLY and CONVINCINGLY outweigh those weighing against it. If the committee regards it as a close question, it should take no action.

G) The advisory committee may, by the affirmative vote of seven or more members, decide to approve a proposal, to reject it, or to take no action on it. A vote in which there are not seven affirmative votes in favor of either approving or rejecting shall be considered a decision to take no action.

H) Any decision by the advisory committee shall be communicated to the proposers, to the Corporation, and, with the approval of the President or his designee, to the Yale community.

I) If the committee votes to approve or reject a proposal, the members voting in favor shall adopt a majority report explaining the basis for their decision in light of the factors mentioned in (E), above and (P), below.

Members in the minority may adopt a minority report, explaining the basis for their disagreement with the decision, if they wish. In case of a decision to take no action, no report shall be adopted. Any report adopted shall be communicated together with the decision, as in (H) above.

J) No proposal substantially identical to a proposal which was rejected by the committee shall be considered until at least six years have passed from the date of the rejection. The secretary shall return any proposal not meeting this criterion to its proposers, with an explanation.

K) No proposal substantially identical to a proposal on which the committee decided to take no action shall be considered until at least two years have passed from the date of the decision. The secretary shall notify the proposers of a proposal not meeting this criterion, and shall either return the proposal to the proposers or retain it in possession until the deadline has passed, and then pass it on to the Corporation for initial approval, whichever alternative the proposers may prefer.

L) A proposal approved by the advisory committee shall be placed on the agenda of the Yale Corporation and considered in the ordinary course of business, according to its regular procedures.

M) In cases of persistent, repeated similar proposals which a member of the committee or of the Corporation considers to be frivolous, outrageous, contrary to these principles, or not in the best interest of Yale, the said member may request of the Corporation that a specific type or form of proposal be placed on a black list, to be maintained by the secretary of the advisory committee. The secretary shall return any proposal matching the requirements of a black list item to its proposers, with an explanation. In case of subsequent, substantially similar proposals from the same source, the secretary may elect to acknowledge receipt without further explanation.

N) Initially, the black list shall contain a single item, specifically, any proposal to remove the names "Yale", "Elihu" or "Eli" from the university or from any of its constituent schools or other organs.

O) The advisory committee is permitted, but not required, to seek public comment from members of the Yale community on any proposal. For this purpose, the proposal, together with the proposers' explanatory statement, may be published; submission of a proposal constitutes permission by the proposers for such publication.

P)

Factors weighing in FAVOR of a proposal:

1. The facility in question is known to, or used by, only a small fraction of the Yale community, and its current users favor the change by a large majority.
2. The proposed name better reflects the origins or history of the facility in question.
3. The name change is requested or required in connection with a very substantial donation intended for the repair, renovation or expansion of the facility, which will greatly improve the facility's usefulness to the Yale community.
4. In case of a new name honoring an individual, that individual's life, accomplishments or significance for Yale are already well-known to at least a segment of the Yale community (e.g. students and faculty in a particular discipline) and, in case of a current name honoring an individual, that individual's life, accomplishments or significance for Yale are not well-known to any segment of the Yale community.
5. In case of a current name honoring an individual, that individual's association with beliefs or causes utterly antithetical to Yale's values is so strong as to bring ongoing discredit upon the university.
6. The revelation of new information, not known when the facility was named, regarding the criminality or moral turpitude of the individual for which the facility was named, provided that the truth of such information has been established by clear and convincing evidence.
7. The committee's evaluation that maintaining the current name would substantially impair the level of financial support that Yale receives from alumni or other sources.

Factors weighing AGAINST a proposal:

8. The facility, as named, is "iconic". That is, it is so well-known by its current name to a large fraction of the Yale community that a change of name would lead to confusion or frustration, or would result in a large fraction of the community simply continuing to refer to it by the previous name.
9. The change of name would amount to breaking faith with the person for whom it is named, or with a donor who contributed to construction of the facility, or would lead to justified anguish or a well-founded sense of betrayal on the part of the living family members of the person for whom the facility is named.
10. The change would be widely perceived by members of the Yale community as submission to the demands of a vocal minority, that is, as granting a "heckler's veto" over the continued use of the current name. This includes any action which would be, mutatis mutandis, contrary to the spirit of the Woodward Report.
11. The committee's evaluation that removing the current name would substantially impair the level of financial support that Yale receives from alumni or other sources.

Factors which SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED by the committee.

10. The fact that certain members of the Yale community claim to be made uncomfortable, unsafe, offended, or mentally disturbed by the current name.

11. The fact that certain actions of the individual for whom the facility is named would be considered unacceptable by current standards, if they were considered unexceptional by the standards of the time and place in which the person lived.

12. The fact that the name is currently a source of controversy, strife or discontent within the Yale community, or within the larger communities of which Yale is a part.

September 15, 2016 11:57am

Leslie Dick, Faculty

I believe that renaming Calhoun College would be a positive step. I do not believe that renaming a college destroys its history or distorts our understanding of the past. Yale has the resources to create an archive of images and texts that would give a detailed account of this history (doing justice to its complexity). It is critical that Yale create space for an understanding of all the different perspectives that go into making the decision to rename. No one wishes to eradicate the historical record; on the contrary, the purpose of renaming the college would be to acknowledge our present reality and work towards a better future.

September 15, 2016 12:13pm

Adrienne Cotterell, Alum

I hope the Committee establishes guidelines on the initial naming of buildings, hopefully to avoid having to re-name them in the future.

If a building is named after a wealthy donor, can the University re-name it later if it turns out the donor behaved immorally, unethically, or criminally?

Why could the University name certain buildings after living wealthy donors (Bass Library, Schwarzmann Center), but refused to name the new residential colleges after worthy, living Yale connected people?

It seems that naming principles would lead directly to principles that would be used to rename buildings.

September 15, 2016 12:17pm

Kris Mandelbaum, Alum

Rename the school after a civil rights leader.

Martin Luther King, Whitney Young, Claude Black, Fred Hampton, Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington, Frederick Douglass just to skim the list.

September 15, 2016 12:45pm

Jonah Bader, Alum

Before coming to the topic of honorific naming, it must be admitted that a name given in exchange for a gift cannot be removed (except perhaps if the money, in modern dollars with interest, would be returned, though this may raise legal questions). Most importantly, the university itself should retain its name despite Elihu Yale's iniquities because his gift was in response to the following appeal from Cotton Mather: "If what is forming at New Haven might wear the name of YALE COLLEGE, it would be better than a name of sons and daughters. And your munificence might easily obtain for you such a commemoration and perpetuation of your valuable name, which would indeed be much better than an Egyptian pyramid." (The name Yale is a special case anyway because it is no longer simply an honor, but a globally recognized brand.)

Coming to exclusively honorific names, it should be noted that almost every residential college namesake had some connection to slavery. Indeed, the institution of Yale as a whole owed much of its early funding to the slave trade. A memorial on campus to all the slaves whose suffering benefited Yale and its alumni would be fitting, and smaller displays in particular areas would also be welcome. (Reparations in some form may also be in order, but that is a separate question.) Yet the existence of a connection to slavery, or any evil for that matter, should not automatically disqualify someone from being honored by Yale. Going forward, Yale should more carefully consider a person's entire life before naming something in his or her honor, but renaming deserves a higher standard because of the potential for unremitting controversy.

I contend that renaming is appropriate when a person's main legacy—their primary industry or cause, their life's work, their greatest achievement—is morally condemnable by modern standards, as well as by a reasonable standard of their own time. Take the issue of slavery. Ezra Stiles College is so named because Stiles was a prominent intellectual in his day and an academic reformer who rendered conspicuous service to Yale. Stiles also owned a slave (whom he manumitted) yet later contributed to the anti-slavery movement. The new plaque in Stiles College recognizing Stiles' participation in the institution of slavery is the appropriate response, not renaming the college.

John C. Calhoun was undoubtedly a powerful leader, skillful orator, and impassioned advocate for his constituents' way of life. However, there is consensus among historians that his life's work and greatest legacy was his defense of slavery, both intellectually and practically. Execrable by modern standards, his pro-slavery positions were also out of line with the beliefs and actions of many of his contemporaries. Since the beginning of African slavery, people had spoken out against the immorality of the practice, and these voices were only getting stronger during Calhoun's time.

A few comparisons may be useful. Samuel Morse held appalling pro-slavery positions and also worked actively to defend slavery. Nevertheless, he is patently honored because of his ingenious and transformative invention, the telegraph. The difference between him and Calhoun is somewhat analogous to that between Henry Ford and Joseph Goebbels. Ford was an innovator who was also rabidly anti-Semitic and worked to keep the US out of World War II; Goebbels is known for his instrumental role in helping the Nazis cement their power and perpetrate the

Holocaust. If Yale had unwisely named such colleges in the past, I would let Ford College remain and rename Goebbels College. For another example, take Benjamin Silliman, Jr., who played a critical scientific role in the early oil industry (though the college is named for his father). No one in that era knew about the perils of climate change, so Silliman should not be faulted. But today, oil/gas industry leaders (e.g., Joe Greenberg '83) should have known better.

These questions of honoring people do not stop at Yale's gates. Oskar Schindler at first worked for the Nazis and exploited Jewish labor, but he ended up devoting himself to saving Jews. Martin Luther King committed plagiarism and adultery, but he was also the hero of the Civil Rights Movement. Thomas Jefferson owned slaves and Woodrow Wilson resegregated the government, but they are remembered for being champions of democracy and human rights. We can celebrate these people and their accomplishments while being sure to acknowledge their wrongdoing. Insofar as there is value in setting up historical figures as role models, we should do this, with a sense of humility that nobody who came before us was perfect and that nobody faced with the task of selecting an honoree today will be perfect either.

September 15, 2016 1:10pm
Robert I. Finkel, Alum

One of the first priorities of this Committee should be to investigate the allegation that Elihu Yale was a slave-holder and therefore not worthy of having an institution such as Yale named after him.

September 15, 2016 1:32pm
Jordano Quaglia, Other

'What is in a 'name" makes history for its own existence in this time of political correctness. A segway: aren't trends just trends? Shouldn't we leave old names as they are? They were history of and from their time, and we are deciding to remake history by becoming Orwell's Big Brother, incurring the chance of erasing part or the whole history by doing such. We can't erase slavery; but we can relate to it and have an opinion on it, not just to say that it didn't exist. For the sake of history, which should not have solely happy endings, we should try to remember our faults by not repeating history. Leave the name, it is just a name.

September 15, 2016 5:33pm
Peter Rowson, Alum

Yale and President Salovey recently missed a opportunity to right a longstanding wrong. The decision not to rename Calhoun College was a very disappointing one, and the impression that this was essentially driven by expediency and timidity was amplified by the concurrent decision to name one of the new colleges after Benjamin Franklin, another "old white male" with absolutely no connection to Yale at all, apparently as he was favored by the donor. It is my hope that the name of one of the most, if not the most, prominent white supremacists in American

history is forever removed from Campus. As a freshman in Calhoun (class of 1978) I vividly recall my amazement when first learning about John C. Calhoun, and at the time I was already cynical enough to realize that it wasn't too terribly surprising to see his name on a Yale building. As a white man, I can only imagine how a young black Yale student feels the first time he makes the same discovery. The time to change things for the better is now.

September 15, 2016 7:55pm

William Roos, Alum

First, the committee should immediately start publishing all comments it receives, to the extent authorized by the individuals submitting comments.

Second, if any names are going to be removed because of connections to slavery, the committee and the university will have no credibility if the name of Elihu Yale continues to be associated with the university.

September 15, 2016 10:41pm

Robert Joseph, Alum

Controversial events should be judged in the context of the time when the event occurred. George Washington should not be castigated today because he was a slave owner. Naming should be judged against the mores at the time that the naming took place.

September 16, 2016 12:41pm

James Crystal, Alum/Parent

Dear Committee Members:

I learned from the YaleNews bulletin circulated by OPAC that you will be convening the following discussion: "What's in a Name? The Naming and Symbolism Controversy on University Campuses," on Monday, Sept. 26 noon-1:30 p.m. I have no doubt that this discussion will be valuable and informative, and I note that it's free and open to the community. Unfortunately, I (I assume along with many interested parties) won't be on campus that day, and I wonder whether it might make sense for OPAC to stream and archive the discussion so that it could be viewed remotely/subsequently.

I would just add that I greatly appreciate your work in service of the University community.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Crystal '86 P'20

September 17, 2016 12:05pm

Ron Sipherd, Alum

I expect the committee will be examining a wide range of issues; but three principles seem to me worth mentioning.

- The audience for its deliberations and its conclusions will extend beyond the Yale community. I expect it will function as a model for other institutions, and as a subject for social/political debate. Some thought should be given to the effect of the committee's recommendations outside Yale.

- The goals of the committee likewise extend beyond the use of paint remover. Its conclusions have the potential (among others) to enhance or diminish Yale's reputation, and the possibility of such indirect consequences is worth examining.

- It might be worth stating, or at least expressing the hope, that readers of the committee's work will approach it with open minds and a degree of charitable understanding. Customs change; names and words once acceptable become anathema; but those who invoked them were not, at least not all, to be condemned. Some comprehension of the plasticity of opinions, over time and within different cultures, is necessary to understand and properly value the committee's deliberations and conclusions.

September 17, 2016 12:23pm

Max Nova, Alum

College isn't supposed to be a "safe space" - and that's ok. Let's not erase our history like the Germans are trying to do with their WWII legacy. Let's stare our uncomfortable past right in the eye and try not to make the same mistakes again.

September 17, 2016 1:54pm

Michael Lawler, Alum

Sounds marvelously Soviet/Orwellian to me. Is this what Yale has come to? Where's the Memory Hole when you need it?

September 19, 2016 9:36am

William Stone, Student/Alum

Changing the name on Calhoun College isn't about changing the past. Such a criticism misrepresents the demand. Indeed, this criticism focuses on the least sophisticated comments offered by those who support the name change and in so doing erects a straw man. A more generous framing would acknowledge that the demand is not to ignore Calhoun's legacy, it's not to sanitize the University's history in honoring Calhoun, it's not to palliate the symptom of a disease, and it's not to make the school "safer" for overly sensitive minority students whom, I

suspect, many (clearly not all) of the proponents of keeping the name think don't deserve to be students at Yale to begin with. Instead, the demand is to clean up the toilet (censoring myself) that is the present. Our lives may be far safer and under less threat than they were in previous decades, but we're still unequal, and every step we take to put black and other minority citizens on more equal footing with white citizens is one that we should be inclined to support. What the students understand is that these monuments aren't merely a symptom of a deeper problem. No, as these monuments contribute to the continuation of bigoted attitudes in generations of current students and donors, they also threaten to make the problem worse. The name itself actively harms.

In addition, more broadly, I find our obsession with memorializing people by putting their names on buildings to be quite troubling. The notion that once named a residential college must keep its name is absurd. This is more radical than any current demand, but I'd go so far as to advocate for an expiration date for the names of the residential colleges. After so many years, the Yale Corporation can vote to keep the name or change it with the understanding that that decision is impermanent. Far from erasing or ignoring history, this move would do precisely the opposite: we'd be acknowledging those we have ignored. Having a college named after you is perhaps the ultimate honor the university can bestow on an alum. We only have a limited number of colleges and an ever-expanding pool of alumni. I have no issue with the precedent we set by changing the names of colleges. Why should the honor be permanent? Let's say President Obama were an alumnus of Yale College.

Let's also say that Yale College has fourteen named colleges and amends its corporate charter to say that the college and the graduate and professional schools can never expand. I think it would be entirely reasonable for Yale to

say: "The first black president of the U.S. is an alum of our college. We are going to make sure people who come here know that. Let's rename a college!" And who would it harm if the university decided to rename Calhoun College or my hypothetical Obama College? And what is the nature of that harm? If this offends donors, do we want their money? Do we need their money?

I agree that we may be a long way away from the end of structural racism, but I don't understand how calling for Calhoun College to be renamed is sanitizing history. And I think the University has done a poor job of explaining why it might be sanitizing history.

In contrast, I'd argue that changing the name does precisely the opposite—it complicates the history of Calhoun College in a way that reflects the complicated legacy of the man after whom it once was named.

Those who want to keep the name talk as though changing the name to "X College" means that people won't remember that it was ever called Calhoun College. They talk as though there is no way to perform the name change in a way that emphasizes the significance of the change and of what Calhoun's name has meant and what it now means, all while demonstrating quite powerfully that the meaning of his name may continue to change. Opponents of changing the name have not established that changing the name would necessarily mean that Calhoun will

never be studied and that we'd lose sight of Yale's connection to slavery. I don't see how they can do that, in large part because there are a host of ways in which the University could have changed the name while maintaining Calhoun's name on the building (e.g., renaming it Calhoun-Bouchet or Calhoun-Douglass or something like that). Moreover, the argument that by changing the name you risk forgetting Calhoun not only frames the students' demands in ungenerous terms, but also assumes that keeping the name on the building actually promotes critical reflection on the namesake's history. I find that line of argument, as currently articulated, condescending, unfair, and lacking in rigor.

Ultimately, I think much of this amounts to a failure of empathy. People like to bash white men, especially straight white men, but I think there are other privileges that even people of color have that obstructs their ability to understand the perspective of others, especially people of their own race. At no point during my nearly seven years here as a student have I felt like the legacy of Calhoun was a weight on my shoulders. Tellingly, I also never once felt like the legacy of Calhoun gave me a chip on my shoulder. Those thoughts haven't cross my mind because I've always felt as though I've had as strong of a claim (or an even stronger claim to be here) as my peers. I can't imagine that living in Calhoun proper and being called a Hounie would have made a difference. But I recognize that I went to Lawrenceville, which for good or ill does instill a sense of superiority within its students. I do think that my experiences at an elite high school that sends dozens of students to Ivy League colleges every year has given me a leg up in some respects.

I don't think there is always a problem with honoring a massive gift, but I do think that at least some of the anger in this instance comes from the fact that respecting the wishes of a wealthy individual over the requests of a fairly considerable group of alumni and current students makes the students feel even more impotent. A classmate of mine at Lawrenceville said that he opposed the student activism at Yale because the minority students should be spending their time working hard to get jobs at Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley so that they can make money and actually have real influence. I don't think it's unreasonable to look at the University's decision to name Franklin College as confirming a nugget of truth in that statement.

Really, Kingman Brewster College would have been an awesome name to pair with Pauli Murray, and I'm quite confident the name would not have received the massive negative reaction that Franklin has.

Also, the decision to keep the name of Calhoun College cannot be squared with the decision to abolish the term "master." Aware of the term's etymology, I confess that I have never opposed the name Master. Nevertheless, I think the decision to eradicate the term "master" exacerbates the anger at the decision not to rename Calhoun. President Salovey's reasoning in the email he shared with current students and alumni announcing the decision is inconsistent. Despite the fact that its linguist origins are not related to slavery, we abolish the term "master" because for some students it "carries a painful and unwelcome connotation that can be difficult or impossible for some students and residential college staff to ignore."

Calhoun certainly does the same, yet we retain the name because we need that marker to remember our complicated history. But if terms of distinct historical origins can remind us of this complicated history, then why are symbols like Calhoun more essential in remembering that history? I think the absence of a clear explanation for why it's ok to eradicate one term because it has fraught historical associations but not another is unfortunate. Perhaps President Salovey could have furnished this rationale, but I can't see it, and the email doesn't offer it.

Finally, I agree with those who argue that these decisions are relatively low-stakes. But the existence of more pressing issues is not a reason why students should refrain from mobilizing around these causes. If many of these students would instead devote more of their time jockeying for jobs at BCG or McKinsey, then I think it's a net good for them mobilize around these efforts.

One of my favorite teachers, who has a PhD from Yale in American Studies and began but didn't finish his J.D. at Harvard, takes issue to what he sees as the student's "obsession with the outward signs of equality--the focus on language--at the expense of substance." First, I reject the binary—surface and substance are inextricably bound. Not having the name on the college isn't about removing an "outward sign" of inequality! If I learned anything in my masters in education (and really I may not have learned anything), it's that stereotype threat and other factors that increase cognitive load do have a material impact on one's performance in school. I think there's a dangerous undercurrent to this critique that if not checked would also threaten the rationale of Title IX. At least for some people, being called a Hounie does trigger a response that forces them to experience cognitive pressures that other students may not have to confront.

I have never felt this way, but for reasons articulated below, I refuse to devalue the undergraduate students' perspective because I don't have an emotional response to markers that honor racist figures on campus. Indeed, I could imagine that I would feel totally different if Yale had historically flown a confederate flag in the center of campus.

Second, I suppose I would agree that the undergrads have not done a great job of articulating a clear and consistent vision. But, instead of tearing down the undergrads for failing to frame their arguments in the strongest possible terms, the University's goal my goal should be to understand their position and, if it agrees with what it sees as their underlying issue, to offer a more robust articulation of their demands. I say this for two reasons: (1) the decision to change or maintain the name will be met with public scrutiny that may be quelled if the underlying rationale for change is presented in serious terms, and (2) an educational institution is supposed to be a place where knowledge is constructed collaboratively; tearing the students down at every opportunity on something of such clear importance undermines that purpose. I think that the account I offer above is a much fairer understanding of the students' stance on the Calhoun-naming issue than what the University has thus far acknowledged.

All best,
William

September 19, 2016 10:35am

Betti Hellman, None

As a white person with no ties to Yale, I fully understand that my input has the lowest possible weight on this issue. But I feel that as a Connecticut born and raised individual I should add my name to those who feel that changing the names of buildings that honor and pay tribute to a history of slavery and racism is long past due. America and Connecticut be should shamed by this history, not celebrating it. I would like to suggest that we instead honor Edward Alexander Bouchet, the first African American graduate of Yale. Thank you for your consideration.

September 20, 2016 9:48am

Andy Hickner, Staff

Last fall's naming decisions got Yale national attention for all the wrong reasons. I'm glad President Salovey realized that the process by which the decisions were made was flawed. There was a perception that the Corporation membership and alumni donors played a decisive role in the process; consequently, I would suggest that the process be revised to erect a firewall between the renaming process and these 2 parties. I understand alumni donors expect that their gifts come with the right to select the name of the college they are helping to fund; if this must remain the case, it would be helpful for the University to be explicit and transparent about it.

September 21, 2016 10:46am

Arthur Gowran, Alum

We cannot eviscerate history. It would be a tragic mistake to remove Calhoun's name from the residential college. Capitulating to the outrageous demands of students, who are neither historically informed nor aware, will only incite them to make more outrageous demands. Where will this stop? Are the names of Washington and Jefferson, both slave-owners, to be removed from universities, monuments in DC and throughout the country? These men, warts and all, are part of our history. Keep their names and use them and their history to educate now and in the future. The primary reason we have Holocaust museums in cities and towns throughout the nation is to remind our citizenry of the horrors of Nazism so that it never repeats itself.

September 21, 2016 5:01pm

Vic Strasburger, M.D., Alum

I'm sure you'll be getting all sorts of comments, ranging from "Don't do it!" to "Let's rename everything."

My suggestion: No renaming unless there is consistent and overwhelming evidence that the current named person was corrupt, unethical, or guilty of a crime. Historical context MUST be taken into account (e.g., John Calhoun and slavery).

September 21, 2016 5:08pm

Eileen Funke, Alum

I hope that through naming we could include the idea that we aspire, as a community and individually, to bring out the best in each other.

September 21, 2016 5:22pm

John Tyler, Alum

I see absolutely no need to rename anything. History is history is history. It is feckless to rewrite it, applying today's sensibilities to yesteryear's choices. Explain yes; deny history no. Yale gains nowt by red lining its moral rectitude meter.

September 21, 2016 5:48pm

Mitchell Mirviss, Alum

Folks, re: Calhoun College, the decision is surely difficult in one sense but easy in another. John C. Calhoun is one of the most despicable figures in American history. The most that can be said of him is that he was a leading public servant of his day (VP, Senator of many years, intellectual leader of the South). His public service is of no positive consequence because, after Andrew Jackson became President, it was given in the service of evil, a rancid cause that haunts us still. He used his great intellectual gifts to thwart fundamental human rights and to create the intellectual framework and catalyst for the Civil War. Millions suffered horrible fates and tortured lives in part due to his evil brilliance.

Calhoun College was named after Calhoun to honor him, and for no other purpose. That honor may have faded with time (I certainly never realized it during my time at Yale), but its obscurity is no more. The genie is out. By keeping the name, Yale does not promote dialogue and reasoned debate -- rather, it continues to honor Calhoun and his legacy. The intent may be otherwise, but that is immaterial. Does Yale want to continue to honor a man bearing such significant responsibility for such evil? How can it expect students of color to live in a college bearing the name of perhaps the foremost national proponent of racism and slavery? This is a horrible stain on Yale that must be exorcised. It cannot be corrected with tepid palliatives and half-measures.

That said, I fully understand the loyalty of Calhoun students and alumni to their college. I would be heartbroken if the name of Branford were wiped away. The easy answer is to try to make everyone happy -- keeping the name of Calhoun but offering various courses, institutes, and other goodies to ease our consciences and to provide public opportunities to make clear that we don't actually continue to honor John C. Calhoun's legacy. If only it were so easy to ignore the fundamental truth of what the name means and signifies. Yale demeans its own integrity and values, indeed its very commitment to intellectual honesty, by suggesting that any such palliative can compensate for this continued memorial to evil. No half-measures are possible here, short of renaming the college "Rory Calhoun College." That, I would enthusiastically support. Even

better, find a name that Calhouners would welcome and perhaps even prefer. My choice: [Gary] Trudeau College.

Who better exemplifies the spirit of undergraduate life at Yale, the devastating wit and irreverence, brilliant insight, unrivaled humor, and [counter]cultural impact that every Yalie wants to emulate in some way?

Plus, by leaving out the first name, you can also cater to the Canadian contingent. Trudeauxites nee Calhouners would be the envy of us Branfordites.

I do feel for the Calhouners, and, if I were in their shoes, I'd be torn as well. But loyalty, college pride, camaraderie, friendship, and even alumni support should take a back seat when the price is a profound and indelible insult to students of color (and all people of color, for that matter). Yale is better than this.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views.

Mitch Mirviss (Branford '78)

September 21, 2016 8:26pm
Scott Williams, Alum

I am a Calhoun College alumnus ('76) and proud of my residential college affiliation. I am not necessarily proud of John C. Calhoun, although he was a prominent and effective statesman, but I am not embarrassed by John C. either, since he was a leader of his times. Yale has far more serious concerns to address than renaming Calhoun College. Political correctness seems to be consuming Yale's very core principles and this should be President Salovey's principal concern. The attacks on freedom of expression as exposed by the Christakis episode, as well as other incidents, do great harm to Yale's reputation. I am closely monitoring the Jack Montague expulsion case and reading all of the pleadings and will follow the trial. Yale's conclusion of a sexual assault better be proven in this case because Yale's Title IX proceedings clearly denied that Yale senior reasonable due process rights (i.e.- no right to counsel or to confront his accusers with cross-examination). Yale had better defend its case through trial and be fully exonerated by defeating the plaintiff's assertions, because this alumnus will view any out-of-court settlement as evidence that Yale has lost its moral high ground and is insensitive to the due process rights of its own students.

These are the sorts of core principle issues where the Yale administration should cast its focus and stop fooling around with meaningless symbolic issues like the Calhoun renaming.

September 21, 2016 10:07pm
James Guyot, Alum

Elihu Yale was a racist and a murderer and even his tombstone back in England chided him for how he had made his fortune out in India. But that didn't keep me from accepting admission to

the country's best political science department with a Cowles Fellowship rather than joining the University of Michigan with a more financially rewarding State College Scholarship, where my local loyalty as a Michigan farm boy should have inclined me. (Nor did I feel a need to compare the virtue of Alfred Cowles III to that of Horace H. Rackham.) So I won't ask you to change the name of a great university. May mother Yale long be known as a place honored for what members of our community have accomplished and less as a palace of political correctness.

September 21, 2016 10:40pm
Nicholas Gall, Alum

I sent the following email to President Salovey on April 29, 2016. I would ask the Committee to consider my proposal as well. Thank you.

President Salovey,

I understand your rationale for retaining the name of Calhoun College. However, I think there is an overlooked option for honoring John C. Calhoun while bringing much needed context to his place in history.

I propose that Yale add a second name to the college: the name of one of John C. Calhoun's slaves. In this way, we could still refer to "Calhoun College", yet at the same time honor one of Calhoun's slaves with the same surname.

Such a renaming would send a powerful message: Calhoun's slaves are every bit his equal and they are every bit as worthy of remembrance as he is.

I nominate Mennemin Calhoun: "The oldest recorded slave was Mennemin Calhoun. (Per tradition, all the slaves at Fort Hill were assigned the Calhoun name.) In 1849, it was reported that she was 112 years old. Her husband, Polydore, also lived a long life, and they had numerous descendants. Legend has it that Mennemin and Polydore were first-generation slaves from Africa."

<http://www.clemson.edu/about/history/properties/fort-hill/african-americans.html>

So the new name of Calhoun College could be the "Mennemin and John C. Calhoun College". That way, when people shorthanded it to "Calhoun College", some could be referring to John and some to Mennemin. Problem solved.

I hope serious consideration will be given to this proposal, even though it is belated.

Sincerely,

-- Nick Gall
Class of 1981

September 22, 2016 2:13pm
Frank Berall, Alum

The logic, or more appropriately, illogic of renaming could be extended to replacing the name of the city and state of Washington with that of Martin Luther King, since George Washington was a slave owner. Similar replacement of names of prominent American slave owners could then also be done, including Yale. This whole renaming fuss should be abandoned. Who are we to rewrite history?

September 23, 2016 6:34pm
Steven Carlson, Alum

Professor Witt:

Thank you for soliciting comments on naming issues at Yale.

Five brief points, please:

1. Everything changes in this world, and names need not be retained forever.

A name that may have seemed appropriate at one time may not always be appropriate.

2. One criterion for changing a name might be that the named person (or entity) is closely associated with something that society finds morally repugnant. Murder, genocide and other such things would appear to be subject to universal condemnation in the United States. If Yale had a building named after Al Capone or Adolf Hitler, I doubt there would be support for retaining such a name. [Frankly, I think slavery is also one such thing, and on that basis, John Calhoun's name should be removed in my opinion, given his ardent support of slavery.] 3. A second criterion might be whether the named person is associated with an activity that is extremely offensive to significant parts of the Yale community: i.e., students, faculty, administrators, alumni and Connecticut residents. While there is subjectivity in making such a determination, I think there are objective ways of doing an evaluation. (At a minimum, one would think most felonies would be among such offensive activities.) 4. A third criterion might be to consider whether the reason a named person was considered worthy at the time of the naming might have become much less important over time. Arguably, for example, a scientist might have been honored for a discovery it was later concluded had been made by someone else.

(Similarly, there may have been some desire in the 1930s to promote a reconciliation with former Confederate States by naming a college after a southerner who graduated from Yale. But in 2016, that reason would appear much less important than the current need to give real effect to the Fourteenth Amendment (equal protection of the laws) and to make Yale a welcoming place for all of its community.) 5. Finally, it might be appropriate for Yale to be less willing to change the name of a building or program named after a donor of that building or program than the name of some formerly esteemed person who is so honored. But of course, Yale would be wise to reject gifts at the outset from would-be donors of self-named buildings or programs if such association would violate the first or second criteria above and thereby dishonor Yale.

September 25, 2016 9:12pm
Jonathan Fichter, Alum

To evaluate the impact of any actions the committee might be considering, I suggest we weigh most heavily what students of color might feel during their first year or two on campus. How can we do our utmost to make Yale truly feel like home? Is there a way to keep the name while sending a strong and enduring message that we are committed to facing history, confronting racism in ourselves and our institution, and working towards a better future? If we change the name, can we ensure that we will continue to hold ourselves accountable for racism in the past and present so that we will not lose the motivation to think critically about how we might become the most welcoming and inclusive university we can be? As a white alumnus, I still have a lot to learn about what might be the best course of action, but I hope that we are finding the right questions to ask.

September 26, 2016 12:09pm
Richard Swingle, Alum/Parent

Dear President Salovey,

As an active Calhoun alumnus over the last 50 years, I am writing to urge the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming not to change the name of Calhoun College.

I surveyed my Calhoun friends and found no interest whatsoever in changing the name of our college. Most felt, as I do, that history cannot be changed 200 years later.

But to be fair, I believe a much larger survey of all Calhoun alums is in order. A direct email or postcard survey would surely be worthwhile.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,
Richard S. Swingle
Calhoun College
1966

September 28, 2016 10:05am
Philip Weber, Alum

New York, New York

September 28, 2016

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am a member of the Calhoun College class of 1978, and actively participated in student government in Calhoun under Master Charles Davis and Dean Eustace Theodore. I received the Cogswell Award upon graduation for service to the College. About a year ago, I wrote to President Salovey and Dean Holloway in support of retaining the name of my College. I was pleasantly surprised when the decision recently came down that the university would retain the name. I am writing to you now to express my thoughts about the utility of a committee devoted to establishing standards for the renaming of Yale's buildings and other places.

I am disappointed and dismayed, like many others with whom I have spoken, by the appointment of a committee seemingly for the purpose of taking a mulligan on the Calhoun decision, which apparently arises from relentless pressure from some faculty, students, and outsiders. President Salovey has stated in no uncertain terms that the Calhoun decision will be revisited once your committee has done its work. This shows an absence of leadership, and a lack of conviction in the original decision-making process, which was announced with great fanfare and involved massive input from many sources. Dressing up a do-over by appointing a committee seems like a cynical way to provide a pretext to reverse a difficult decision that was always bound to be unpopular in certain quarters.

As was endlessly mooted in the initial Calhoun discussion, any decision to change that name (or really any other name on campus) presents a slippery slope. Stepping onto that slippery slope will have unintended consequences and will lead to no good. Most of the Colleges and other buildings on campus are named for people (although a few are named for unexceptionable places), and people will have their moral failings. Historical figures should not be judged by modern standards of ethics and behavior. Furthermore, it would be impossible to establish a Bad Person test that would not sweep away many cherished names on campus, including perhaps even that of Yale itself.

If you do decide to establish renaming principles, please consider well that names should not be changed lightly, for evanescent reasons of the moment, or under pressure from special interest groups. Place names at a 300-year-old university become institutionalized, and in so doing have become part of the fabric of many people's lives. These people's experiences, and therefore their memories, are associated with these institutions. To change a name rips away an important part of a person's past. I do not see a pressing need for your committee, but if you do decide to act, please give due weight to the feelings of people who have attachments to these names and places.

Philip S. Weber

September 28, 2016 12:35pm
John Keller, Alum

The name Pauli Murray for one of the new colleges is political correctness gone mad. Almost anything to the extreme like this is a mistake.

September 28, 2016 5:31pm
Matthew Hamel, Alum

You might be interested in this podcast, which raises a number of issues in the context of war memorials -- whom should we honor and whom not, and why? -- that I think would be directly applicable to your work. You may even want to speak to the professor being interviewed to help give your work a theoretical underpinning:

<http://philosophybites.libsyn.com/cecile-fabre-on-remembrance>

Good luck. I do not envy you.

September 30, 2016 2:41pm
Joseph DeNicola, Alum

I applaud the formation of the committee and believe Prof. Witt is starting from the right place: “our core values.” But what are these core values?

They don’t seem to be specified any place that can be found by Google.
Yale should begin this process by developing a value statement, adopted by the Corporation.

Naming is an honor that should be earned. Yale.edu indicates that Yale “engages with people and institutions across the globe in the quest to promote cultural understanding, improve the human condition, delve more deeply into the secrets of the universe, and train the next generation of world leaders.” These people and the leaders of such institutions should be the ones honored with a naming. Accomplishments should be emphasized, but potential and strength of character also considered. And there should be a direct connection between the named and the University. I recognize the practical considerations of fund raising and believe it is reasonable for the University to allow some naming based on major gifts. I agree with the current policy that residential colleges not be named after living persons, but suggest Yale also should preclude donors from having undue influence on these same naming decisions.

Importantly, ALL naming should be revocable. This is where a value statement could be particularly helpful. Behavior or actions in direct conflict with our values should be the broad basis for revocation. I recognize this is a significant challenge and a slippery slope. To make the decision-making process less subjective, the committee should establish a set of factors, based on the values, that would be considered in renaming decisions.

The most complex issue relates to actions and beliefs from the distant past, when societal values were different than today. If we think of human, environmental, animal, and other rights as a progression, then decisions should be based on where the person fell on a spectrum. For example, was the person (i) regressive, (ii) an active obstacle to progress or strong advocate for status quo, (iii) a facilitator of the status quo, (iv) a passive objector, or (iv) an activist for

progress. Future names should come primarily from the last category; renaming candidates from the first two categories. We should not shy away from letting history be the judge. In the case of the acts of organizations led by honorees, the leader should be accountable for the acts of the organization. Consideration also should be given to later expressions of regret for acts or changes in view expressed by the person, i.e. no automatic, permanent condemnation for an act or expression.

The objective of renaming is NOT to cause us to forget the acts or beliefs of the individual whose name is removed from a property. Rather, it is to remove the honor associated with the naming. I would encourage the University to post a permanent placard on any property that is renamed, explaining the renaming event.

October 3, 2016 11:59am
William Kenney, Alum

I may be the only curmudgeon out there, but here are my thoughts about your efforts.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YALE COMMITTEE ON RENAMING By Bill Kenney 1955

What is the real purpose of this committee? Will developing guidelines for renaming icons of Yale's history contribute anything to the university, society or the world? How far back will you go? Did Elihu walk on water?

Shall we purge the names of Washington and Jefferson from the thousands of places they appear because they owned slaves? Or will we take a more holistic view of anybody's contributions?

Slavery has been a plague on society for thousands of years. We still see various forms of it today. The institution thrived here for about 100 years.

The leaders of our country differed about both its value and its morality, but, after terrible prices were paid in blood, treasure and families, ultimately outlawed it 150 years ago. None of these leaders were perfect in their judgment or behavior, but they were a real part of the history of this great nation. Is worshiping at the altar of regret productive?

We are still living with fallout from our bout with slavery. The Jim Crow mindset still lingers in some people. Others look at everything around them seeking hints of racism. What will renaming a building at Yale do to change that? What will it do for the self-enslaved communities of color where family breakdown, rejection of educational opportunities, the tyranny of criminals, and the perception (or perhaps the reality) police persecution prevent all but the heroic from escaping? Where will the new ideas to address these problems come from? Certainly not from committees. Will the faculty at Yale and other such institutions focus on nitty-gritty solutions to these problems, or merely settle for symbolic gestures?

Institutions such as Yale have long held that their purpose is to promote understanding and tolerance for all views; critical thinking about them and civil discourse over conflicts. The goal is to prepare enlightened leaders for many walks of life. These days single issue extremists seem to be driving the decisions of these institutions. There are many such in the headlines today: the NRA, the ACLU, Black Lives Matter, Pro Life, Pro Choice, the PC Police, obsessive environmentalists, and the sensitivities of the LGBT community to name a few. What will this

committee do to liberate the minds of those stuck in the quagmire of extremist views, and catalyze consideration of the impact of their single issue on the whole of society? Students had one rule during my years at Yale: behave like a gentleman. I realize that the makeup of the Yale community has changed markedly since I graduated, but the principles of civil behavior have not. Certainly the profane abuse of the Master of Silliman College by a student who did feel “at home” hardly qualifies as “gentlemanly” behavior. Nor does the banning of black girls from a frat party.

And what happened to discipline, or even “tough love”? Would Robert Peace still be alive today if the Master (there’s that dirty word again) of Pierson College had followed up to actually stop Robert from selling drugs on campus when he learned about it? Did Yale really have to hire back the extremist who smashed the stained glass window in Calhoun? Did the distressed student who abused Professor Christakis, deprived Yale of the teaching of his wife, and markedly changed the careers of the two ever see any discipline?

Was the fraternity investigated?

Is Yale still calling rape “nonconsensual sex? Yes I know that the captain of Yale’s basketball team left school over allegations of sexual misconduct, but what was the outcome of those allegations? Are there no longer any public consequences for uncivil and cowardly behavior?

On another subject, does the Yale administration really believe that the color of a person’s skin or his/her gender automatically confers diversity of thought? That sounds like the BS the human resources (HR) department of my company tried to foist on us back in the 1980s. Here come the quotas! Look at the current US political race. A couple of old white men brought new ideas while the woman spouted more of the same. How about that other old white man, Pope Francis, who is reorienting the thinking of the perennially moribund Catholic church? If one thinks about it there are many more examples to cite.

On a more mundane level, I had a half-dozen female engineers work for me over the years. One of those was Hispanic. She counted twice on the HR “Diversity” scorecard. They were all competent professionals, but none brought anything special to their work. The best creative idea I saw in 38 years in the business came from an older white male. His superbly elegant idea was the key to implementing first-of-a-kind technology in a huge chemical plant. Which engineer would you want on your team?

That is not to say that truly diverse thinkers from all cultures are not valuable. The challenge is to find them.

In Chicago 3000 black people have been shot by other black people in the first nine months of 2016. What is anybody doing about that? Black Lives Matter would rather march in the streets calling for the death of policemen (either white or black) than try to change something fundamental in troubled communities.

I would suggest that Yale’s option for flagellation be dumped immediately and this august committee’s talents be diverted to changing whatever issues in the Yale environment turn out to be fundamentally divisive. This might be an appropriate project for the “Grand Strategy” program. With success there, perhaps the students involved will go into our society with some idea how to change the things that are strangling communities of color in the real world.

October 3, 2016 4:56pm

James Courtright, Alum

James Madison letter to Thos Jefferson may 12 1786 (Second sentence appears to ask a critical question as to whether it is the 'worthy' or those doing the honoring.)

All of the following is the original Madison letter ... any remaining italics are those of Madison.

"The execution of your hints with regard to the Marquis¹ and Rochambeau would be no less pleasing to me than to you. I think with you also that the setting up the busts of our own worthies would not be doing more honor to them than to ourselves.

October 3, 2016 11:11pm
Michael Eckblad, Student

I encourage the committee to consider the role honor plays in who we, as a society, choose to name our institutions and edifices after.

October 4, 2016 9:41am
Lex Brown, Student

Hi - I haven't done enough research to be able to suggest a new name, but I have a few thoughts.

- Given the circumstances, the new name ought to be of a person, or peoples, who were abolitionists. Let's honor someone(s) who worked against human bondage, not for it.
- Somewhere under the physical name of the college (on the gate or building it's displayed on) it should say "Formerly Calhoun College" so as not to erase the history of Calhoun, the former administration of the University and their approval of human bondage, but also to show that we live in a different time, and changes have been made.
- Somewhere near the entrance(s) of the college there ought to be a plaque that describes the protests last fall, the names of the core students who initiated those protests (or at the very least that they were started by black women), and that the university came to the process of name-changing by way of student protest, discussion, and organization.
- There should be a small exhibit inside Calhoun College about Calhoun's slave history, the history of Yale with regard to slavery, a historical account of how the Windows were placed in the dining hall, Yale's role in advocating for and against civil rights through the years, the story of the 2015 protests, and also of Corey Menafee. This exhibit should be curated by an outsider to Yale, who works professionally with histories of slavery, colonization, and civil rights. This exhibition should be on view for at least a year after the renaming, ideally 5 to 10 years.
- The new name doesn't have to be of a singular person. It could be of an entity of people, or the name where those notable people worked. e.g. (This is completely fictional) Colbrook College, named for the nearby town in which a Connecticut abolitionist group met.

The most important thing is that Yale properly historicize this moment, and that it not use flowery language to gloss over its role in supporting inequality. That is a frequent habit of Ivy League schools (I went to Princeton for undergrad and the alumni magazine published a flattering article about some slavery-advocating alumni). It's beyond "offensive" or "hurtful" which implies personal injury. What it is is deplorable, Unacceptable, and ethically wrong for institutions as elite as Yale and Princeton to be so caught up in glorifying in their racist pasts that they can't make the choice to not just represent an equitable future, but to be cultural and academic leaders in that regard. Racism is not cool. I don't know why the dominant (white) institutions have always found it so hard to acknowledge it and fight against it. Dismantling supremacy is one of the coolest things a person or administration or institution can do. I would be proud of Yale if Yale could become a bold leader in this regard, rather than a fearful entity that supports the validity and humanity of the Other with resignation. Yale has the power to send an important message.

Thanks for reading.

October 4, 2016 4:18pm
Christopher Potts, Alum

Admittedly John Calhoun is an important historical figure. So is Adolf Hitler. A Yale residential college should not be named for either of them.

October 5, 2016 8:18am
Thomas Eastman, Alum

I would like to know the names of my surviving class-mates who graduated in 1955.

October 5, 2016 5:50pm
Abram Claude, Jr., Alum

I am totally opposed to changing the name of Calhoun College where I am a Fellow and where I lived as a member of the Class of 1952. Calhoun served his country all his life in major positions including Vice President of the United States. Yes, he was a slave owner but so were Thomas Jefferson, George Washington and Eli Yale, At that time in history it was not considered improper or immoral to own slaves and it was not just in the South. Many Northern families had slaves for household work and farming.

This political correct action is nonsensical as carried to the extreme we would have to rename Yale, the Washington Monument and the Jefferson Memorial and half the avenues in Washington, DC. Anyone who has studied history knows this and changing the names of buildings does not change history. And while I am at it I think changing the title Master is one of the silliest things I can think of as the root of the title goes back centuries in the academic and other fields long before America was settled by the English, French and other Europeans. Every private preparatory school has a Headmaster and the teachers are all Masters. And how about Master Carpenters and Master Musicians, etc. I think you get my point that the title Master has

an ancient history and does not relate to only those who owned slaves. Heaven help us if we turn the asylum over to the uneducated inmates.

October 6, 2016 12:58pm
Osman Guler, Alum/Parent

Dear Committee,

I am a class of 1977 student, and was in Calhoun. My son, Timur Guler, is currently a junior in Calhoun. I had fun memories of Calhoun during my years there, and suggested my son choose Calhoun, too. I was born in Turkey so I can only appreciate what slavery meant intellectually, not at a gut level.

But, I gave a lot of thought to the subject during the Calhoun alumni exchanges, and thought about writing then, but didn't. I'd like to share my thoughts with the committee now.

I am against changing the name. It's not because I approve of what John C. Calhoun did, but changing the name would set a precedent that would be hard to stop. What names would be changed next? Surely, name-changing would not stop with Calhoun! Clearly, he was not all alone in these activities, and other people, much later, thought of him highly enough to be deserving of his name on a college.

Changing Calhoun's can't undo the long history of slavery in the United States, either. That is not to say that we should white-wash history. I agree with the people who suggest viewing Calhoun and his times for what it is: the history of the US about 200 years ago. We can all find faults with the past looking back. Do we even have a clue what future generations, say 100 years from now, will think of us today?

Finally, name-changing is a tricky business. Once you start down on that road, it could lead to multiple name changes.

Look at St. Petersburg. Recently, right after the attempted coup on July 15 in Turkey, the parliament hastily changed the name of the iconic Bosphorous Bridge to honor the memories of the civilians killed during the night of the uprising. Was a good idea? Surely, it was the sentimental thing to do, but I'm not sure it was the right thing to do.

Respectfully submitted,

Osman Guler
Prof. of Mathematics, UMBC. Baltimore, MD

p.s. These comments reflect my opinions, not necessarily my son's. Usually, he has his own opinions on most things.

October 6, 2016 1:54pm

Alexander Zubatov, Alum

If you take a few seconds to step back from the heat of the cultural moment and reflect upon what you are doing, you will see how utterly absurd and Orwellian this entire enterprise is. Consider the very name "Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming," which sounds like something Stalin would've come up with while attempting to whitewash Soviet history of references to tsars, saints and that sort of thing. The act of erecting a one-issue litmus test for whitewashing American history of references to slavery is equally myopic and dystopian (if you think the difference is that you are doing the good Lord's work in furtherance of a just cause, you'd have to agree that the Soviets surely thought the same thing).

This nation has become obsessed with race, racism, slavery, discrimination and the cancer of regressive, zero-sum, winner-take-all identity politics, with the result that ideologues on the left and right are ensuring Americans are divided, polarized and pitted against each other based on their most superficial identifications. Yale, like many institutions of higher education in America, appears to have lost sight of the fact that part of the mission of an elite educational institution should be to avoid trend-hopping and to remain above the fray, to stand back from the dust cloud of our present-day turmoil and avail itself of the more nuanced and distanced vantage points conferred by academic disciplines such as history and philosophy, which further deep reflection rather than shallow proclamations and knee-jerk actions. By contrast, a university that is constantly bobbing and weaving in fear as a response to every whim of impulsive students who have not yet acquired the ability to stand back and think is a university that has lost sight of its educational mission. It is a university being run by spineless technocrats and cynical profiteers afraid of losing a few dollars for a few days on account of being branded "racist" in some hysterical student screed, Youtube'd shriek or viral tweet. I have no doubt whatsoever that those who act most rashly today will be judge most harshly by history tomorrow. What we need today is not the renaming of buildings but a re-framing of the entire debate so that the question is not under what conditions we should or shouldn't rename buildings, but rather, why we have come to a point in our culture where people have become so over-determined by what Max Weber referred to as their "status groups" (races, gender affiliations, sexual proclivities, etc.) to such an extent that we are blinded to the common good of our society as a whole. We are, to say this another way, in dire need of those who take the long view. To quote Bertrand Russell, "The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts," or in Yeats' memorable words, "The best lack all conviction, while the worst / Are full of passionate intensity." These words, more than ever, are apt characterizations of the dispiriting juncture at which our society and our purported institutions of higher learning have arrived.

October 6, 2016 6:27pm

John Fontana, Alum

There is no more meaning to naming a building than there is to naming a football stadium. Auction off the name to the highest bidder for 5 years at a time, then do it again - only in that

way will you make sure that the identity of Yale and its institutions are nor not made obsolete or offensive by history, as it is rewritten and reinterpreted. Why not a Coke College or a Taco Bell College - or an In Loving Memory of (insert here the name of someone's mom or dad) College? Who pays the most, wins naming rights. Follow fashion, do not try to lead seems to be the lesson.

How about an Obama College, for a decade or so until it falls from favor, then perhaps a Chevy Chase or Gerald Ford College if either one comes back into fashion?

October 6, 2016 7:03pm
Justin Wang, Student

My most idealistic hopes for what the committee will recommend and how its recommendations will be put in practice focus around:

- 1) accepting that names for physical places where students, faculty, staff, and community members do their work in, spend their time in, and ultimately identify with some part of are necessarily honors for whom the place is named for
- 2) acknowledging that giving such an honor to any figure whom history has ultimately deemed to have actively worked against human freedom, thinking, and dignity causes real hurt to anyone who must either explicitly or implicitly respect this honor (i.e. a student having to say they belong to Calhoun college)
- 3) providing other means of recognizing, understanding, and reflecting on the ugly parts of history, so as to not erase a memory but also not perpetuate an undeserved honor and injustice to the present
- 4) establishing channels for people to actively reflect on who the people behind the names were, as the present context evolves over time
- 5) for every named space, designate someone with the responsibility of being the mediator for debate about the name. For example, for the naming of each residential college, the head of college would make sense. For a classroom in an academic building, the department chair
- 6) create some democratic mechanism that if cannot directly change a name (obviously corporation wouldn't be too happy with that), at least force a larger investigation to be had, force a justification from the corporation

These are my ideals, even though I've tried to also keep them practical. In the end, I know with even the best intent and effort, the Yale corporation can't be perfect and I don't expect it to be. But given this, I wish it would be honest with itself and its imperfections. I think this is ultimately what will lead to a healthy corporation - rest of the community

relationship: honesty. To give a hypothetical example, suppose the corporation really did make a particular naming decision because of a monetary incentive. If the corporation went about announcing the decision as if the money had no effect, then people will be rightly suspicious and distrustful, and you'll see the sort of turmoil that happened all of last year. But if the corporation just from the start told everyone, "We needed the money, so we had to sell the name," I think people would be disappointed but at least respect the honesty. And I even think in this way the corporation could become an EXAMPLE for the rest of the community on how to be open in one's thought process in general.

Which is to say, while I am certainly really interested in the specific content that your committee delivers, I'm also more fundamentally interested in the transparency, honesty, and openness of the corporation. You can decide on whatever principles you want, but as long as you're honest about how you got to them, I'll be able to respect them. But if there's anything remotely fishy, I think all your work will still be missing the problem that originally motivated your creation, which is closing the gap of distrust between the community and the organization.

I finally want to say thank you for your work and engagement of the community.

Justin

October 6, 2016 11:36pm
Oliver Mesmer, Student

Hi. I'm a student in Pierson. I know that what you're working on must be incredibly hard. There's so much painful history built into the walls of this institution. And so much good that we can do with reflecting on that legacy.

Please, please, please, let's honor people who deserve to be honored. People who used their power to help, uplift and empower disadvantaged groups and never used it to subjugate, disempower, or enslave the human beings who walked this earth alongside them so many years ago. You have an opportunity to make history by adjusting our focus onto true heroes of Yale rather than simply men with money and power earned from the labor of others. Thank you for taking on this task. Please hear our students voices. They are raspy and faded since they are so tired of yelling, fighting, pleading for recognition.

But many will still choose to speak. Honor their words with actions and we will be grateful. Thank you for your efforts.

-Oliver

October 7, 2016 10:21am
Lucy Braun, Alum

I was in Calhoun College and have followed the debate with great interest. I understand and respect the positions of both sides--but in the end, I think attempting to "correct" problems

through renaming does little to educate people or change the trajectory of our progress on these issues. Better, in my opinion, to leave names as is and ensure that our history--the good and the bad--is acknowledged so that it can be used in its full force for future good.

October 9, 2016 1:49pm

Dara Purvis, Alum

I feel strongly that Calhoun College should be renamed. I am thrilled at the more inclusive choices for new residential colleges, particularly recognizing Pauli Murray, but this is a context in which more speech does not undo the ongoing harm of bad speech.

October 10, 2016 8:32am

Malcolm Pearson, Alum

I am a graduate of Yale College and Calhoun, Class of 1978. I have given a lot of thought to the issue of the name of my college, to which I was deeply committed as an undergraduate and where I was awarded a prize for college service at graduation in our courtyard.

But to think more generally, let me suggest two principles to include in assessing the appropriateness of honoring an historical figure by naming an architectural feature or institutional post, or by exhibiting a statue or painting. If the views or practices of this historical figure are repugnant to contemporary sensibility, then we should inquire if they were part of a broad social consensus then existing or if other and better views and practices were in fact available to this historical figure. In other words, were his views and practices part of an unchallenged social framework or did the figure specifically choose them in a time when they were opposed by a significant portion of the society in which he or she lived. A second principle would be to assess the specific result of a historical figure's views and practices. If they had little historical impact then they might be discounted in part. But if they resulted in a result, such as a war or genocide, that was widely viewed at the time as harmful or even calamitous then those views and practices should be weighted more heavily.

In reference to these principles, may I say that Calhoun fails on both to merit retaining his name. He chose to defend slavery at a time when it was widely and increasingly viewed by his contemporaries as a morally unacceptable practice. And though he died before seeing the fruit of his intellectual labor, as the father of the doctrine of nullification he provided a philosophical basis for secession. It is in fact fair to lay the calamity of the Civil War in part at Calhoun's feet.

It is sheer anachronism to expect historical figures to hold our contemporary social views. I defer therefore in Calhoun's case to the opinion of Andrew Jackson, his exact contemporary. Of his Vice President, Jackson said succinctly, "I would hang him if I could."

Thank you for your work.
Malcolm Pearson

Calhoun 1978

October 10, 2016 11:39am
Harold Hammet, Alum

October 10, 2016
Dictate from Lincoln Mass.

[Re-submitted]

October 6, 2016

To the Committee,

One of your obvious challenges is: Is there an enduring principle that nullifies naming a Yale building after a person who practiced or advocated Slavery, regardless of that person's accomplishments? That is hardly a new thought. "For there is not a just man upon the earth who doeth good and sinneth not." [1] Also to what extent must the person's contemporary history and culture be considered, not just currently reigning attitudes?

Consider that, historical imaging aside, slave state Connecticut was probably a very comfortable place for John C. Calhoun as a Yale student. Slavery began to be established there a few years after Connecticut's founding in 1636.

[2] Connecticut's Gradual Abolition Act in 1784 provided that all slaves born after March 1st, 1784 would be freed when they reached age twenty-five.

On August 1, 1797, the law was amended to reduce the age of freedom from twenty-five to twenty-one. The bill was not a complete abolition act. Slaves born before the start date remained enslaved until death or they were freed by their owners. Slavery did not completely end in Connecticut until 1848, only two years before Calhoun's death. [3]

Beloved at Yale, Benjamin Silliman, Yale 1796, was one of Calhoun's, Yale 1804, mentors as a faculty member, although he was only three years older.

Silliman's mother owned slaves at the family Fairfield, Connecticut plantation. He inherited them and continued to use them in violation of Connecticut's Gradual Abolition law. [4] On July 4th, 1832, Silliman gave a speech about slavery in Centre Church on the Green, in which he argued that sending slaves, voluntarily on their part, back to Africa is the best solution to the racial tension in the country. He urged Congressional appropriations of money to accomplish that, and stated that it was impractical to "discuss the project of the entire and immediate abolition of slavery." [5] It seems reasonable that Calhoun and Silliman had several discussions about slavery. The education Calhoun received at Yale may have done nothing to lessen, but instead strengthened, his beliefs as a slave holder.

Customs and beliefs in Connecticut until the 1830s were similarly as racist as Silliman's. In 1831 New Haven voters overwhelmingly rejected founding a negro college. [6] In 1833, the Connecticut Legislature enacted the "Black Law," which made it illegal to open a school that taught African American students from a state other than Connecticut. In 1886, citizens of Canterbury, who had initiated that legislation, expressed that they were ashamed in promoting it. [7]

President Salovey has stated that changing Yale's name itself will not be considered. What principle can work around the sad fact that Elihu Yale himself was an active and successful slave trader? He financially supported the Collegiate School of Connecticut, which renamed itself Yale. [8] His name appears on every degree that Yale bestows, not Silliman's or Calhoun's or the other slave holders that have a residential college named after them.

I don't envy you and your task, because I personally have great difficulty about how to form a principle that, in my opinion, should recognize that accurate historical awareness is not often the same thing as historical or institutional memory. [9] I hope your report will discourage conveniently selective amnesia about history, and challenge those demanding changes to confront the great names on Yale's buildings and strive to understand, and avoid, the gaps in their sense of humanity.

Thank you again for your work.

Respectfully,
Harold D. Hammett, 1960

1. Ecclesiastics 7:20 "KJV".
2. Wendy Warren, *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America* (2016), 2, 36.
3. David Menschel, "Abolition without Deliverance: The Law of Connecticut Slavery 1784-1848," 111 *Yale Law Journal* 183-222, pp 185-86,191. (October 2001).
4. Chandos Michael Brown, *Benjamin Silliman: A Life in the Young Republic* (1989), 33, 36, 120; Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony & Ivory: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities* (2013) 133-34.
5. Benjamin Silliman "Some of the Causes National Anxiety: An Address Delivered in the Centre Church in New Haven, July 4th, 1832" (*The African Repository and Colonial Journal* Vol. 8, No. 6, 22-23).
6. Antony Dugdale, J.J. Fueser, J. Celso de Castro Alves, "Yale Slavery and Abolition Copyright 2001 by The Amistad Committee, Inc." 16-18.

7. Albrey Dice, "Prudence Crandall (1803-1890)", National Women's History Museum, (2006), <https://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biography/biographies/prudenc-crandall/>

8. Joseph Yannielli, "Elihu Yale was a Slave Trader", Digital Histories at Yale, November 1, 2014, <http://digitalhistories.yctl.org/2014/11/01/elihu-yale-was-a-slave-trader/>

9. I have been guided by Professor David Blight's emulating address "If You Don't Tell it Like it Was, it Can Never Be As it Ought to Be", Keynote talk at Yale conference on Yale and Slavery, <http://glc.yale.edu/events/memory>, and, more recently David Reiff, In Praise of Forgetting: Historical Memories and its Ironies (2016).

October 10, 2016 3:56pm
Dag Wilkinson, Alum

I think the Committee should ensure that any new name is perfectly politically correct according to the most up to date standards as of the date of the decision. That way it can ensure its continued existence as new needs to rename arise. Of course, the wishes of donors should not be taken into account.

October 10, 2016 4:27pm
Lawrence Berger, Alum

My interest in "renaming" is relatively slight. (I'm an alumna of the Law School, not the College, and my children -- who attended other schools -- are both post-college.) But reading on October 10 that you were planning to hold a session on the evening of October 11, which is the beginning of Yom Kippur and specifically the time for the Kol Nidre service, got my attention. Why? Yes, I see that you are having many other sessions, but if this one is important, why hold it at a time that excludes a significant portion of Yale?

October 10, 2016 4:48pm
Peter Hall, Alum

We can't ignore history just because it offends somebody today. Doing that makes us no better than ISIS which is not only removing history, it is destroying it.

October 10, 2016 5:02pm
W David Chambers, Faculty/Alum

I imagine someone has already proposed this, but if not, you should know that there is an extraordinary black American family named Calhoun, descended from a former slave of a plantation owned by John C's nephew. The family tree is laden with doctors, educators,

philanthropists, etc. Lena Horne is a descendant of this former slave. (There's probably a Yale connection in there somewhere.)

A reframing or a co-naming of Calhoun College would be an exciting and just thing to do; no one is happy with the weaselly non-solution of last spring.

Here is a review of a recent book about the black Calhouns:

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/20/books/review/the-black-calhouns-by-gail-lumet-buckley.html?_r=0

All best,
David Chambers

David Chambers MFA, Dr.h.c.
Harvard University: Theatre, Dance, and Media New School College of Performing Arts, NYC:
Professor, Yale School of Drama: (Ret.)

October 10, 2016 5:22pm
David Getachew-Smith, Alum

Dear Committee:

I am a 1976 graduate of Yale College. During my undergraduate years, I was extensively involved in minority recruitment as the chair of the Black Student Alliance at Yale (BSAY) Recruitment Committee for three years. I was always proud to share my view of the progressive and inclusive atmosphere on the Yale campus.

After graduating from Yale, I spent three years at Harvard Law School. It just so happens that I recently returned from the Harvard Law Celebration of Black Alumni. It was a glorious occasion attended by approximately 800 individuals which was impressive since there are only 2000 living African-American alumni of the school. We celebrated the long lineage of black Harvard Law students and faculty, and Harvard Law's role in advancing civil and human rights. The group was particularly pleased that the most recent law school shield depicting symbols of a slaveholding family that endowed the law school has been retired.

(<http://today.law.harvard.edu/harvard-corporation-agrees-to-retire-hls-shield/>)

Unfortunately, I am disappointed that my undergraduate school has not seen fit to take a similar brave stand with regard to name of Calhoun College. Retention of that name is an insult to all of Yale's alums of color and causes us constant embarrassment from our friends, family and associates.

Jefferson and Washington reflected their times but also reluctantly acknowledged African-Americans as humans. Washington provided in his will for the freeing of his slaves and Jefferson freed the slaves he fathered by his slave companion Sally Hemmings and proposed a national plan to end slavery.

In contrast, Calhoun vilified slaves and referred to slavery as a “ Positive Good.”

How is it possible that Yale could be so tone death in 2016? Would Yale keep the name of a building honoring someone associated with Hitler in an effort to make a teachable moment about Nazism?

I urge your committee to re-evaluate the situation immediately so as not to do more damage to the Yale brand. Lastly, I would suggest renaming Calhoun as Amistad College in honor of a time in New Haven when numerous Yale affiliated parties reflected the best of Yale by coming to the rescue of African men and women who asserted their freedom as human beings.

See the following link for background:

<http://news.yale.edu/2016/03/07/175-years-later-amistad-affair-lives-yale-library-s-collections>.

David Getachew-Smith'76

October 10, 2016 5:46pm

Sara Abramson, Parent/Other

IT IS AN INSULT TO HAVE THIS MEETING ON THE HOLIEST EVENING OF THE JEWISH YEAR. You obviously must not want input from any Jews associated with Yale. How insensitive! .Is this part of the plan?

[To make sure everyone who wanted to be in touch with us had the opportunity to do so, the CEPR created a listening session at the Slifka Center for Jewish Life in coordination with Slifka Center students and with the Center's Executive Director. — CEPR]

October 10, 2016 6:22pm

Kenneth Bowen, Alum

There is a strong recent trend in society for today's people to impose upon people of earlier generations their own modern set of standards and morality.

I think it is a very wrong approach that can lead to divisiveness when we should be seeking unity. Our motto is truth and light. I think this is very meaningful because all things, including truth, look different in different light.

One should not judge the truth of the past in today's light, but instead apply best efforts to understand the light of the past era. I like the naming of one new college after Pauli Murray because it fits the traditional pattern of someone who is far from a common household name, while making very appropriate breaks from the patterns of being white and male. It is very possible, however, that in the light of some future age, Murray's advocacy of abortion rights could be seen to be as shameful or more shameful than Calhoun's advocacy of slavery. The taking of a life before it even has a chance might someday be seen by the prevailing majority as even more evil than the controlling of a life through slavery. If that time comes, I hope we do not change the name of the new college, not only because it accurately reflects the prevailing

light of the world when the naming took place, but also because Murray is deserving of recognition for her advancement of both women and people of color, even if she was misguided in thinking that it's ok to murder somebody's grandbaby in the womb. I think President Salovey did a good job in explaining the reasoning for not renaming Calhoun. It is important for us to confront and understand our history rather than to try to run away from it. And it's important not to yield to the demands of a mob, and the anger and vociferousness of some undergraduates these days really seems quite similar to mob behavior to me.

October 10, 2016 6:33pm
Elizabeth Jerison, Alum

I believe that Yale should rename Calhoun college, for the following three reasons:

1. Renaming the college would not whitewash history. During my time at Yale, few discussed the college name. Renaming the college and erecting a plaque about the history would probably inspire as many, or more, of these conversations.
2. I believe these decisions should be made by considering, first, what the individual has contributed to society as a whole; and, second, what he/she has contributed to Yale in particular. For example, I think Princeton did the right thing to retain the name of their school of government, because while Woodrow Wilson was abhorrently racist, he was also President of the US, devised the League of Nations, and, finally, was a highly influential president of Princeton. John C. Calhoun has no such redeeming qualities. He left a horrendous mark on the country, and his connection to Yale is limited to having been an alum.
3. A residential college is a very special institution, because students live there and take the name in some sense as their own. Frankly, I would have been embarrassed or even ashamed to be a 'Hounie had I been in Calhoun and thought about it hard enough.

October 10, 2016 7:34pm
Mark Reed, Alum

If Yale is committing itself to eliminating the names of individuals adjudged guilty by an always evolving, communal standard of morality, it is setting itself up for incessant controversy and chaos. By today's standard, certainly Elihu Yale would be considered morally repugnant for his trade in slaves. Are you really prepared to change the name of the university with all of its attendant consequences? I suggest that the Committee commit itself to maintenance of the existing naming, with an equal commitment to providing students with ample historical understanding of the basis for the original naming decision. As times change, students will appreciate our always changing historical perspective.

October 10, 2016 8:09pm
Margo Schlanger, Alum

I strongly support the renaming of Calhoun College.

But I'm writing for a different reason. You put the open session that was just publicized on Kol Nidre -- the evening that begins Yom Kippur. It's completely unavailable for Jews who are even the slightest bit observant.

October 11, 2016 9:47pm

Aaron Bray, Alum

I have a few thoughts on renaming the College, and more generally, any named program, structure, or building at Yale.

1. One should consider the type of building or program. With a college this cuts both ways, the larger the presence, the more carefully a decision to rename should be. However, a college is a residential institution, one which identifies students for their four years, and one which students identify with. In the case of Calhoun, this clearly cuts toward renaming it. No group of students should be forced to identify with someone whose primary "contributions" were of odiously racist and discriminatory.

2. One should consider the strength of ties to the institution. Obviously, Elihu Yale has a particularly strong tie to the University, whatever his corrupt practices as a merchant were, through which he amassed his fortunes. Calhoun, on the other hand, has no significant ties to the institution other than being an alumnus.

3. One should consider the purpose of naming things, and the impact that renaming things has. Naming things is inherently an honorary in nature, and the suggestions to the contrary is highly specious. In our (American) culture, we simply do not name things after people except as a mean to express approval, support, or admiration. A college named after Calhoun honors Calhoun, no matter when the decision was made. Time does not diminish the honor. There have been further suggestions that renaming things serves to erase history. In my four years at Yale, from 2006 to 2010, Calhoun was never the topic of public or wide-spread conversation. No history was learned. No deep scars discussed. No original sins contemplated or atoned for.

Since my graduation, however, the debate has actually brought history to light. Renaming Calhoun would in fact serve to create more introspection — not less — and certainly a memorial or plaque that acknowledges Yale's (hopefully former) shame could help in that process.

October 18, 2016 3:27pm

Bruce Babcock, Alum

Due to Yale's rapidly increasing efforts for political correctness, I plan to significantly reduce my annual donations to the school.

Yale has been a very important part of my life, but I am repulsed by Pres. Salovey's grossly exaggerated efforts at social sensitivity.

BTW- digging into the condemnation of Elihu Yale by the British East India Company, we learn of the disrepute/dishonesty of our college's namesake. Should his name be replaced by that of some recent magnanimous donor? That appears to be Salovey's direction.

October 19, 2016 6:57pm

John Smith, Alum

To the Yale Renaming Committee

From John Macauley Smith, Class of 1959

First, thanks to all members of this committee for undertaking this important but difficult assignment. Thanks also to Edward Baptist's eye-opening book *The Half Half Has Never Been Told*, which every citizen in this country should read to be fully informed about this complex period of our history.

I feel that Renaming is a very important exercise for Yale University. Although I was born in Louisville, Kentucky (which was a "border state" during the Civil War) I now live in the state of Oregon which forbade blacks from entering the State up to 1926. Fortunately we are doing better these days. The University of Oregon is also undertaking the task of "Renaming." The headline in the Eugene Register Guard's Sept 9, 2016 issue: UO trustees strip KKK member Dunn's name from Dunn Hall. U of O student body president Quinn Haaga said "The state of Oregon has a very ugly racist history that was deeply ingrained in our policies and laws."

While at Yale I was a resident of Branford College yet I have no idea who "Branford" was, nor Harkness of the Harkness Tower, nor did I know anything about Calhoun -- until I read Baptist's book. The truth is, knowing now that Calhoun was a slave owner, would make me very uncomfortable if I was assigned to Calhoun College today. But knowing Calhoun's important role in the Constitutional protection of enslaver's "property rights" over slaves would make it impossible for me to live in a college named for such a person. (See page 331 of Baptist's book.)

A few stories from my youth. I was born white, in a white society that was segregated. Blacks were discriminated against in public places such as swimming pools, rest rooms, drinking fountains, schools, as well as socially. Laws have changed much of this by now. My mother once showed me a residential house with a building in the rear where she said slave women were bred by the white men who lived in the house and their children were shipped down the river to be sold. I recently learned from Baptist's book that "down the river" meant traveling to the deep south which was brutal to the slaves. I once gave a ride to a woman who worked in the farming area where we lived. She was afraid to be seen in the passenger seat with a white person. (I told her she was free to sit where ever she liked.) For several years my family lived on an old farm that originally been worked by slaves. There were no graves there, although some slaves may have spent their entire lives on the farm. The Will of the property's owner gave one slave to each of his two daughters when they married. Once I traveled to visit a friend in the suburbs of Louisville. I rang the doorbell and a maid led me into the living room to wait for the owner's return. I sat on a couch for awhile and then wondered why I was sitting in one room while someone else was in the nearby kitchen. Feeling uncomfortable, I went to the kitchen and talked

to the woman who had let me in. Her name was Edith and she became a good friend. Old customs still linger in the south.

I consider it very fortunate that my forbearers lived in the North during the years of slavery in this country, and during the Civil War they fought for the Union.

Thank you for listening and for working on such an important assignment.

High Regards from John Smith and if you have any questions, please write me at Crow Farm, 85316 Coyote Creek Road Veneta Oregon 97487 or use the e-mail address above.

Members of my family previously at Yale: Father, Judge Macauley Letchworth Smith; Grandparents, Dr. Letchworth Smith, The Rev. John Henry Strong; Great Uncle, Albert Anson Bigelow; Cousin, Prof. Richard Sewall, Yale English Department.

October 19, 2016 7:21pm
John Smith, Alum

Please disregard the earlier, shorter draft I sent to you when I was confused by the e-mail system and my computer's ability.

Regards, John M. Smith in Oregon

October 20, 2016 6:00pm
Richard Butcher, Alum

I think you booted it.

I'm not proud to have Calhoun's name associated with Yale and not proud of Yale for the way they handled it.

Please include the possibility of readdressing that decision along with your other recommendations.

October 30, 2016 2:35pm
Nataliya Braginsky, Other

Calhoun College should be renamed! It is a disgraceful celebration of the legacy of slavery in this country. While we recognize that this country's history is important not to forget, that does not mean residents and workers of Calhoun should have this constant reminder, which is not only serving as a reminder but indeed a problematic celebration.

The college should instead be named after someone from New Haven's history who has fought against slavery and oppression, someone who has fought for liberation--that is the history we should be celebrating.

November 1, 2016 2:57pm
Hillel Auerbach, Alum

In search of principles that are enduring rather than specific to particular controversies, one must avoid the pressures from students and radical agitators. I do not imply the students and radical agitators are the same - they are not. But both appeal to at-the-moment emotions. As for John Calhoun, we may come to a point in time when his name is irrelevant, and ready to be replaced with a then-relevant name. We see this happening in this country (Geffen Hall?), and it is likely many names at Yale will suffer the same fate - possibly even the name "Yale". Let our future leaders and administrators apply enduring principles, avoid specific controversies, and change names accordingly.

November 3, 2016 5:00pm
Wallace Hike, Student

Hello,

I emailed the below message to John directly, and wanted to share with the rest of the task force as well:

Professor Witt,

Thank you for hosting the listening session this afternoon. I was glad to have a chance to participate.

At the meeting, Chris Desir and I stated that the committee has an opportunity to address white supremacy and racism directly. Not only racism's past, but its present effect on students of color and all students.

This can be done while focusing on "principles on renaming." You might say: racism has no place at Yale. But white supremacy hangs over students every day. It is present in what is taught and what is not taught. It is found in the way Yale spends its money, the composition of its faculty, and the images on the walls and windows. The principle for renaming: Renaming must be coupled with a commitment to ending racism and white supremacy at Yale.

If you take on this opportunity, you might wonder how best to do it. Consider reading the recent Police Accountability Task Force report from Chicago. The topic is different. But the task force successfully described the racial impact of policing in open, frank terms. Here is an example from page 6 of the report:

"The Task Force heard over and over again from a range of voices, particularly from African-Americans, that some CPD officers are racist, have no respect for the lives and experiences of people of color and approach every encounter with people of color as if the person, regardless of age, gender or circumstance, is a criminal. Some people do not feel safe in any encounter with

the police. Some do not feel like they have the ability to walk in their neighborhoods or drive in their cars without being aggressively confronted by the police. The consistent theme of these deeply-held beliefs came from a significant cross-section of people: men and women, young, middle-aged and older, doctors, lawyers, teachers and other professionals, students, and everyday workers. Regardless of the demographic, people of color loudly expressed their outrage about how they are treated by the police.

These encounters leave an indelible mark. Long after the officer moves on to chase the next call or make the next stop, the citizen involved remains affected and if the encounter involved physical or verbal aggression, even if there was no arrest, there is a lasting, negative effect."

The release of the Chicago report caused some controversy. It was a Mayor-commissioned task force, and the Mayor's Office was not comfortable with the frank and straightforward language that the task force chose to use.

But ultimately, the task force members succeeded in releasing the report they believed in.

The content of your report will be different, and probably not so stark. But you have a similar opportunity to address issues of race head-on. I hope you will take the opportunity to authentically and thoroughly address how racism and white supremacy affect people at Yale. It is central to the conversation we are having together.

Sincerely,

Wally Hilke
Yale Law School, Class of 2018

P.S. You can find the full Police Accountability Task Force report here:

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_chicagopatf.org_wp-2Dcontent_uploads_2016_04_PATF-5FFinal-5FReport-5F4-5F13-5F16-2D1.pdf&d=CwIDaQ&c=-dg2m7zWuuDZ0MUcV7Sdqw&r=sYjCZo5AtDbqnr3gYk4i2om320pSQbALT5gthxz3KqY&m=knfX2X5vwc_3ZBK2wOLG0Daumji0ueXpEKRzryXd-WA&s=yI4aX2ipURBMFPwTx0SfUC2VXS-MHlpV5feD7xUh0wQ&e=

November 6, 2016 10:22pm
[Anonymous], Student

I wholeheartedly believe that a name change is almost meaningless without any further commitment to changes that tangibly improve the experiences of current students, and potentially risks sanitizing Yale's history and forgetting the uglier periods in its long history. However, I would go further and say that I generally think an emphasis on renaming may end up being a waste of time and political capital that could be better spent on concrete programs and initiatives (ex: recruitment from historically underrepresented institutions, ethnic studies centers/scholarships, etc.). I have generally been disappointed by the national student

movement's focus on symbolism, often at the expense of meaningful discussions about systemic change. One example that comes to mind is the Princeton students' 24+ hour sit-in that was based on their demand to change the Wilson School's name. What ultimately is the point? Who benefits tangibly from the name change? Are we really serving students' interests by focusing on names and crests rather than recruitment programs, cultural centers, and curricular initiatives? Many students don't see this as an either/or question, but I think that overlooks the realistic limitations of the range of changes the institution can make (largely due to certain disgruntled alumni who think today's college students are just soft).

At the same time, I found the case of Calhoun to be distinguishable from other cases – the reason for this is that residential colleges inherently involve a close association and identification with the name/person after whom the college was named. There are portraits everywhere, and students are supposed to proudly call themselves “Hoonies”; this I think crosses an admittedly blurred line into the realm of oppression, given that Calhoun wasn't just a slaveholder but an ardent political supporter of the institutionalization of slavery. So when thinking about principles, I've considered the question of “veneration” quite a bit; to what extent are we extolling the virtues of someone after whom a building or institution is named? Obviously, the use of a name inherently involves veneration – we are also venerating Yale, Harvard, Brown and many other slaveholders through retaining the names of our institutions. But the combination of the residential life component, the strong positive association with the person after whom residential colleges are named, and the more insidious nature of Calhoun's actions compared to those of Yale etc. are all factors that weigh in favor of renaming Calhoun. So I suppose my point is that when thinking about principles (and I support the search for and use of principles in this area, not because it's ideal but it's realistically how university decision making processes work), the degree of veneration, the relationship between students and the individual, and the nature of the individual's wrongdoing should be strongly considered.

November 10, 2016 6:32am

C. Daniel Ward, Alum

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my thoughts concerning the functioning of a Renaming Committee.

I start with several principles:

1. The renaming process shall be administered by either the present Committee or one structured like it which that make recommendations and forward them to the President and Fellows of the Yale Corporation for final decision. A draft of possible Committee procedures is included for your consideration.
2. The Yale community consists of more than 150,000 people who, as the composition of the committee suggests you chair suggests, are divided into three major groups: students; faculty and administration; and alumni.

Representatives of all three groups most participate in all stages of the Committees' processes and consent to its decisions.

3. Recommendations to rename must be supported by a majority of each of the constituent components of the Committee.

3. No individual or group of individuals may dominate the process.

4. The functioning of the Committee must not lead to divisiveness within the Yale community or detract from Yale's missions of student education and of research.

Three other points;

1. The name Yale is not on the table and will not be considered.

2. The fact of slave ownership is not, standing alone, a basis for renaming. Were it otherwise, renaming the nation's capitol would be under consideration at the national level. Regretfully, throughout much of U.S. history, slave ownership was a commonplace and many admirable persons, for some of whom Yale buildings or spaces are named, owned slaves. There must be more such as a. activities intended to preserve and advance the institution of slavery. e.g., Calhoun; or b. evidence of mistreatment of slaves such as physical punishment or deliberate dividing of families of slaves. On the other hand, freeing slaves should be considered a plus. These are just my own thoughts and I certainly defer to Professor Blight on this subject.

3. Renaming recommendations must be a two-step process: first, the Committee must determine whether the existing namesake of a building or space is unworthy of the honor. Only then may the Committee consider a replacement name. The fact that that some members of the Community believe a name should be changed to honor someone deemed more worthy shall not be the basis for removing a name. This would lead to endless, divisive debates and popularity contests.

Based on my experience with Yale (Class and Club officer, AYA member, Alumni Schools Committee Director and Yale parent), professional experience (lawyer). and involvement in civic activities, I have drafted for the Committee's consideration, and as no more than a starting point for discussion, a set of procedures for determining how a renaming Committee might carry out its responsibilities. See below.

If you have any suggestions, comments or questions, please feel free to call on me. I wish to be of assistance to you, the Committee and the Yale community.

Sincerely yours,

C. Daniel Ward, 1955

November 6, 2016

DRAFT PROCEDURES OF THE COMMITTEE ON RENAMING

1. Definitions: For purposes of these procedures, the Committee on Renaming (Committee), membership (Members), and the Yale Community (Community), have three segments: Student; Faculty and Administration; and Alumni (Groups), all of which will take part in all of the Committee's activities.
2. Petition for Renaming Committee consideration of the renaming of a Yale building or space may take place only upon receipt of a written petition that:
 - a. Identifies the building or space;
 - b. States the reasons for removing the existing name;
 - c. Contains the names of at least xx different individual members of each Group who approve the filing of the petition which will state that approval.
 - d. No individual may join in more than one petition in any academic year.
3. Meetings:
 - a. Notice of Meetings: Members shall receive notices of meetings, containing the date, time and place of the meeting and an agenda.
 - b. Quorum: A majority of each group is necessary for a quorum.
 - c. Voting: Members shall vote by Group. A vote to recommend renaming must be approved by a majority of every Group.
 - d. Conduct of Meetings: Robert's Rules of Order as in effect at the time shall govern the conduct of meetings.
 - e. Attendance: Members of the Yale Community may attend meetings as space permits. Meetings are not open to persons not members of the Yale Community
 - f. Public Notice of Meetings: Notice of meetings of the Committee will be given not less than fourteen days in advance by publication in The Yale Daily News and xxx.
 - g. Public Comment: Meeting agendas will provide for a reasonable period of public comment. Speakers will identify themselves by their name and the Group of the Community of which they are a member. No member of the audience may speak more than once on an agenda item unless permitted by the Chair of the Committee.
 - h. Minutes: The Committee shall keep written minutes of its meetings copies of which will be distributed to the Members, the President of the University (President), and the Senior Fellow of the Yale Corporation (Senior Fellow). Minutes will also be published in The Yale Daily News and xx.
4. Committee Recommendations: Recommendations shall be in two steps.
 - a. Removal of Name: Removal of an existing name if the person for whom an

existing building or space shall be deemed unworthy of being a building or space namesake. The fact that there may be a person more worthy of being a namesake is not justification for changing a name.

b. New Name: Only if the Committee first determines that a name should be removed shall the Committee make a recommendation for a replacement name.

5. Forwarding Recommendation to Rename for Further Action: A Committee recommendation concerning renaming shall be in writing, state the reasons for the decision in detail, and be provided to the President and the Senior Fellow for further consideration.

November 16, 2016 4:20pm

Roman L Weil, Alum

I'm BK '62, but a visiting professor at Princeton, where we've gone through agony about Woodrow Wilson. I'd bet at about 99:1 odds you've already seen the letter their alum, distinguished Stanford professor David Kennedy, wrote on the difference between memory and memorialization, which I'd attach if this mechanism allowed. Here's a link.

The letter will tell us why we can abhor slavery and still name the College for John C. and the University for Elihu.

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A_wilsonlegacy.princeton.edu_sites_wilsonlegacy_files_media_wilsonlegacy-5Fkennedy.pdf&d=CwIDaQ&c=-dg2m7zWuuDZ0MUcV7Sdqw&r=sYjCZo5AtDbqnr3gYk4i2om320pSQbALT5gthxz3KqY&m=yD6x53q31ZPGZKTcixQ1ZMdAv_DL9Hme15MUSo-IvVg&s=Ag36_iYMLGP4fS_hAhTo2KZ69kTfZBaN_YTdwMeK6ZY&e=

November 17, 2016 12:02am

Roman L. Weil, Alum

I'm embarrassed that I didn't realize earlier that David M. Kennedy is Yale College '64, and some other Yale degrees as well, so it's inconceivable you don't already know his work on this subject. My apologies for bothering you. Roman

November 17, 2016 9:59am

R. Raleigh D'Adamo, Alum

R. Raleigh D'Adamo _____

17 November 2016

Yale University

Members of the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

History comes down to us in many forms:

Orally, certainly.

By wall drawings, paintings and photographs.

Through statues, monuments and memorials.

In naming streets, cities, buildings and structures.

And certainly in books.

We have long abandoned the practice of burning books, the contents of which we disagree with or otherwise find objectionable. Now it is time to stop trying to rewrite or obliterate history by silencing speech, relocating paintings to obscure locations, or renaming buildings, streets and parks.

We have no plans to destroy the Coliseum because it reminds us of the persecution of the Christians which took place there two millennia ago.

Similarly, we preserve Auschwitz as a constant reminder of man's inhumanity to man in our own times by the wholesale slaughter of Jews which took place there. To try to rewrite history by destroying such reminders of man's history would make us no better than the extremists who destroyed an important reminder of man's heritage as depicted in the statues at Palmyra..

The names we give to places or events that mark happy events give us the opportunity when we come across them to recall such events and to celebrate them with joy. On the other hand, when a name, a painting, a statue depict an unpleasant event or practice, it serves to remind us never to let that event or practice be repeated.

Most important to the question at hand, if the practice still continues to a greater or lesser extent, while it may give us some measure of satisfaction that progress may have been made with respect to the issue, it also piques our conscience as to what we must still do to completely eradicate the practice or solve the problem. Therein lies the true value of keeping these objects – paintings, statues, names – constantly before us as we journey through life striving for the perfection of our Creator.

Respectfully,

R. Raleigh D'Adamo, Yale BA 1953

[The Committee received additional comments without accompanying permission to publish.]

Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming
Phone Messages

October 15, 2016

11:02pm

Ah yes, my name, first of all you can publish everything I say in this message. My name is Tony Butler and I am calling for a couple of reasons. The first reason, foremost, is the appointment of the members of that committee. There should have been members from the workforce, particularly the dining room or the hospitality section to sit on that committee before it was even established or while it was being established. Alright, that's my first issue and problem. I am basically wanting to nominate Shirley Lawrence to sit on this committee. My second point is, this committee is establishing rules, regulations for the renaming of colleges. I find that a little disingenuous because first of all there are rules and regulations in place when you initially name any college in the first place, so to change it doesn't seem like there needs to be a committee or a one of a series of committees because that's what I believe is happening, is about to happen here, which I'm very upset about. I don't go to Yale. I'm not a Yale member. I don't work for Yale. I have nothing to do with Yale. But just reading and listening to the petitions and the students who talk about this, I do know Yale, okay. So I am very upset with the way this going but if you are going to establish committee, I'm nominating Shirley Lawrence to be on that committee and you can publish my answer.

Thank you.

October 17, 2016

9:44am

Hi Good Morning,

My name is [omitted] and I'm calling concerning the renaming of that Calhoun Hall. I know that President Salovey had put together that committee and I hear that there is no blue collar representation on that committee, I'm requesting that petition and I guess I should say that you put Shirley Lawrence to be our representative on that committee, so that someone of color can also help make the decisions which I think that is what this is really basically all about.

Thank you so much, bye bye.

October 20, 2016

11:09am

Please don't concentrate on renaming buildings, names a name it doesn't make a difference, concentrate on fixing the buildings, a lot of them are old and out dated and great need, over half

the buildings are in great need of physical fixing up, that would be a lot better than if they changed the name, I know we've gotta fix these buildings up and make them like they were new.