

Union Council Minutes Summer 2018

June 6, 2018

Council Room, Memorial Union

Present: Brennan Bahr, Yogev Ben-Yitschak, Farhat Bhuiyan, Mills Botham, George Cutlip, Susan Dibbell, Mark Guthier, Heidi Lang, Fernanda Martinez, Liz Preston, Erin Roberge (on behalf of Charlie Childs), Argyle Wade

Guests: Shauna Breneman, Lori DeMeuse, Miguel Guevara, Meredith McGlone, Doug Erickson.

Absent: Dan Grabois, Anika Chatterjee, Sam Kodzik, Chris Verhaeghe

Call to Order

Mills Botham called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Open Forum

Miguel Guevara, Chair of the Wisconsin Union Association, introduced himself and noted that he was attending on behalf of that organization and is especially interested in the naming issue.

Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes

Liz Preston moved to approve the April 25, 2018 meeting minutes. Farhat Bhuiyan seconded the motion.

Introduction to Union Council

- Organizational Structure
Susan Dibbell reviewed the Union's organization chart.
- Role of the College Union
Heidi Lang reviewed the Role of the College Union statement, written by Porter Butts in 1956.
- Constitution and Bylaws
Mark Guthier reviewed the Wisconsin Union's Constitution and bylaws. The Constitution was written in 1956 by Porter Butts and Harold Bradley. He noted that Union Council has the ability to change the by-laws; the Constitution needs to be changed by a referendum of the student body.
- Shared Governance
Heidi Lang reviewed UW System Policy 36.09 regarding shared governance.
- Parliamentary Procedure and the Purpose of Summer Meetings
Mills Botham reviewed the use of parliamentary procedure during Union Council meetings.

Mills stated that Union Council does not usually meet in summer and that the named space issue will be the focus of this summer's meetings. A decision on how to handle this issue must be made by the end of 2018. Mark Guthier added that the usual committee structure will not be activated during the summer.

Yogev Ben-Yitshchak inquired on whether the final decision on the named spaces rests with Union Council. Mark Guthier replied that the naming of spaces on campus rests with the Chancellor and there is currently not a policy on un-naming spaces. The decision made by Union Council will be presented as a recommendation to the Chancellor.

Background on Named Spaces

Mills Botham stated that this meeting will be largely informative. The background documents discussed are available in a UW Box folder and on the Union Council website.

- Clarification on Documents

Liz Preston inquired about the new information relating to TUMAS that was provided by the Wisconsin Union Association. Discussion on this specific topic was tabled. WUA will be invited to talk about the research work that they've done at an upcoming meeting.

Fernanda Martinez asked for clarification on the Romay Rupnow response to Miguel Guevara. Ms. Rupnow is a WUA Trustee and was responding to an email sent out by Mr. Guevara.

- Timeline on Discussion

Heidi Lang reviewed the milestones on this topic from last year. The concern about the link between the KKK organization in the 1920's and Porter Butts is not new. It was brought up in the 1990's and in 2007. Council took some action at that time.

- August 2017 – White Nationalist Rally took place in Charlottesville prompting a national conversation about race.
- Fall 2017 – Campus Climate Survey released and Directorate began to receive questions regarding Butts and March named spaces.
- Oct 2017 – Chancellor Blank convened an ad hoc committee to try to understand what happened in the 1920's and the university's responsibility in reconciling that past. Heidi served on the committee. Recommendations were requested by 12/17, but the committee quickly realized the issue was too complex and that wasn't possible.
- March 2018 (early) – Union Council formed a sub-committee to delve into the information at hand.
- April 2018 (mid) – Chancellor's ad hoc committee report complete and Chancellor's statement released to the public
- April 25, 2018 – Union Council sub-committee met with Chancellor's ad hoc committee co-chairs.
- April 25, 2018 – Union Council final meeting for the academic year. The following resolution was made at this meeting.

- Review of Resolution from 4/25/18 meeting

Mills reviewed the resolution made at the 4/25/18 meeting. Items 1 – 6 need to be worked on this summer. 7 – 10 can be worked on in smaller pieces during the academic year.

- Recap of Meeting with Chancellor Blank

Susan reported that the timing of the report was challenging as it came out a few days before the last Union Council meeting of the academic year. President Iffat Bhuiyan felt it was very important to share the resolution with the Chancellor before it was made public. The Chancellor encouraged Council to use this summer and fall to continue to have conversations with constituents. She also encouraged Union Council to be thorough in investigating the issue but also timely to achieve closure.

Summer Process

- Current Ideas for Future Meetings

Mills reviewed the following topics to be discussed at upcoming meetings.

- Named Spaces Topic
 - Review Inclusivity Study
 - Sherrill Randall (Porter Butts daughter) to attend upcoming meeting.

- Presentation by Wisconsin Union Association on its research.
- The Yale Approach to Named Spaces
Mills stated that we are not the only University dealing with the issue and pointed to the Yale Approach as a possible guideline.
- Other Topics
 - Social Justice Incubator
 - Campus History Project
- What other information does Union Council need?
 - Other information on the life and work of Porter Butts and Fredric March
 - Minutes from previous Union Council meeting where the topic was discussed.
 - Text from Hate/Bias Report – possible attendance from those who signed at an upcoming meeting.

Proposed Summer Council Dates

The following summer meeting dates have been set:

- Thursday, June 28
- Tuesday, July 17
- Monday, August 6

Additional meetings will be scheduled if necessary.

Adjourn

Brennan Bahr made a motion to adjourn the meeting. George Cutlip seconded the motion.

Facts about the Wisconsin Union, Porter Butts and Fredric March at UW Madison:

The UW Chancellor asked an adhoc committee to examine the history of UW-Madison student organizations that bore the name Ku Klux Klan..... 2

Two groups named Ku Klux Klan existed at UW Madison in the 1920s; an honorary interfraternity society (from 1918-1923) and a group related to the racist national Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (from 1922 to 1926). 2

The honor society changed its name in 1923 to avoid being confused with the racist national Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. 3

The Tumas governing documents demonstrate no intention to be discriminatory..... 4

Porter Butts was NOT a member of the KKK. In fact, his life and career exemplified an individual who was the antithesis of racism..... 4

Porter Butts sought to create a welcoming space for all and stood against segregated organizations. He also was a passionate supporter of student galleries and art. 5

Fredric March (born Frederick Bickel) was a member of the honorary Ku Klux Klan in 1919-1920. 6

Fredric March was a celebrated Hollywood actor in 1930s and 40s who was widely known as a supporter of liberal causes. 6

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The UW Chancellor asked an adhoc committee to examine the history of UW-Madison student organizations that bore the name Ku Klux Klan.

On October 18, 2017, Chancellor Rebecca Blank “charged an ad-hoc study group to look into the history of UW-Madison student organizations that bore the name of the Ku Klux Klan.” She asked the Study Group to review “documents and other historical information related to the creation, activities and context of student organizations that operated on campus in and around the 1920s and that were named after or otherwise affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan” and to “[e]valuate the actions and legacies of those organizations and advise how the campus can appropriately acknowledge this history in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain.”

SOURCES:

[“Confronting our campus history”](#) Posted on April 19, 2018 by Chancellor Blank, Office of the Chancellor Blog

[“Report to the Chancellor on the Ku Klux Klan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison”](#) Presented by Stephen Kantrowitz and Floyd Rose Co-Chairs of the Ad-Hoc Study Group April 4, 2018

Two groups named Ku Klux Klan existed at UW Madison in the 1920s; an honorary interfraternity society (from 1918-1923) and a group related to the racist national Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (from 1922 to 1926).

The Chancellor’s Study provides a brief history of the Ku Klux Klan at the national level before explaining their presence at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The report explains how popular culture had brought the image of the Klansman to the national spotlight in the early twentieth century (including Thomas W. Dixon’s 1905 novel *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan* and the 1915 feature film *The Birth of a Nation*). The study group reports in 1915 an entrepreneur named William Simmons appropriated the iconography of the Klan for a new for-profit fraternal organization, which he called the “Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.”

The study group found between 1918 and 1926 two student organizations on the UW campus took the name “Ku Klux Klan.”

The first organization named Ku Klux Klan appeared in the spring of 1918. “Inspired and recruited by members of a society called “Ku Klux Klan” at the University of Illinois. The group was an honorary society composed of male student-body leaders in the Junior class. These students established their Ku Klux Klan as an unmasked, above-ground interfraternity society composed of students including leaders the Student Union board, the YMCA cabinet, the Memorial Union fund drive committee, the athletic board, the Daily Cardinal, and the Badger Yearbook.

The report states, “There is no evidence that this group was ever affiliated with the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, nor do we know what these 1918 founders knew or thought about the organization that Simmons founded in 1915. Still, its choice of a name signals an identification—or at the very least, no meaningful discomfort—with the widely known violent actions of the Reconstruction-era Klan as it was remembered, celebrated, and given new cultural and institutional life in the early twentieth century.”

The second Klan group on the UW campus was, by contrast, a direct product of Simmons’ Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. In the fall of 1922, the Knights began recruiting on the UW campus, finding some success among the faculty and student body, though apparently not among the members of the first honorary group. The UW’s administration took no action against the group, and in 1924 a Klan-controlled housing fraternity, Kappa Beta Lambda (KBL, for “Klansmen Be Loyal”) was established at UW. A Milwaukee Klan newspaper praised this group’s commitment to the Klan principles of “White Supremacy, Restricted Foreign Immigration, Law and Order.”

The difference in social status between the first and second Klan groups on campus seems to have been marked. Both were composed of native-born Protestant men, but Messer Kruse argues that the first group was higher status, composed disproportionately of liberal arts majors from outside Wisconsin, and included some of the most socially prominent and influential students on campus. The second group, by contrast, was chiefly composed of engineering and agricultural students from Madison as well as rural and small-town Wisconsin.

The honorary society changed its name (see below) in the 1922-1923 school year and existed on campus as Tumas until at least the late 1930s. The student organization associated with the racist national Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, “Kappa Beta Lambda” expired in 1926 following the downward course of the local and national Knights.

The honorary society changed its name in 1923 to avoid being confused with the racist national Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Chancellor’s Study Group reports the rise of the racist national Knights of the Ku Klux Klan “...quickly inspired the first group to change its name to the cryptic “Tumas.” According to Messer-Kruse, the name Tumas “derived from the Latin second person pronoun ‘tu’ and the Latin word ‘mas’ meaning ‘manly’ or ‘vigorous.’”

The research by the Wisconsin Union Association using publicly available information at the UW Archives found the honorary society changed its name to Tumas in the spring of 1923. The University of Illinois Archives report a meeting in March 1923 where representatives of similar honorary organizations –supposedly five in number–met in Chicago and agreed to change the

organization's name. The University of Illinois organization changed its name to "Tu-Mas" in April 1923.

SOURCES:

["Report to the Chancellor on the Ku Klux Klan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison"](#) Presented by Stephen Kantrowitz and Floyd Rose Co-Chairs of the Ad-Hoc Study Group April 4, 2018

"Ku Klux Klan" Posted on October 15, 2012 by University of Illinois Archives staff

The Tumas governing documents demonstrate no intention to be discriminatory.

It appears from all the information available that TUMAS was a recognized University-sanctioned Student Organization.

The TUMAS governing documents state the following: "It was an honorary organization composed of seventeen members elected annually from various fraternities on the campus" "by virtue of our immediate contacts with fraternities in general, we are in a favorable position to promote good-fellowship amongst these fraternities, to frustrate any friction and to obtain harmonious existence on the campus....."

From its constitution we know that the Organization's "Aims and Objects" were to "promote good scholarship among fraternity men by the 'TUMAS SCHOLARSHIP'... (t)o foster good will among fraternities on the campus.... ..lend support to all worthwhile university activities Orientation Week Committee, Homecoming Committee, etc."

Porter Butts was NOT a member of the KKK. In fact, his life and career exemplified an individual who was the antithesis of racism.

Our examination of the facts demonstrates Porter Butts was NOT a member of the Ku Klux Klan, nor was he racist. We examined Badger Yearbooks at the UW Archives, the appointment practices of the honorary society, and the years that Porter Butts was a student.

Put simply, Porter Butts was not a member of the Ku Klux Klan because the honorary society changed its name to Tumas during the in the spring of 1923.

Porter Butts was one of the two members selected by the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity in the spring of 1923. Each fraternity had one member from the junior class and one member from the senior class. Porter was appointed to the Tumas Society as a Junior in the Spring of 1923 and continued as a member during his senior year in 1924. *He was not a member of the honorary Ku Klux Klan.*

The research by the Wisconsin Union Association at the University Archives indicates the president of the junior men's honorary student organization, Ku Klux Klan, announced in 1923 that the organization would be changing its name to "Tumas" because the group was too frequently confused with the national Klan. This name change was announced too late to be included in either the 1923 or the 1924 Badger yearbooks. The 1925 Badger included the student organization "Tumas," identified as the "junior men's" honorary organization.

Porter Butts sought to create a welcoming space for all and stood against segregated organizations. He also was a passionate supporter of student galleries and art.

As a young man, Porter laid the groundwork both literally and figuratively for a Wisconsin Union that would open its doors in 1928 to serve as a community center on campus. Here, the student would learn from informal associations with one another and with faculty. Porter firmly believed that "only full living induces full learning."

Porter was instrumental in the drafting of the Wisconsin Union constitution by a student faculty group in 1927. The constitution purpose includes the following:

- Section 1. The purpose of the Wisconsin Union shall be to provide a common life and cultivated social program for its members.
- Section 2. The motto of the Wisconsin Union shall be "Sociotate Crescit Lumen" - light is increased through human relationships.
- Section 3. The emblem shall be the Indian Pipe of Peace, with ribbons attached, displayed against a cardinal and white arrowhead shield which is superimposed on a mariner's compass card --- a symbol of fellowship and unity among diverse peoples.

In 1926, Porter convinced the Memorial Union building committee and the building architect to convert a planned music room next to the Main Lounge to an art gallery - the first art gallery on the Madison campus. Under his leadership, in 1930, he instituted a Union-sponsored craft shop for student use, the first student show in the early 1930's, and the first state wide art competition in 1936. His leadership led to the opening of the Union Theater in 1939. He received a master's degree in Art History, and published the book "Art in Wisconsin" the first account tracing the history of art in the state.

Porter Butts was "Mr. Union" for college unions throughout the country, having designed and consulted on over 100 union buildings. His book, "The College Union Idea" written in 1971, still serves as the primary narrative describing the role and purpose of college unions

On the Memorial Union's designation on the "National Register of Historic Places" in 2016, the report includes a section under the title "The National Influence of the Wisconsin Union and Porter Butts". The register places emphasis on the following:

“the Memorial Union and its association with Porter Butts who served as director from 1928 until 1968. Butts guided the development of the Memorial Union as a unifying educational institution integral to the social and community life of the University of Wisconsin. He quickly became a nationally recognized authority and innovator in the college union movement, and national leader in articulating the role of the university union on the college campus that it not just a building, but an organization aimed at bringing together and enhancing student learning.”

Fredric March (born Frederick Bickel) was a member of the honorary Ku Klux Klan in 1919-1920.

Our research revealed that the 1921 Badger yearbook lists Frederick Bickel as a member of the honorary Ku Klux Klan. This would mean he was a member of the group in 1919-1920.

Fredric March was a celebrated Hollywood actor in 1930s and 40s who was widely known as a supporter of liberal causes.

Fredric March actively supported democratic and liberal movement like the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, the Committee for First Amendment and Films for Democracy. He fought the persecution of Hollywood artists, many of them Jewish, in the 1950s by the House Un-American Activities Committee.

SOURCES:

“Fredric March: Craftsman First, Star Second” by Debora C. Peterson. Greenwood Press 1996.

[“Confronting our campus history”](#) Posted on April 19, 2018 by Chancellor Blank, Office of the Chancellor Blog

The Wisconsin Union Association acknowledges the emotions of marginalized students and allies and is committed to ensuring the Wisconsin Union is inviting and accepting of all people.

The Wisconsin Union Association acknowledges the emotions of marginalized students and allies and is committed to ensuring the Wisconsin Union is inviting and accepting. The moral nature and guiding beliefs of the Wisconsin Union compel us to continue working to provide a welcoming, inclusive and common gathering space for all members of the University community. We strive to continue the ethos that the Wisconsin Union is “a unifying force in the life of the college” --regardless of race, gender, nationality, financial position, and any other disadvantage.

The Wisconsin Union Association (WUA) supports Union Council, the Wisconsin Union, and the Wisconsin Union Directorate.

The Wisconsin Union Association (WUA) is a non-profit organization that traces its roots to the Building Committee that was established by the Board of Regents in the 1920s to raise the funds to build the Memorial Union. We were formally incorporated in 1951 with the stated purpose of promoting the interests, welfare, and development of the Wisconsin Union and its buildings, in cooperation with the governing board (Union Council) and the University of Wisconsin administration.

WUA Board Members are committed to the ideals of the Wisconsin Union and have individually and collectively provided time, treasure and talent in support of the Union's mission. Our recent work includes supporting the construction of Union South, the renovation of Memorial Union and student programming through the Wisconsin Union Directorate in both facilities. *Many of us are lifelong advocates because the Wisconsin Union provided experiences for a lifetime, and gave us a welcoming space as students who did not fit in to the broader majority due to our race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, religious values, national origin, and/or political beliefs.*

We support Union Council's governance role as the Wisconsin Union's governing body responsible to the Board of Regents through the Chancellor. This includes supporting the actions outlined in the April 25, 2018 Union Council "Resolution Regarding Named Spaces at Memorial Union." We look forward to working with Union Council, the Wisconsin Union, the Wisconsin Union Directorate, University of Wisconsin administrators and the Madison community.

Miguel Guevara

Dear Miguel.

I am not sure I understand the issue of removing Porter Butts name from the Union Art Gallery. But if this is the issue, PLEASE – consider this long and hard.

The Union as it stands today would probably not have existed without Porter. He and his Trustees made it a stand-out in unions around the country.

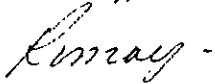
It was his idea to make it a learning center as well as a home away from home. It was his idea that to teach leadership you have to make them leaders and then give them the powers. Therefore, he made the Directorate the decision making body. The University recognized this by designating it as an educational division of the University.

The young people on the current Directorate and some of our younger Trustees may not know his history with the Union since 1926. He worked with the founders to raise funds for the building. He was made its first Director and served for at least 53 years. I recommend reading his book *The College Union Idea* to understand him better.

Any foolish action he may have done (if this is a fact) certainly is overshadowed by the man he became – honorable, far-thinking and dedicated to his students. I worked under him for several years and saw his devotion to the Union.

I can not imagine the Wisconsin Student Union not having something dedicated to his Memory!

Sincerely,



Romay Rupnow

Cc: Mark Guthier
Lucy Lloyd

Response by Porter Butts

Following adoption by the Trustees of a resolution expressing appreciation of his service as fund raiser and officer of the Memorial Union Building Association

Trustee Annual Meeting, April 27, 1979

I appreciate your generous salute. I suppose 53 years at the same stand adds up to something of an occasion.

I must say that I'm not the only one who qualifies in this respect. The same can be said also for Lowell Frautschi. His interest and service to this Union, all on a volunteer basis, also dates back 53 years. I was reminded tonight of that first experience we had together, back in 1926, when we attended our first national union conference at Willard Straight Hall at Cornell, he as the Union's student president and I as the newly appointed secretary of the Association.

To remind Lowell of that event, I brought along this photograph; as you can see, there were 33 or 34 delegates there, both students and staff. At that time, there were less than two dozen unions in the country. Now there are more than 1500 unions, and more than 1000 attend the conferences—which says something about the growth of the union idea in the last half century. From that 1926 conference, I drew my first inspiration from Foster Coffin, director of Willard Straight Hall, and J. Burgon Bickersteth, warden of Hart House at Toronto, who revealed to me what a Union could be like. They both had impressive new buildings, both were strongly culturally-oriented, both were highly intelligent and both encouraged me to think of the union as a career.

George Haight, who was one of our most active Trustees at the time, had told me when I was appointed secretary, "Porter, this may be all right for you for a year or two, but I think you'll burn out on this kind of a job." At that point, I had no indication that I would be asked to be director, but it was at that Cornell conference I guess I made a kind of decision to keep going, if asked.

I think I would like to take this occasion to say something about the Trustees, because my relationship over the years to this group, the Trustees, has been one of the most rewarding experiences of all these 53 years. The Trustees group, as a group and as an institution, is really something very special.

It's one of a kind in this country. In the beginning, when all the fund raising efforts started for unions in the '20s, usually as war memorials, there were a number of alumni fund raising groups that continued on to give guidance to the destinies of their unions as well as continued fund raising, including Michigan, Purdue and Iowa State. And at Iowa State, it's a private corporation which literally owns the Union building. It's on university property, but the alumni corporation has title to the building. It's on university property, but the alumni corporation has title to the building and tends to spend its time most particularly financing new construction and paying off the mortgage. In contrast, we have something here that makes this Trustee group, as I've said, very special. For those of you not familiar with our history, I think it's worth citing a few examples of what makes it so.

Fred Clausen, president of the Van Brunt Manufacturing Company of Horicon, Wisconsin, first and long time president of the Memorial Union Building Committee, and one of its stalwart workers.

Walter J. Kohler, head of the Kohler Company, member of the Board of Regents from 1918 to 1924 and its president 1921-1924, vice-president of the Memorial Union Building Committee and its largest contributor, later Governor of the State of Wisconsin. Following his death in 1940, Porter Butts wrote to Mrs. Kohler on behalf of the Memorial Union Building Committee saying, "As much as to any one man, we consider the Union as a monument to him."

Prof. E.H. "Ned" Gardner, Professor of English, literate and eloquent, campaign director for the Union for several years, member of the committee and Trustee until his death. I heard him say on more than one occasion that his involvement with the Wisconsin Union was the most cherished thing in his life.

Prof. Harold Bradley. Professor of Physiological Chemistry, community leader in Madison and a campus statesman, one of the principal shapers of the Union and ever faithful. We paid homage to him yesterday afternoon.

John Dollard, successor to Ned Gardner as campaign director and notably effective in organizing student leadership and energizing campus life. Effective writer and winsome personality, who so impressed Prof. Max Mason by his work for the Memorial Union that Dr. Mason took him along as a special assistant when he became President of the University of Chicago.

George Haight, Chicago attorney and noted alumnus of the University of Wisconsin. A dynamic leader who along with Israel Shrimski headed the nine men who signed the \$90,000 note that made it possible to go ahead with construction of the Union in 1926. Followed Fred Clausen as president of the building committee, and was the first chairman of the Trustees of the Memorial Union Building Association.

John Lord, Chicago attorney and another devoted alumnus of the University of Wisconsin. An original member of the Memorial Union Building Committee, he followed George Haight as chairman of the Trustees, and remained as emeritus until his death only three or four years ago. On his retirement as chairman in 1968 he contributed \$10,000, which became the nucleus of the fund drive which made possible substantial remodeling of the Memorial Union and enthused everyone who attended its Golden Jubilee Anniversary in 1978.

And finally, but surely not least, Porter Butts, close friend: of John Dollard who shared with him the task of organizing and managing the Alumni Records Office of the University, which was a vital factor in the Memorial Union building campaign, and who took over as campaign director and secretary of the building committee when Jack left for Chicago. Thus Porter found his life work. As House Director of the Memorial Union for forty years he made an indelible mark not only on this campus but on campuses throughout this country and much of the world as a leading authority on college unions. The members of the Memorial Union Building Committee and their successor Trustees well knew that he was always thorough, efficient, and light years ahead of everyone else in foreseeing needs and devising ways to attain them.

We have a wonderful heritage and much for which to be thankful.

Lowell Frautschi

November 5, 1983

It was indeed the Trustees—Walter Kohler, Sr. (later governor), Fred Clausen (later president of the Regents), John Lord and others—who, in 1919, initiated the fundraising for this building and made construction possible. Without them, who knows when or if it might have happened? This was at a time when there was very little help from the University—none at all from the alumni office. The Union was a pioneering venture, dealing with an unknown phenomenon that very few understood except the Trustees themselves.

Then came the critical time when the bids came in to build the original Union and the cash was \$90,000 short. In those days, the State would not approve a building contract unless all the cash was in hand. With this news, the Regents were moving—and moving steadily—to abandon the project. And then George Haight and eight other Trustees personally guaranteed a bank loan that produced the cash that was needed, and the contract was let.

We were still without any money at all for equipment or furnishings. George Haight again played a key role, with others, in establishing the University Building Corporation which, as a private, non-profit organization, could borrow money and equip the building and lease it back to the University. This was done—and this, interestingly, led the State to adopt the same device in years to come to finance all kinds of other state buildings—and ultimately led to an amendment to the state constitution which had originally prohibited a state debt. So we got our equipment due to the energy and foresight and help of the Trustees.

Then, in the early '30s, it was the Trustees who persuaded the Alumni Association to abandon its proposal to the Regents which would have eliminated the student role in the policy-making of the Union and turned it over to alumni. They succeeded thanks again, primarily, to George Haight and Fred Clausen, then chairman of the Trustees. (Both were former alumni presidents.)

Shortly thereafter, in the early '30s, it was the prestige and influence of the Trustee group around the state and their work to create this kind of Union that led a legislative investigating committee to conclude its long and arduous investigation and to recommend shelving a bill that would have stripped the Union of its food service function and most other revenue producing operations—a measure in the legislature that was vigorously promoted by the Wisconsin State Restaurant and Hotel Association and had a good chance of passing.

Through these early years, it was the Trustees who helped shape the purpose and educational goals of this Union—particularly John Dollard, Ned Gardner, Dr. Harold Bradley and George Haight. They were potent influences in the development of the program and ideology of this building and had a pronounced effect on my own thinking about it.

Through Dr. Bradley's leadership, the Regents were persuaded to designate the Union as an educational division of the University—again, we were one of a kind in this country or in the world recognized as having an acknowledged educational function.

In the mid-'30s, it was again Dr. Bradley particularly who convinced the Regents that the design of the Union Theater and early construction should be approved, despite the strong opposition of the State Bureau of Engineering and some top University officers. Fred Clausen, chairman, helped on this too.

In the 1950's, it was the Trustees who persuaded the University Foundation to drop its opposition to the construction of the cafeteria addition and the maintenance of parking between the Union and the Gym, after the Foundation had acquired the YMCA next door. For this, we have to thank, again, George Haight and John Lord.

Not too much later, the Trustees joined with the Foundation and the Alumni Association in arriving at a coordinated plan for the development of the lower campus and the Trustees helped fund the study. John Lord served on this joint committee.

In the '60s the Trustees were successful in restoring parking to the lower levels of the Helen White Library after both the State and University had dropped it. This came about by way of a personal appeal by Trustee Don Anderson to Governor Knowles.

The Trustees recommended the construction of Union South a little later on and effectively prevented, through the good offices of Don Anderson, the naming of Union South as the "Frank Lloyd Wright Union." Sen. Leonard had a bill in the Legislature to so name it. Frank Lloyd Wright, of course, had nothing whatever to do with it and wouldn't have been more chagrined. Don personally talked with Sen. Leonard and persuaded him to drop the measure.

Throughout the '60s and '70s, the whole Board of Trustees met with each new incoming University president and chancellor to discuss Union background, goals, and problems—and to seek understanding and support. Then later, through documentation and resolution, they slowed down administrative moves to reorganize the Union, transferring the Union Council's policy-making function and authority to the Dean of Students. Ruth Doyle and Lowell Frautschi played key roles in that. Ultimately, the proposed reorganization was abandoned.

In the case of merger of the higher education institutions in the state, the Trustees helped establish that the student role in the governance of this Union did indeed satisfy the legislative requirements. Lowell Frautschi made the presentation. The administration and the Regents adopted this position, preventing, at least for the time being, the complete take-over of the allocation of the Union student fee by a superimposed student board, politically elected.

And then, the Trustees produced the evidence of the very harmful effects of the University's freeze on the level of the Union fee in the face of inflation—thus helping to remove the freeze.

The Trustees weren't always successful. Their recommendation that a substantial addition to the Union and the Center building, plus guest house and underground parking, be built on the gym site was not accepted by the administration although the Lower Campus Planning Committee had recommended it and the Union was prepared to fund it.

Neither was the recommendation accepted that the purchase of the land for Union South be made through State funds instead of Union funds. The land for the Memorial Union was given by the State, but not so the land for Union South. However, later, there was success in refinancing the Union South land purchase so that the cost was spread over a period of years and monies turned back to the Union. This, together with a special increase in the Union student fee for construction, provided the backstop fund that made our whole Golden Anniversary \$1 million campaign among classes and individuals possible—because you cannot depend on letting a construction contract on the basis of whether a class may or may not raise sufficient funds by a given time. Lowell was our chief negotiator in this effort, as he has been in so many others.

Speaking of that \$1 million campaign, Trustees and Voting Members themselves have personally initiated and led their class fundraising for the Union: John Bergstrasser, Class of '25; Lowell, Class of '27; Bill Blaesser, Class of '34; Bob Gresch and Hans Hopf, Class of '49; and Don Ryan, Class of '52. So there has not just been Trustee group action; individual Trustees also have taken initiative to make things happen for the good of the Union.

Altogether, the Trustees, from the beginning until now, have elicited contributions from more than 50,000 students, faculty, alumni and friends to make this physical plant and its improvements possible. This is far in excess of what has happened on any other campus anywhere. The closest is the Michigan Union, with about 20,000 contributors.

And so, I guess you can see that over the years, the Trustees have performed a three-fold function:

They have facilitated, through long-range planning and fundraising, the construction and equipment of the physical plant;

They have served as a shield against takeovers of the Union or parts of it, and as a shield against other unwelcome developments that would injure its ability to do what its founders and the donors created and;

Not the least important, they have continuously over the years given encouragement and support to the Union's staff and the Union Council.

One never knows when a new threat to the Union's progress or its traditional basic purposes may arise again, or from what source. So I would hope that the Trustees—in effect, Trustees of an idea—will continue to be vigilant in preserving and advancing what is good and valuable in this enterprise to which we are all devoted.

Union Council Resolution Regarding Named Spaces at Memorial Union **Wednesday, April 25, 2018**

The Wisconsin Union has a long history on the UW-Madison campus of working to provide a welcoming, inclusive and common gathering space for all members of the University community. Being a membership organization, the organization has been guided in its vision to be the heart and soul of the campus in this regard by working to advance its core values:

- Respect
- Inclusivity
- Relationships
- Leadership
- Learning
- Performance

It is in the spirit of living out our values, that the Union Council considered its response to the “Report to the Chancellor on the Ku Klux Klan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison” as well as the Chancellor’s action plan outlined in “Confronting our Campus History.” In addition, it is important to note that the Union commissioned an Inclusivity Study this spring to examine the extent to which students find Memorial Union, Union South and the Terrace to be inclusive. The results of that study are expected by the end of May 2018.

Union Council is grateful to the Ad Hoc Study Group that produced the report and to the Chancellor for a thoughtful and expansive response to the report’s recommendations. The Council brings attention to the following excerpt in the report in formulating its response:

“... the history the UW needs to confront was not the aberrant work of a few individuals but a pervasive culture of racial and religious bigotry, casual and unexamined in its prevalence, in which exclusion and indignity were routine, sanctions in the institution’s daily life, and unchallenged by its leaders. We therefore suggest that any focus on the renaming of particular campus facilities follow rather than precede the work of substantial institutional change ...”

While we agree that the priority for the UW-Madison campus should be systemic rather than symbolic change, an important element is missing from the report - the role of student programming in the named spaces. Members of the Wisconsin Union Directorate are asked to provide an array of diverse, thought-providing and relevant programs for the campus community in the two named spaces. The relatively unaddressed nature of this fact influenced Council’s response.

For nearly 90 years, student leaders at the Wisconsin Union have provided programming for all members of the campus community in these spaces - well before the spaces were named for

these men. The programming has attempted to meet the needs of each successive generation of students - always being produced by student-led committees. Increasingly, student programmers are having to respond to charges of racism from performers and students, due to lack of action from previous requests to properly address the named spaces. There have been specific requests to rename these spaces. Given these concerns, students have asked Union Council to consider the impact this has on the ability for the Union to live out its stated vision and values.

Union Council also expresses its concern over the release of the report so close to the end of the academic year. While some slippage from the original due date of December 1, 2017 can be expected, the release of the report on April 19, 2018 - just four business days before the last meeting of Union Council for the semester - has put the Council in a very untenable position. UW-Madison students have been waiting most of the year to see what the Union will do in response to the report. Even today (April 25, 2018), some students have announced their plans to file a hate and bias complaint if the names are not removed. Our time to seriously consider the implications of their complaint within the historical context of the named spaces is practically non-existent. Unfortunately, our ability to arrive at a satisfying decision by semester's end for these students has been severely compromised by the timing of the report.

Therefore, after reviewing the aforementioned report, the campus-level action items and in anticipation of receiving the results of our own Inclusivity Study, Union Council resolves the following:

1. We charge the Wisconsin Union to widely distribute the results of the Inclusivity Study with the greater campus community and to gather additional feedback and responses from students regarding the Study as well as our named spaces. An analysis and recommendations based on the Study and gathered feedback should be delivered to Council at its second meeting of the 2018 - 2019 term.
2. We will cover the Porter Butts Gallery and Fredric March Play Circle names at the beginning of the 2018 - 2019 school year while the process outlined in the document moves forward and Union Council makes a decision by the end of 2018. We ask that Union Marketing staff work with members of Union Council to create informative and educational signage along with the mechanism to capture feedback at the entrances of both spaces. In the meantime, the two spaces will be referred to generically on promotional pieces as "The Gallery" and "Play Circle".
3. We ask that members of Union Council serve on the summer design team for the public history project, co- chaired by Dr. Kantrowitz and Dr. Clark-Pujara.

4. We charge WUD students and staff to develop supplemental WUD programming that complements the related campus history project.
5. We request a new program initiative be developed to create a Social Justice Incubator at the Wisconsin Union to help address social justice issues on campus. A physical space, operating budget and funding sources (from campus or other sources) should be identified for the Incubator. A full proposal should be delivered to Council at its second meeting of the 2018 - 2019 term.
6. In order to support and ensure the timely completion of initiatives 1 through 5 - and to stay engaged in the necessary conversations this issue demands - Union Council will not go on hiatus this summer. The Council will continue to meet monthly (May, June, July and August), moving seamlessly into its regular meeting schedule in September 2018 and beyond.
7. We charge the 2018 - 2019 Union Officers to request quarterly meetings with the Chancellor to continue addressing the named spaces issue as well other Union-related business.
8. We charge the Wisconsin Union staff to develop new methods to accurately reflect the Union's history in signage and displays throughout the building.
9. We charge Union Council to make a firm decision on the naming issue by the end of 2018.
10. We request a clear and defined process for future naming of spaces with in the Wisconsin Union.

**Report to the Chancellor
on the Ku Klux Klan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison**

**Presented by Stephen Kantrowitz and Floyd Rose
Co-Chairs of the Ad-Hoc Study Group**

April 4, 2018

SUMMARY

The name "Ku Klux Klan," the sign of the fiery cross, and the image of robed and hooded nightriders evoke horrific histories of racist, anti-immigrant, and anti-Semitic violence. It may therefore seem shocking that between 1919 and 1926 two distinct student organizations at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) took this name. In Fall 2017, Chancellor Rebecca Blank asked us to provide a review of this history and advice as to how to acknowledge it "in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain." (See attachments 1 and 2)

This report begins with a brief history of these organizations, placing their creation, activities, and membership in several contexts. These contexts include the history of the Ku Klux Klan itself: its origins during the decade after the Civil War; its power as an image and idea during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; its re-emergence as a national organization during the late 1910s; the twin but historically related pathways that led to the creation of two campus organizations bearing its name; and the relationship of these organizations to the Ku Klux Klan in Wisconsin, including the City of Madison.

As important as this history is, it does not fully capture what the Study Group understands to be the most important context of all: the fact that, on our campus during those years, these organizations formed only part of a pervasive culture of exclusion that pressed non-majority students to the margins of campus life and subjected them to routine and persistent indignity. The climate created by this culture, like the Ku Klux Klan itself, was a defining feature of American national life in this era and was not unique to this campus. This helps explain how campus organizations of the time could so casually or eagerly adopt the name "Ku Klux Klan" and why so few at the UW objected.

We received our charge in the wake of the protests and deadly violence in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017, where white supremacists marched with torches and chanted Nazi slogans. Our conversations this fall and winter took place amid a sharp and renewed national focus on the history and resurgence of white supremacist politics in the United States and in the context of countless local debates, including here in Madison, over Confederate memorials and other reminders of the nation's troubled history of racism. Many people, on campus and beyond, are aware that members of the first Klan group on UW's campus—an interfraternity society founded in 1919—included well-known leaders of the student body. Two of their names, Porter Butts and Fredric March, are prominently displayed on facilities in the Memorial Union, while other facilities on campus (and around Madison) bear the names of other members of this group. The members of the Study Group understood from the outset that many people would expect us

to be guided by the question of whether any or all of these names should be removed from our campus landscape. Indeed, our discussions repeatedly returned to this question.

Public discussions of this and similar histories often produce two diametrically opposed arguments with regard to what we came to call the “names” question. The first position is that no person who ever identified with the Klan should be honored in any way on the campus or elsewhere. This position argues for renaming every campus facility bearing the name of any member of a campus Klan group. The second, quite different, position is that Klan membership reflected the climate of the era—that these were “people of their time,” that they affiliated with a group named “Ku Klux Klan” for a brief period during their youth, and that this self-identification should not overshadow their subsequent contributions to campus, community, and American life.

We acknowledge the power of both of these arguments, but we do not find ourselves in agreement with either one. Put simply, **the history the UW needs to confront was not the aberrant work of a few individuals but a pervasive culture of racial and religious bigotry, casual and unexamined in its prevalence, in which exclusion and indignity were routine, sanctioned in the institution’s daily life, and unchallenged by its leaders.** We therefore suggest that any focus on the renaming of particular campus facilities *follow* rather than *precede* the work of substantial institutional change to acknowledge and address the legacies of that era.

Thus, we urge a reckoning with the history and legacies of that era's campus climate—a reckoning focused on the ways people sought to resist and transform that climate, and on practical steps the UW can now take to give life to “the values the campus currently strives to maintain” and become a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of its community. We understand that this requires a broadly shared commitment by many people, in residence halls, offices, and departments as well as in Bascom Hall. But we advise the Chancellor to undertake the following steps:

- Help the university acknowledge and learn from its past. Long before the UW committed itself to its present values of inclusiveness, respect, and equity, some members of our community embodied those values in the face of hostility and derision. Their history deserves a prominent place on our campus. We propose a project to **recover the voices of campus community members, in the era of the Klan and since, who struggled and endured in a climate of hostility and who sought to change it.** Their efforts to bring change to this campus will provide lessons, contexts, and reminders for our efforts today.
- Honoring this history is necessary, but the present life of our campus demands more. We further advise **a renewed commitment of significant resources to units, programs, and policies that explicitly seek to create a campus where these struggles are no longer so necessary.** We urge the following specific investments. First, we call for a renewed commitment to the Department of Afro-American Studies and the Programs in American Indian Studies, Chican@/Latin@ Studies, and Asian-American Studies. These programs have proven track records of fostering success, community, and a sense of belonging on campus among non-majority students; equally important, their courses and

programs help all members of campus develop what the UW's mission statement describes as "respect for, and commitment to, the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society." Second, we recommend increased investment in the high-impact recruitment programs housed in the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity & Climate, and more generally the close study and commitment of resources to the improved retention of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty of color and from first-generation, economically disadvantaged, and otherwise underrepresented groups. Third, we recommend increased investment in the graduate fellowship program known as AOF.

Recovering the voices and responses of those who experienced exclusion will help the university learn from its past. Investment in proven programs that foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment will help achieve a better campus community for all. Holding true to "the values the campus currently strives to maintain" requires our ongoing commitment to understanding how far we have come, acknowledging how far we still have to go, and taking the steps that move us forward.

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I: CHARGE AND ACTIVITIES

On October 18, 2017, Chancellor Rebecca Blank asked the members of this Study Group to “[r]eview documents and other historical information related to the creation, activities and context of student organizations that operated on campus in and around the 1920s and that were named after or otherwise affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan” and to “[e]valuate the actions and legacies of those organizations and advise how the campus can appropriately acknowledge this history in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain.” The Study Group began its work during its initial 90-minute session on October 18, 2017. It subsequently met for 90-minute sessions on October 27, November 10, and December 1, 2017, and January 26, February 9, February 23, and March 16, 2018. The first three meetings focused on scholarship and documents relevant to the first part of the charge; these and other works we consulted are listed in the bibliography (Attachment #3). At subsequent meetings, we discussed how to evaluate this history and its legacies, and what advice to provide to Chancellor Blank.

We sought the aid of UW archivist David Null, hired a researcher, consulted scholars at other institutions, and read relevant works of scholarship and studies undertaken by other universities. As news of the Study Group’s existence spread, we received comments, suggestions, and offers of aid from many past and present members of the campus community. We also received many media requests, which we agreed to delay answering until our work was complete. The Study Group’s work could not have been completed without the administrative efforts of Catherine Reiland, to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks.

II: HISTORY

Institutions, contexts, and legacies

A Brief History of the Ku Klux Klan

In order to understand how the Ku Klux Klan came to our campus at the end of the 1910s, this section reviews its nineteenth-century origins, the transformation of that legacy by the early twentieth century, and the emergence of the reorganized Klan as a national movement after 1915.

The Ku Klux Klan was first established in the spring of 1866 as a social, musical, and fraternal association of ex-Confederate men in Tennessee. Over the next two years it evolved into a Southern regional organization whose members—ex-slaveholders, former Confederate soldiers, and their younger male relations—employed disguises as they waged campaigns of terror and intimidation against former slaves’ expressions of social and political autonomy. Masked, collective, violent action under the name “Ku Klux Klan” created a widely known label—in today’s terms, a brand—that identified men with the common project of reconstructing white supremacy for a world without slavery. Masks and robes granted those men at least the fiction of anonymity as they carried out acts of intimidation and violence. As the Klan claimed responsibility for violence against black and white opponents during and after the election of 1868, the name and its associated iconography gained the power to instill fear.¹

The Reconstruction-era Klan committed horrific acts of racially motivated terrorism, including murder, assassination, rape, torture, and intimidation, but it did not survive long as a political and paramilitary force. African Americans, their white allies, and Union forces occupying parts of the South fought the Klan, and a federal legal and military campaign in the early 1870s substantially diminished it. But white supremacist violence and intimidation quickly re-emerged under other names, often with the same personnel. Together, the Klan and its successor organizations played a crucial role in dismantling Reconstruction’s effort to build a non-racial democracy.

Although the Klan faded as an organization, its name and cultural form remained potent. The memory of its terrors featured powerfully in African American culture, and African Americans and many others continued to remember and repudiate its legacy of violent vigilantism.² But by the late nineteenth century, many white Northerners ceased to think of Reconstruction as a necessary sequel to slave emancipation and as an effort to make the promise of democracy real; instead, they focused on its shortcomings and failures. For many Northern and Southern whites of the 1880s and 1890s, the history of anti-Reconstruction violence by the Klan and other groups became evidence not of a deliberate campaign to restore the former slaveholders to power but, instead, of white men’s inborn racial resistance to the idea and practice of equality. At the same time, many white Americans sought and celebrated a “reunion” of former Unionists and Confederates that would finally put to rest the bitterness of the Civil

¹ Elaine Frantz Parsons, *Ku-Klux: The Birth of the Klan during Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

² Kidada E. Williams, *They Left Great Marks on Me: African American Testimonies of Racial Violence from Emancipation to World War I* (New York: NYU Press, 2012).

War. Crucially, this “reunion” was for whites only; it sidelined or ignored the aspirations and activities of African Americans, including their crucial contributions to the war and to Reconstruction.³ In 1901, Princeton professor (and future President of the United States) Woodrow Wilson published an article in *The Atlantic* in which he described Reconstruction as a ruinous alliance of scheming Northern radicals and their black Southern pawns, a dismal period that provoked white Southern men to rebel (including as Klansmen). In Wilson’s telling words, black Southerners “were left to carry the discredit and reap the consequences of ruin, when at last the whites who were real citizens got control again.”⁴ By the time Wilson wrote, his understanding of the Klan and its violence as natural and inevitable responses to the post-Civil War challenge to white supremacy had become a widely held view.

The practical history of the Ku Klux Klan as an instrument of ex-slaveholders’ power might have been lost to most white Americans, but the organization’s reputation for masked, violent, concerted action was not. It was in this spirit that some collegiate organizations of the era adopted its name and iconography. As Nicholas Syrett shows in his history of white college fraternities in the United States, young men of the turn of the twentieth century sought to distinguish themselves from their peers and establish themselves as powerful by adopting violent imagery, violent or mock-violent rituals, and a sinister tone. The memory of the Ku Klux Klan retained precisely these connotations, and the name “Ku Klux Klan”—often in tandem with the now-iconic robe, hood, and cross—appeared repeatedly in the “fraternity” section of college yearbooks across the turn-of-the-century nation, not just in the South, but (among others) at the Universities of Illinois, Michigan, and Maine, as well as eventually at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.⁵

Popular culture returned the image of the Klansman to the national spotlight in the early twentieth century. Popular fiction (especially Thomas W. Dixon’s 1905 novel *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*) represented Klansmen as heroic white vigilantes who faced down villainous African Americans bent on political and sexual domination. The wide national circulation of Klan novels gave rise to stage productions and finally to the 1915 feature film *The Birth of a Nation*. That film was an unprecedented commercial and critical success, attracting large audiences for years to come (including in Madison) and earning an endorsement from then-President Wilson, who screened it in the White House. The film’s depiction of robed, masked, collective white vigilantism as the savior of white womanhood and the white nation returned the image of the Klansman to the center of national consciousness.⁶

³ David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2001).

⁴ Woodrow Wilson, “The Reconstruction of the Southern States,” *The Atlantic* (January, 1901), p. 11.

⁵ Nicholas L. Syrett, *The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2009); see also Katherine J. Lennard, “Uniform Threat: Manufacturing the Ku Klux Klan’s Visible Empire, 1866-1931,” Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 2017, p. 98. Students at at least one Northern college (Yale University) formed a “Ku Klux” eating club as early as the late 1860s. See Parsons, *Ku-Klux*, p. 125.

⁶ Melvyn Stokes, *D. W. Griffith’s The Birth of a Nation: A History of “the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time”* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007).

The second Ku Klux Klan, successor to the by-then-moribund Reconstruction-era organization, was born in this moment. In 1915, Atlanta entrepreneur William Simmons appropriated the iconography of the Klan (as depicted in *Birth of a Nation*) for a new for-profit fraternal organization, which he dubbed the “Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.”

Simmons’ Klan capitalized on the renewed fame of the name to channel the era’s powerful currents of nativism and violent white supremacy. In recruiting people to this group, Simmons coupled the anti-black rhetoric of the Reconstruction-era Klan with his own era’s pervasive hostility toward non-Protestant immigrants. Like many others, Simmons believed that the millions of recently-arrived immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, many of them Catholic or Jewish, carried with them dangerous foreign “isms” (in his words, “Bolshevism, Socialism, Syndicalism, I.W.W.ism,”) which threatened to overwhelm true “Americanism.” Simmons was also inspired by a recent, local episode of vigilante violence against one such “outsider”: the lynching of Jewish factory superintendent Leo Frank. This lynching had been perpetrated in August, 1915 by the “Knights of Mary Phagan,” white Georgians claiming to act in the name of a 13-year-old white girl for whose murder Frank had been convicted in a grossly unfair and anti-Semitic proceeding.⁷

Simmons introduced his new organization with a dramatic cross-burning at Georgia’s Stone Mountain at Thanksgiving 1915. By 1920, he had recruited a few thousand members, mainly in Georgia and Alabama. In that year two more skilled entrepreneurs took over the organization’s recruitment and finances and quickly transformed the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan into a fast-growing and highly profitable national organization. During the early 1920s, the Klan rapidly grew from a Southern group numbering in the low thousands into a vast organization with a foothold in nearly every part of the country. It reached a membership in the hundreds of thousands by 1921 and continued to grow over the next three years, finally reaching an estimated membership of between one and four million by the middle of the decade.⁸

This second Ku Klux Klan shared some features with the original Klan. Some auxiliaries of the organization committed acts of violence in its name, and the name and iconography were clearly intended to inspire fear and awe among its enemies. At the same time, this Klan did not assert or depict itself as a guerrilla organization waging masked war against the federal government; instead, as historian Felix Harcourt explains, Klan leaders represented their organization as “simply a law-abiding and law-enforcing union of white, native-born, patriotic Protestants.”⁹

The time was ripe for this organization and movement. Since World War I and the revolutionary movements in Russia and other parts of Europe, streams of racist, nativist and anti-radical feelings had converged in American political and social life. Immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were frequently depicted as vectors of radicalism and as threats to the United

⁷ Steve Oney, *And the Dead Shall Rise: The Murder of Mary Phagan and the Lynching of Leo Frank* (New York: Pantheon, 2003).

⁸ For recent estimates, see Felix Harcourt, *Ku Klux Culture: America and the Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 3, 5 (four million), and Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition* (New York: Norton/Liveright, 2017), pp. 2, 217 n.4 (at least one million).

⁹ Harcourt, *Ku Klux Culture*, 4.

States' cultural identity as a white Protestant nation. At the same time, the near-total disenfranchisement of black Southerners by state constitutions, state laws, federal acquiescence, and a pervasive climate of intimidation and violence barred most African Americans—the people who had most fiercely resisted the first Ku Klux Klan—from exerting force in the nation's political debates.

Racism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and religious and cultural prejudice converged with more personal and specific agendas and grievances to make the Ku Klux Klan an appealing vehicle for literally millions of white Protestant Americans. Women's and children's auxiliary organizations bore the Klan's name; so did newspapers, radio stations, fairs, and local baseball teams. By the end of 1924, Klan forces were numerous enough to make an unsuccessful bid to select the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party.

The Klan reached Milwaukee in late 1920. A first attempt to organize the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Madison faltered in 1921 in the face of some hostility from newspapers and fraternal organizations. But in the summer of 1922 Klan organizers returned and quietly recruited men into the first local affiliate ("klavern"). That group went public in October, claiming 800 members.¹⁰ Between 1922 and 1924, the years of the Klan's national ascendancy, the state organization also grew.

Norman Weaver's study of the midwestern Klan argues that white protestant Wisconsin men were recruited by propaganda emphasizing "the problem of Catholicism" and "the threat of aliens" to "Americanism," and promising to "'clean up' any community in which it was given a free hand."¹¹ This meant taking part in marches, raids, and other sanctioned and unsanctioned activity against people and neighborhoods that Klan members considered "un-American." In Madison, Klan forces took aim at the Greenbush neighborhood (home to most of Madison's Jews, a large percentage of the city's African American residents, and its Italians of Sicilian origin), claiming that the city's police had proven ineffective at combating the neighborhood's liquor trade, prostitution, and growing number of murders. Their purpose, according to Klan organizer F. S. Webster, was "to make Madison again a fit place in which to live."¹²

The Klan penetrated Madison's institutions, including its police force. In 1922, when Klan organizers formed a paramilitary unit to "fight crime, fires, floods, riots, and strikes," Madison Chief of Police Thomas Shaughnessy publicly turned them away. But this initial rejection was not the end of the story. In October, 1924, after Madison Mayor Isaac Milo Kittelson granted a permit, several thousand Klansmen paraded through the city, around Capitol Square and into the Greenbush. Following the December 3, 1924 shooting death of a Madison police officer in the Greenbush neighborhood, Klansmen in robes attended his funeral en masse. Klansmen subsequently acted as deputies for the mayor's special investigator, helping to conduct

¹⁰ Robert A. Goldberg, "The Ku Klux Klan in Madison, 1922-1927," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 58, no. 1 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 32-34.

¹¹ Norman Weaver, "The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, UW-Madison, 1954, pp. 73-4.

¹² Goldberg, "The Ku Klux Klan in Madison, 1922-1927," pp. 34-36.

anti-bootlegging raids. Decades later, former chief of detectives William McCormick recalled that “pretty near all the men in the department were Klansmen.”¹³

Following or supporting the Klan was not inevitable, and there were voices of protest and dissent. A few Madison institutions openly opposed the Klan, among them *The Capital Times*, the Elks, the Madison Federation of Labor, and Catholic groups. Despite these voices, however, Madison’s mayor made no objection to the Klan’s arrival, and other civic leaders and organizations welcomed its speakers and its message.¹⁴ Ultimately, the Klan was not undone by outside opposition but by scandals and internal struggles. By late 1925, the Madison Klan was all but extinct, and the national organization faded over the next few years. By the late 1920s, it was no longer a powerful political force with national reach. Despite its brief career, historian Linda Gordon argues, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan constituted the largest U.S. social movement of the early twentieth century.¹⁵

The Ku Klux Klan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Between 1919 and 1926 two student organizations on the UW campus took the name “Ku Klux Klan.”¹⁶

The first Ku Klux Klan organization on the UW campus came into being before the emergence of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan as a national organization. This campus group appeared in the spring of 1919—that is, after Dixon’s novels and *Birth of a Nation* had returned the Reconstruction-Era Klan to a prominent place in American popular culture, and after Simmons had formed his Knights, but before that organization had arrived in Wisconsin. Inspired and recruited by members of a society called “Ku Klux Klan” at the University of Illinois (apparently founded as early as 1906)¹⁷, the first UW Klan group was composed of male student-body leaders in the Junior class.

These students established their Ku Klux Klan as an unmasked, above-ground interfraternity society composed of leading students. Its members included (from the 1921-1922 class): senior and sophomore class presidents, “members of the student senate, student court, the *Badger* yearbook board, the alumni committee, the prom and homecoming committees, the university traditions committee, the Campus Religious Council, and nearly all varsity sports squads and theatrical companies.” Members of this Klan group also occupied leadership roles on the Student Union board, the YMCA cabinet, the Memorial Union fund drive committee, the athletic board, and the *Daily Cardinal*.¹⁸ There is no evidence that this group was ever affiliated with the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, nor do we know what these 1919 founders knew or thought about the organization that Simmons founded in 1915. Still, its choice of a name signals an identification—or at the very least, no meaningful discomfort—with the widely known

¹³ Goldberg, “The Ku Klux Klan in Madison, 1922-1927,” pp. 36, 39-41, 34.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-7.

¹⁵ Gordon, *Second Coming of the KKK*, p. 8.

¹⁶ Timothy Messer-Kruse, “The Campus Klan of the University of Wisconsin: Tacit and Active Support for the Ku Klux Klan in a Culture of Intolerance,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 77, no. 1 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 2-38.

¹⁷ See <https://archives.library.illinois.edu/blog/ku-klux-klan/>

¹⁸ Messer-Kruse, “The Campus Klan,” p. 10.

violent actions of the Reconstruction-era Klan as it was remembered, celebrated, and given new cultural and institutional life in the early twentieth century.

The available historical record provides only a few indications of this first group's activities. In the *Badger* yearbooks, membership in this Klan group was represented in photographs of members and individual students' lists of affiliations, as well as in group photographs of an initiation ritual (pushing baby carriages through town) and of their formal dances. The affiliations of the group's members and the numerous references to it in campus publications of the early 1920s suggest its social prominence. Timothy Messer-Kruse also finds some evidence members of this group took part in an extra-legal spring 1921 campaign against liquor sellers in the Greenbush neighborhood. "Student leaders staked out the area, collected the affidavits necessary to obtain warrants, and, bypassing the Madison police, called in federal liquor control officers....In a single night, eight Italian merchants were arrested and 300 gallons of liquor confiscated." He notes that most of the UW's "student leaders" were members of this Klan group, and quotes a note from the same month in *The Daily Cardinal* that "[t]he following are having spring practice: 1. The football team 2. Ku Klux Klan."¹⁹ His inference is that this referred to these students' part in that raid on the Greenbush (which preceded the 1924 raid described above).

The second Klan group on the UW campus was, by contrast, a direct product of Simmons' Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. In the fall of 1922, the Knights began recruiting on the UW campus, finding some success among the faculty and student body, though apparently not among the members of the first Klan group. The UW's administration took no action against the group, and in 1924 a Klan-controlled housing fraternity, Kappa Beta Lambda (KBL, for "Klansmen Be Loyal") was established at UW. A Milwaukee Klan newspaper praised this group's commitment to the Klan principles of "White Supremacy, Restricted Foreign Immigration, Law and Order."²⁰ Like the first group, this Klan's members proudly and publicly acknowledged their affiliation.

The difference in social status between the first and second Klan groups on campus seems to have been marked. Both were composed of native-born Protestant men, but Messer-Kruse argues that the first group was higher status, composed disproportionately of liberal arts majors from outside Wisconsin, and included some of the most socially prominent and influential students on campus. The second group, by contrast, was chiefly composed of engineering and agricultural students from Madison as well as rural and small-town Wisconsin. In any event, the emergence of the second group quickly inspired the first group to change its name to the cryptic "Tumas." That organization persisted for a few more years. Kappa Beta Lambda expired in 1926, following the downward course of the local and national Knights.²¹

A Culture of Intolerance

The Ku Klux Klan of the 1910s and 1920s was not by itself the source of nativism, racism, and bigotry in the United States. President Wilson did not rely on the Klan to introduce

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²⁰ See *Ibid.* and Weaver, "The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan," pp. 87-88.

²¹ Messer-Kruse, "The Campus Klan."

Jim Crow segregation into the federal workforce in 1913, and his endorsement of *The Birth of a Nation* two years later simply recapitulated his view that the United States was essentially a white republic.²² The white citizens of Tulsa, Oklahoma did not don robes and hoods to make literal war on their city's African American community in 1921.²³ The Immigration Act of 1924, intended to dramatically shrink the immigration and naturalization of European Catholics and Jews, did not depend on the Klan for its passage through Congress.²⁴ We could offer many more examples of discriminatory policies and organized racist violence from this era. The point is that such policies, programs, and pogroms were part of the same culture that produced the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, one in which non-whites and non-Protestants were at best second-class citizens. The fact that the promoters of these policies often described their purposes as "Americanism" and "Americanization" should not distract us from their fundamental commitment to a racial and religious hierarchy in our national life.

That broader vision of the United States as a republic of, by, and for white Protestants shaped our campus in the 1920s much more than did the Klan groups themselves. The expression of that vision on this campus was what Messer-Kruse calls "a culture of intolerance," in which although some (but not all) groups of non-Protestants and non-whites could gain admission to the university, they were routinely reminded, by the action and inaction of students, faculty, and administrators, that they were not equal members of its community. That culture of intolerance took form here before the Klan groups arrived; it did not require them in order to persist during the 1920s; and it continued to exist after their disappearance. In our view, what is most striking about the history of the Klan at the UW is how easily its assertion of a native-born, Protestant, anti-radical "Americanism" meshed with a campus culture that was pervasively hostile and demeaning toward non-majority students.

Messer-Kruse's article on the "campus Klan" documents in excruciating detail the many forms of social and cultural exclusion practiced against both the small number of African American students and staff of that era and against the larger population of Jewish students. Our own research confirms his argument that the tenor of campus life, as reflected in campus publications and the experiences of non-majority students, was grossly inhospitable for non-whites and non-Protestants. To immerse oneself in the *Badger* yearbooks for the 1920s is to understand how unselfconsciously many students seem to have accepted the exclusion or degradation of non-majority members of the campus community. To delve into the social experiences of those groups who did not meet Klan-like definitions of "Americanism," is to understand that for such students, life on this campus in the early twentieth century was something to be endured.

Exclusion took both practical and symbolic forms. The handful of African American students on campus in this era faced exclusion from campus organizations. When they sought housing, they confronted *de facto* segregation. Blackface minstrelsy and other degrading

²² Eric Yellin, *Racism in the Nation's Service: Government Workers and the Color Line in Woodrow Wilson's America* (Chapel Hill: U.N.C. Press, 2013).

²³ Alfred L. Brophy, *Reconstructing the Dreamland: The Tulsa Riot of 1921—Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002).

²⁴ Mae Ngai, "The Architecture of Race in American Immigration Law: A Reexamination of the Immigration Act of 1924," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 1 (Jun., 1999), 67-92.

depictions of African Americans were omnipresent in campus societies, performances, parades, and publications. These were sanctioned at the highest level: in 1924, when the “Southern club” threw a spring “revue” including “several banjo numbers by negro impersonators,” *The Capital Times* reported that the event’s patrons included Dean of Men S. H. Goodnight as well as several members of the faculty.²⁵

Black students mounted some vocal and legal resistance. In 1916, three black students took part in a community protest against a return performance of *The Birth of a Nation*. José Escabi, a student of Afro-Puerto Rican descent, successfully brought charges against a local restaurant owner for violating Madison’s anti-discrimination ordinance.²⁶ But these students could do little to challenge pervasive housing discrimination and their belittlement at the hands of some of their professors and colleagues. H. S. Murphy, one of the students who protested *The Birth of a Nation*, wrote to N.A.A.C.P. founder and scholar W. E. B. Du Bois to complain about the style sheet presented by a UW journalism professor. The sheet instructed students to capitalize all nationalities, but not “negro.” “When the instructor read that special item to the class on the morning it was issued and discussed,” Murphy told Du Bois, “there was great occasion for a coarse guffaw, showing how men at this great modern university are learning to think of the rights of the other fellow—EXCEPT when the other fellow happens to be a Negro.” He pointedly asked Du Bois not to use his name when publishing this information, as “prejudice here is already uncomfortable enough.”²⁷

Jewish students on campus in this era also faced housing discrimination and demeaning representations. Private rooming houses were certified by the university even if they practiced exclusionary renting. Above the yearbook entry for the one Jewish student organization, the yearbook’s editors appended a drawing of hook-nosed men gesturing at bags of money. Non-Jewish fraternities formed secret dancing societies and held events off-campus in order to avoid having to attend dances with Jewish students at the newly established Memorial Union, where exclusion was not permitted.²⁸

Native Americans in this era were fully excluded from the student body, but they were omnipresent on campus in the form of demeaning stereotypes and ersatz ceremonies. In the early twentieth century, students gathered in huge numbers to pass the “Pipe of Peace,” a well-attended annual ceremony on Library Mall replete with mock-Indian dialect, regalia, and ritual. This ceremony and its iconography were so popular that they formed part of the original decorative features of the Memorial Union itself. But it would not be until 1946 that the first Native American student received a degree from the UW.²⁹

²⁵ “Dixie Punch and Southern Moss Are Features of Revue,” *Madison Capital Times*, May 10, 1924, p. 1.

²⁶ “Negroes in New Protest on ‘The Birth of a Nation,’” *Wisconsin State Journal*, Jan. 27, 1916; “Superior Court,” *Madison Capital Times*, Aug. 7, 1918. The Study Group is grateful to Harvey Long for this and other research.

²⁷ Letter, Harry Murphy to W.E.B. Du Bois, May 1, 1914, W.E.B. Du Bois Papers, University of Massachusetts-Amherst Archives.

²⁸ Messer-Kruse, “The Campus Klan”; Jonathan Z. S. Pollack, “Jewish Problems: Eastern and Western Jewish Identities in Conflict at the University of Wisconsin, 1919-1941,” *American Jewish History* 89, no. 2 (June 2001).

²⁹ Thanks to Aaron Bird Bear (School of Education) and Daniel Einstein (Facilities Planning & Management) for sharing their research into this history.

At the same time, the Memorial Union's refusal to sanction exclusion, like the campus movements in subsequent decades to challenge exclusionary renting, demonstrates that the "culture of intolerance" could be confronted, and that it did not govern every person's outlook or every corner of campus life. But exclusion was the inegalitarian will of the day's majority, and so far as we can tell, the university community, including the administration, faculty, and student leadership, did nothing to resist it. That is to say, exclusion does not seem to have been contrary to campus values in this era. In a bleak confirmation of this reality, one of the rare campus voices to speak out against the campus Klan (in the *Wisconsin Engineer* in 1923) conceded at the outset that "no one will quarrel seriously with any restrictions of race or creed that may be placed upon membership."³⁰ In this climate, the major challenge facing non-majority students was, to quote historian Jonathan Pollack, how to "endure."³¹

It might be comforting to think that the presence of Klan groups fostered such a culture, and that it disappeared with them, but our conclusion is that the presence of groups denominated "Ku Klux Klan" on campus constituted a symptom of this culture, not a cause. The Klan's ethos—that the United States was a nation of, by, and for white Protestants and that all others should accept their subordination or exclusion—found few open dissenters beyond those groups it sought to exclude or demean.

The Values We Strive to Maintain

We have been asked for advice as to how to acknowledge this history "in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain." We understand those values to begin with thoughtful inquiry guided by the university's commitment to "that fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found." We also understand those values to embrace equity and inclusion. The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Mission, as articulated by the Board of Regents in 1988, is to provide a learning environment that enables students "to realize their highest potential of intellectual, physical and human development." That statement explicitly and specifically includes "students from diverse social, economic and ethnic backgrounds." That Mission Statement concludes with the charge that the university "[e]mbody through its policies and programs, respect for, and commitment to, the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society." These values have recently been reiterated in the Institutional Statement on Diversity: "Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background - people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world."

How Other Institutions Have Acknowledged and Addressed Their Histories

³⁰ "The Klan," *Wisconsin Engineer* vol. 27, no. 5 (Feb., 1923), p. 88.

³¹ Pollack, "Jewish Problems," p. 163.

The UW is not the first institution to confront a painful history and to wrestle with how to acknowledge its legacies in light of present values. Over the past several decades, many universities have begun to explore the troubling aspects of their institutional pasts, sometimes at the behest of campus leadership and sometimes as a result of student campaigns. These investigations have sometimes produced heated and polarized responses, but this does not have to be the case. As President George W. Bush acknowledged in a 2003 speech on Senegal's Gorée Island, home to the infamous "door of no return" for African captives of the Atlantic slave trade, "My nation's journey toward justice has not been easy, and it is not over. The racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation. And many of the issues that still trouble America have roots in the bitter experience of other times."³² Acknowledging the past is not in itself the answer to present troubles, but it is a necessary starting point for an understanding of how we reached our present circumstances and how we might transcend them.

At some universities, debate has centered on how to acknowledge and address institutional complicity in slavery and the slave trade. In 2003, a Brown University committee convened by President Ruth Simmons began exploring the institution's deep, early relationship to the Atlantic slave trade. That investigation included extensive historical investigation and opportunities for public comment; it yielded an detailed set of recommendations for acknowledging and studying this history, as well as a call for "high ethical standards in regard to investments and gifts," expanding opportunities at Brown for those disadvantaged by slavery and the slave trade, and the appointment of a committee to monitor implementation of the report's recommendations.³³ More recently, a Georgetown University body spent several years investigating and discussing that institution's historical relationship to slavery and the domestic slave trade, in particular the crucial role that the sale of several hundred slaves played in keeping the university afloat in the early nineteenth century. Here, the university sought out and engaged the descendants of those people the university sold, created memorials, and (as at Brown) committed itself to "invest in diversity" by creating or bolstering academic, outreach, and scholarship programs.³⁴ At both universities, the work of these projects continues.

These and other universities have confronted the related issue of campus facilities named after figures whose legacies have been called into question. The Yale University community struggled for many years over a residential college named after proslavery statesman and ideologue John C. Calhoun. Many western universities (as well as Northwestern University) have investigated the roles of their buildings' namesakes in massacres of Native Americans. In these cases, universities have established committees (including faculty with historical expertise, students, and sometimes other members of their campus community) to investigate and advise. Their reports often present a careful narrative of the history under discussion and seek to establish standards of proportionality. That is, they explore the individual's actions and words and assess how seriously these violated values now deemed central to the life of the university; they then assess these in relation to the positive contributions the subject made to the university

³² Quoted in *Report of the Working Group on Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation to the President of Georgetown University* (Washington, D.C., 2016), pp. 29-30.

³³ For the report and context, see <https://www.brown.edu/initiatives/slavery-and-justice/about/history>

³⁴ For the report and context, see <http://slavery.georgetown.edu/working-group/>

or to society. Princeton University, for example, debated whether Woodrow Wilson's legacies with respect to the status and role of African Americans should prompt a renaming of its Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.³⁵ In these cases, the underlying question is often "what do we say about our values, to ourselves and to the wider world, when we honor (or continue to honor) this person in this way?"

In most of the institutional self-studies we have considered, the history under review concerns the actions of the university, or those it has chosen to honor, in the wider world. Our situation, we conclude, is rather different. Our review of the history suggests to us that the campus Klans were accepted (or at any rate broadly uncontroversial) in their era, and that their existence was not a cause of the university's culture of exclusion and intolerance but rather a symptom of it. From this perspective, we are not facing precisely the same questions as the institutions described above. The central question facing us is not what the institution or its honored names did in the wider world, but how to acknowledge what the community did to its own members, and what implications that acknowledgement should have for campus life and priorities today.

Legacies: The Question of Names

As noted in our summary, this group received its charge in the wake of the protests and deadly violence in Charlottesville, Virginia in August, 2017, and at a time when many institutions were engaged in a reexamination of their own histories of institutional racism and exclusion. Specifically, the group was asked to "review documents and other historical information related to the creation, activities, and context of organizations that operated in and around the 1920s and that were named after or otherwise affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan.

We understand—indeed, we feel, deeply and personally—the shock and discomfort of learning that familiar campus spaces were in any way associated with the heinous name and history of the Ku Klux Klan. We insist that the history this connection represents must not be obscured or ignored but instead confronted and addressed. At the same time, we resist the impulse to resolve this sense of shock by purging the names from our campus. It may be that, after thoughtful community deliberation, the campus will find it desirable or necessary to change the names of some facilities. But our advice is that the university focus first on the broader, deeper lessons and legacies of the era of the Ku Klux Klan, and that we seize this moment to confront the legacies of the "culture of intolerance" in campus life today.

As we have argued, the history that the UW needs to acknowledge and address was not the aberrant work of a few bigots but a pervasive climate of racial and religious bigotry, casual and unexamined in its prevalence, in which exclusion and indignity were routine in the university's daily life and unchallenged by the institution's leaders. "Racism," education researchers Özlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo explain, is often used as a shorthand for "individual acts of meanness committed by a few bad people." That is, if we can point to the actions of a "few bad people," we do not have to do the hard work of questioning and dismantling the "economic, political, social and institutional actions that perpetuate an unequal

³⁵ <https://www.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/documents/2017/08/Wilson-Committee-Report-Final.pdf>

distribution of privileges, resources and power” within our own institution.³⁶ Taking this caution to heart, we question whether renaming facilities alone, absent the systematic redirection of resources to effect long-term change, will address the history under review in any consequential way. We believe that to focus only on those within that culture of intolerance who identified themselves as Klansmen would be to sidestep the broad complicity of many of the era's students, faculty, and administrators in sustaining a hostile and demeaning campus environment. Were there evidence that these individuals in their roles as Klansmen were central to creating or maintaining this campus climate, and even more so were there any evidence they participated in acts of violence, our conclusions might have been different. Our review of this history has not produced any such evidence.

The legacies of the students who were campus Klansmen are sometimes complicated and mixed. As an example, at nineteen, Porter Butts was inducted into the first campus Klan. At twenty-three, he became the first Director of the Wisconsin Union. Under his direction the Wisconsin Union became a place where all members of the community were welcome, to the point where those who wanted to practice exclusion had to host their events elsewhere. In his long career in Madison and as a national leader in the organization of student unions, he promoted policies of non-discrimination, mutual understanding, and openness to debate and protest. That later work need not close the door on the question of whether the gallery in the Union should continue to bear his name, but it suggests the complexity of at least some of this history.

However the campus responds to this or other particular questions of names, we want our collective reckoning with this history to consist of a great deal more than the purging of unpleasant reminders. In our view, advice focused on the names of these facilities would provide a limited and unproductive form of healing for the wound this history represents. We are not therefore advising the renaming of any particular campus facilities, and we suggest that any focus on these questions follow rather than precede the work of substantial institutional change to address the legacies of this era.

This view guides our response to the argument that these were simply “people of their time.” It seems to us that to “appropriately acknowledge this history in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain” requires something more than a pained expression and a shrug of the shoulders at the moral failings of a long-gone era. As our work proceeded, we turned our attention away from questions of individual culpability on the part of student Klan members and toward more troubling questions: why “Ku Klux Klan” was for the most part an uncontroversial or even prestigious name for an undergraduate organization; how exclusionary and demeaning behavior and representations persisted on the campus; how non-majority (that is, non-white and non-Protestant) students experienced and endured this climate; and finally, following the language of the Chancellor’s charge to us, what “legacies” of those organizations and their context have persisted.

We understand that some people may quarrel with our assessment and advice, feeling that we are taking inadequate account of these young men’s willful association with the Ku Klux

³⁶ Özlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo, *Is Everyone Really Equal? An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education*, second edition (New York: Teachers College Press, 2017)

Klan or even that we are whitewashing the university's history. This is not our purpose. Rather, we want the campus to acknowledge and respond to this history with a renewed awareness for the historic and contemporary challenges faced by underrepresented and minority students on our campus and with a renewed commitment of resources and energy to build a more equitable and inclusive campus community.

Legacies: The Challenges We Continue to Face

We recognize the many efforts, especially over the past 50 years, to transform the campus into one where all are welcome, where all members may (to quote the university's Mission Statement) "realize their highest potential of intellectual, physical and human development," and where the institution itself embodies "the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society." These changes have been driven by student demands and by the less visible but equally crucial work by students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Important milestones include the student activism of the 1960s and 1970s that led administrators to create the Department of Afro-American Studies and the units that became the programs in American Indian Studies, Chican@/Latin@ Studies, and more recently Asian-American Studies. The campus has undertaken a series of long-term plans to create a more representative and inclusive campus, including most recently "Affecting R.E.E.L. [Retain, Equip, Engage, Lead] Change." Through the Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement, it supports crucially important programs that directly address the challenges faced by students from underrepresented and historically disadvantaged groups. The 2016 Campus Climate Survey, and the recommendations offered by its Task Force, offer substantial and important data and recommendations for further improving equity and inclusion at UW.³⁷ We applaud these efforts and the energy and sincerity that have animated them.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that the legacy of previous efforts has been mixed and uneven. Incremental progress has been made in diversity and inclusion, but the campus lags stubbornly behind its peers in the recruitment and retention of students and faculty from underrepresented groups. Enrollment of students from underrepresented groups rose slightly over the last decade but stands at less than 10% of the campus population. The make-up of the student body also poorly reflects the state of Wisconsin's diversity. American Indians compose 1.1% of the state's population, but as of Fall, 2016 only 95 students identified themselves as members of one of Wisconsin's twelve Indian nations. Wisconsin ranks dead last in the Big Ten in the percentage of African American students; although African Americans constitute 6.6% of the state's residents, only 3% of the student body identifying as African American.³⁸ Comparisons over time are complicated by changing guidelines for self-identification, but enrollment of African American undergraduates does not appear to have grown substantially from 2008 to 2015, though overall minority enrollment rose slightly (from

³⁷ The survey report, including analysis and recommendations, is available at http://diversity.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/CCSTF_FullReport_2017_11_01-3.pdf

³⁸ In 2008, federal guidelines allowed students to indicate multiple race/ethnic identities. The figure of 3% includes both students who self-identified as African American and those who included that as one element of a multi-racial self-identification.

14.2% to 16.1%) over the period 2006-2015. Just over 2% of faculty—55 in 2016—identify as African American.³⁹ Among peers, Wisconsin also ranks in the bottom half for the percentage of students identifying as Asian, Hispanic, and International.⁴⁰

The Campus Climate Survey also suggests that students from underrepresented and non-majority groups continue to feel less welcome and are less likely to feel that this is also their campus. The breakdown of responses to the survey's questions on how often students feel welcome or respected, or how often they feel like they belong, show troubling disparities between white students and students of color. Three quarters of white students generally feel they belong here, while only half of students of color do; for African American students that proportion drops to one-third. Eighty-three percent of white students (and 80% of all students) report feeling generally respected; only about half of African American students and U.S. students of Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern descent generally feel this way.⁴¹ There are many other troubling aspects of the survey results, particularly with regard to the campus experience of students identifying as Trans/Non-binary, as first-generation college students, and as Muslims or Buddhists. The aggregate disparities in responses by other groupings are less dramatic but still statistically significant. Overall, students intuit a gap between the UW's values and its climate: while nearly three quarters of students surveyed felt it was important the university have a strong commitment to diversity, only 50% felt that it actually did; among students of color, that number fell to one-third. UW-Madison still has much work to do to create an atmosphere that genuinely welcomes and nurtures a diverse array of students.⁴² These findings should trouble anyone who values diversity and inclusion as core elements of the UW's mission and work.

Recent incidents of hate and bias have shown just how unwelcoming campus can be, with serious effects both on the campus community and on its reputation in the wider world. In the Fall of 2016, for instance, an individual attending a football game at Camp Randall Stadium wore a costume depicting then President Barack Obama that featured a noose wrapped around his neck. The Campus Climate Survey suggests that in general Jewish students (13% of the undergraduate population, by one count) no longer feel marginal to campus life, but anti-Semitism persists on campus. For example, in March of 2016, racist and anti-Semitic notes were posted on and slipped under a student resident's door. For Native American students, the establishment of the American Indian Student & Cultural Center has been an important step forward, but overall enrollment has shrunk, and the legacies of earlier eras are painfully present. The fire circle outside the Dejope Residence Hall has been the site of two separate acts of bigotry: in March of 2016, residents yelled mock "war cries" at a Ho-Chunk elder who was performing a healing ceremony at the fire circle, and vandals defaced the site with spray paint in October of 2017. Few non-Native members of our community even know on whose ancestral lands the campus now stands.

³⁹ Data: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/WI>; <https://apir.wisc.edu/data-digest/>

⁴⁰ Data: http://www.studentsreview.com/big_ten_compare.html

⁴¹ By "generally," we mean the sum of the responses "extremely" and "very."

⁴² Campus Climate Survey, data tables C1B, C1C.

Although campus officials denounced these events, including in a notably frank address via YouTube from Chief Diversity Officer Patrick J. Sims, such grotesque incidents have a profoundly negative impact for students who already feel marginalized and unwelcome.⁴³ Furthermore, the cumulative significance of these incidents to students and faculty of color who might consider making the UW Madison their home should not be underestimated.

One could argue that, as in the 1920s, we face a pervasive national culture of intolerance. The FBI reported that 2016 saw the highest number of reported hate and bias crimes nationwide over a 5-year period. The Anti-Defamation League reports that during the first nine months of 2017, anti-Semitic assaults and vandalism increased by 67 percent nationally (1299 recorded incidents) over all of 2016 (779 recorded incidents). The Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks the activities of groups “that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics,” reports nine different “hate” groups operating in Wisconsin. The campus is in no way responsible for creating this dire situation. But the fact that events on campus mirror developments in the broader society does not mean that they are not also our problem.

⁴³ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMBQUzwnCL0&feature=youtu.be>

III: ADVICE

Upholding “the values we strive to maintain”

Whose campus is this? Our values and our hopes say “all of ours,” but both historical and present experience provoke a variety of responses, many of them less reassuring. We aspire to share a campus where all can flourish and contribute to the community. We understand that this requires a broadly shared commitment by many people, in residence halls, offices, and departments as well as in Bascom Hall, and we applaud those groups now actively working to undo the persistent legacies of the culture of intolerance.

We advise the Chancellor to help the university acknowledge and learn from its past; we also advise her to look to the future with the lessons and legacies of that past in mind. We advise a searching examination of the struggles many communities have faced in becoming full and equal members of this community, and the efforts they and their allies have undertaken to make UW a place where everyone can truly belong. We advise commitments to units, programs, and policies that explicitly seek to create a campus where these struggles are no longer so necessary. **To be the community we aspire to be, to embody the values we strive to maintain, we must match our rhetoric with resources.** Resources will not solve all of the problems of disparity and disparagement that plague our community, but they will create possibilities. They also signal the campus’s commitments and values, both to students who already feel the campus to be their place and to those who do not. In that spirit, we respond to the Chancellor’s request for advice with the following specific recommendations.

1. Recover and acknowledge the history of exclusion on this campus, especially through the voices of those who experienced and resisted it.

While it is important to understand and confront the history represented by this “culture of intolerance,” it is crucial to remember that UW has other histories as well. Among the least understood of these, our review suggests, is the history of those who, though pressed to the margins of campus life, demanded a full and equal place in it. Long before the university committed itself to its present values of inclusiveness, respect, and equity, members of our community embodied those values in the face of hostility and derision. Their history deserves a prominent place in our present.

We propose a project to recover the voices of campus community members, in the era of the Klan and since, who struggled and endured in a climate of hostility, and who sought to change it. Their stories will bring to light moments in the university’s past that will dismay us, but their efforts, successful or not, will provide lessons, contexts, and reminders for our efforts today. Some of those voices have begun to be recovered already, in scholarship cited here and in research underway in various quarters of the campus.⁴⁴ Much remains to be done. The fruits of this research should occupy a prominent place in the campus’s self-understanding and self-representation and be acknowledged on its physical landscape.

⁴⁴ For example, see the published work of Jonathan Pollack, cited above, and the work of researchers named elsewhere in this document.

We would not be the first university to undertake such a project. While most of the other universities whose self-studies we considered fit the models described above, two of our peers have engaged in more sustained recovery and discussion of their communities' difficult pasts. At the University of Michigan, the chancellor convened a colloquium on The Future University Community and underwrote a related art exhibit.⁴⁵ These projects asked how groups had been excluded or marginalized in the university's past, and what role diversity would play in the university's future. In a related undertaking, Rutgers–New Brunswick commissioned the Scarlet and Black Project on Enslaved and Disenfranchised Populations in Rutgers History.⁴⁶ This committee was “charged with seeking out the untold story of disadvantaged populations in the university's history and recommending how Rutgers can best acknowledge their influence.” Through research in university and other archives, that project has produced a volume on the institution's early decades and recovered rich histories of the role slave labor and Indian dispossession played in its founding and development. The project's work continues. These models might not precisely fit our needs, but they represent two rich and thoughtful approaches to histories similar to ours.

However the University of Wisconsin-Madison proceeds in this area, however it chooses to research and publicly present its history, we feel strongly that any marker or display related to the history under review would be incomplete if it focused primarily on the activities of the campus Klans or other perpetrators of campus intolerance. Instead, any such exhibit or display should focus on the experiences, words, and achievements of those who were marginalized or excluded, and those who struggled to create a more just and inclusive university, whether or not their efforts immediately bore fruit. They represent a past very much worth recovering and remembering, and one that can help show us the way forward.

2. Recommit the university's resources to a more inclusive present.

Our advice in this area speaks specifically to pressing campus needs—areas in which our practice is not fully aligned with our values, and in which thoughtful, sustained commitment of resources may yield powerful, positive results.

A: Reinvigorate Academic Programs

In 2006, Brown University's Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice concluded that “[u]niversities express their priorities first and foremost in their selection of fields of study. We believe that Brown, by virtue of its history, has a special opportunity and obligation to foster research and teaching on the issues broached in this report.”⁴⁷ We echo this conclusion and recommendation. Since the founding of the Department of Afro-American Studies in 1970, departments and programs focusing on the experiences of many groups have broadened and enriched the academic and cultural life of the university. These programs have proven track records of mentoring and supporting students from underrepresented groups, while simultaneously exploring a wide array of experiences and cultures for the benefit of all members

⁴⁵ <https://futureuniversitycommunity.umichsites.org/stumbling-blocks/>

⁴⁶ <https://scarletandblack.rutgers.edu/>

⁴⁷ *Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice*, pp. 83-87. <https://www.brown.edu/initiatives/slavery-and-justice/about/history>

of the campus community, across its schools and colleges. Indeed, these four units shoulder much of the burden of the campus's Ethnic Studies Requirement.

Today, however, these units—the Department of Afro-American Studies and the Programs in American Indian Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chican@ and Latin@ Studies—face challenging futures. Several lack adequate faculty staffing, which limits students' ability to learn about these crucial aspects of American society, culture, and history. Support for these departments and programs should be increased rather than diminished, in particular through faculty lines and funding for partner hires as well as additional funds for teaching and research assistants and short-term staffing. The UW should support these units by authorizing each one to search for and hire a faculty member in its area of most pressing need.

B: Study and Improve Recruitment and Retention

Beyond these units, we want to see measurable improvements, compared to our public peer institutions, in the enrollment and graduation rates for students of color, and in our recruitment and retention of faculty from underrepresented groups. To that end, this committee underscores the recommendations of the 2016 Campus Climate Survey Task Force and specifically urges increased funding for the high-impact programs housed in the office of the Vice Provost for Diversity and Climate.⁴⁸ We also urge the creation of a study group to investigate successful retention strategies. For example, exit interviews with faculty of color who leave the institution in conjunction with interviews of tenured faculty of color could shed light on reasons why some stay and others leave. It is not enough to say we will recruit and retain students and faculty of color; we must have specific, well-formulated, and adequately funded mechanisms for doing so.

C: Increase Fellowship Opportunities

The program generally known as Advanced Opportunity Fellows (AOF) has played an important role in recruiting students from underrepresented groups, including first-generation college students, into graduate programs. Despite its importance, this program is underfunded. The university should substantially increase the resources available to this program, with particular attention to units (including but not limited to those named above) with significant numbers of eligible applicants and with track records of success in recruitment and retention. Increasing the number of AOF offers could immediately increase the recruitment and retention of students of color, first-generation students, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, increasing their presence in classrooms and laboratories across the campus, and ultimately in the broadest array of fields and professions.

The UW was an unfriendly place for many members of its community not even a century ago. We still have a long way to go. It is up to us as a community to confront the legacies of that era, to remember the people who stood against it, and to commit ourselves to a different future—one that consciously strives to make real “the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society.” We believe that these recommendations, pursued vigorously from the

⁴⁸ For more information, see <https://diversity.wisc.edu/about-3/pipeline-programs-services/>

Chancellor's office and embraced by the campus as a whole, can help move us toward the university we aspire to be.

Attachment #1: Chancellor's Charge



CHANCELLOR'S CHARGE TO AD-HOC STUDY GROUP

EACH MEMBER OF THE AD-HOC STUDY GROUP IS ASKED TO:

- Review documents and other historical information related to the creation, activities and context of student organizations that operated on campus in and around the 1920s and that were named after or otherwise affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan;
- Evaluate the actions and legacies of those organizations and advise how the campus can appropriately acknowledge this history in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain.

Attachment #2: Study Group Members



AD-HOC STUDY GROUP MEMBERS



CO-CHAIR

Stephen Kantrowitz is Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor of History. He has taught at UW-Madison since 1995. His publications include *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* and *More Than Freedom: Fighting for Black Citizenship in a White Republic, 1829-1889*.



CO-CHAIR

Floyd Rose founded and operates the Framework for Opportunity Convergence and the Utilization of Sustainable Solutions (FOCUSS), Supplier Information Data Assistant Tool Processes (SIDAT) and CCF Properties. In addition, he serves as the President of the nonprofits, the 100 Black Men of Madison and the Consortium for the Educational Development of Economically Disadvantaged Students (CEDEDS). Dr. Rose earned an AA from Black Hawk College, a B.S. from Illinois State University, a M.S. from the Western Illinois University and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa.



Sam Alhadeff is a Master's Candidate in International Public Affairs. Sam is the Founder of the Alexander Hamilton Society, where he still serves as President Emeritus, and Founder and Editor-in-Chief of the Wisconsin International Review, a student-run magazine focused on foreign policy and international relations. Sam volunteers at multiple places on campus and hopes to run for elected office one day.



Christy Clark-Pujara is an Associate Professor of History in the Department of Afro-American Studies. Her research focuses on the experiences of black people in small towns and cities in northern and Midwestern colonies and states in British and French North America from the late 17th century through the American Civil War. She is the author of *Dark Work: The Business of Slavery in Rhode Island* (NYU Press, 2016); her current book project *Black on the Wisconsin Frontier: From Slavery to Suffrage, 1725-1868* examines how the practice of race-based slavery, black settlement, and debates over abolition and black rights shaped white-black race relations in the Midwest.



Roberta Gassman is a Senior Fellow teaching macro practice to advanced graduate students at the UW-Madison School of Social Work and has lived in Madison since coming to UW-Madison from Evanston, Illinois in 1966. Previously she served in President Obama's administration as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training in the U.S. Department of Labor and as Wisconsin's longest serving Secretary of Workforce Development in the cabinet of Governor Jim Doyle. She earned her B.A with distinction in social work and her M.S.S.W. from the UW and is active in the community serving on the boards of the Madison Community Foundation, United Way of Dane County, Edgewood College, Overture Center for the Arts, and the School of Social Work Board of Visitors.



Heidi Lang is the Assistant Director for the Program and Leadership Development Department at the Wisconsin Union. She has served in the role since Fall of 2016 but has been a member of the department since 2003. Heidi currently serves as an ex-officio board member of Union Council, Wisconsin Union's governing board. Heidi received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Interpersonal Communications from Western Michigan University, her Master's degree in Higher Education Administration from North Carolina State, and is currently pursuing an Educational Doctorate degree with the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse in Student Affairs Administration.



Shawn Peters is a Senior Lecturer in the Integrated Liberal Studies (ILS) Program as well as an Instructional Specialist in the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Educational Achievement (DDEEA). He is an American historian by training, and his fifth book will be published in spring, 2018, by the University of Minnesota Press.



Nathan Royko Maurer is a life-long Madison resident and has worked at the University of Wisconsin- Madison since 1998 in a variety of different Information Technology roles. He currently manages enterprise campus data centers at the Division of Information Technology. He also volunteers as a co-facilitator with the UW Leadership Institute and is a community activist involving himself with issues of police accountability and social justice.



Margaret Tennesen is the Deputy Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning and Management (FP&M) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Since 2014 she has worked closely with the Associate Vice Chancellor to lead and manage a full-spectrum facilities management division in support of the academic mission of a Big 10 research university. Margaret previously served as the Assistant Director for Administration at the Wisconsin Union where she was responsible for budget development and reporting, financial services, human resources and marketing and communications for a major campus auxiliary. Margaret began her UW career as a program advisor to the Wisconsin Union Directorate student programming board.

Catherine Reiland from the Office of the Provost is coordinating logistics and other support for the Ad-Hoc Study Group. Contact info: creiland@wisc.edu / 608-262-0380

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Yale Approach to Named Spaces

Letter of the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming

November 21, 2016

To President Salovey,

On August 1, you asked our Committee to articulate principles to guide the University in deciding whether to remove “a historical name from a building or other prominent structure or space on campus.” To do this, you requested that we review renaming debates at Yale and elsewhere. In the report accompanying this letter, we describe the history we reviewed and present a set of principles. In this letter, we say a few words about how we went about our work.

The first task we set ourselves was to develop a process that would guide our thinking on the question before us. The Committee read scholarship on the history and theory of naming and renaming. We studied renaming debates in other times and places. We researched the experience at Yale, and we tried to use the scholarly expertise in history represented on our Committee.

We were aware that our Committee was constituted after more than a year of controversy on campus over the name of Calhoun College. We were aware, too, that our Committee was constituted after two years of conversation about the names of two new colleges. As a result, we faced a certain exhaustion in the University community with the question of building names. To accommodate this, we obtained many of the communications arising out of last year’s debate over the name of Calhoun College. We also sought new input and new ideas.

The Committee received many different opinions on the question before it. For now, it suffices to say that the views we received arrayed themselves across a wide range. Such a diversity of views, many of them deeply and powerfully felt, might have stymied us had we understood our mandate to be a report dictated by majority opinion or by the intensity with which opinions were held. We conceived of our task, however, as developing a reasoned answer, not necessarily the most popular answer. In this respect, every suggestion made us better students of the issues involved.*

In all our work, we have tried to model the sort of process that might be employed in any future application of the principles we articulate in this report.

Two limits in our charge shaped our work. Our mandate did not include the power to recommend that any particular building name be changed. Nor were we charged with developing a new name for any such building. We viewed these limits on our authority as

* We are publishing an Appendix on our Committee webpage documenting much of the input we received, as well as many of the other materials we relied on in developing our report. For more, see <http://president.yale.edu/advisory-groups/presidents-committees/committee-establish-principles-renaming-0>.

felicitous rather than constraining. They gave us the freedom to deliberate on the problem of renaming in a light informed by the University's recent controversies, but not unduly influenced by them.

We adopt the report and its principles unanimously.

John Fabian Witt (chair)

Yale College '94, '99 J.D., '00 Ph.D., Allen H. Duffy Class of 1960 Professor of Law and Professor of History

G. Leonard (Len) Baker, Jr.

Yale College '64

Tom A. Bernstein, Esq.

Yale College '74, '77 J.D.

David Blight (advisor)

Class of 1954 Professor of History

Beverly Gage

Yale College '94, Professor of History

Jonathan Holloway

'95 Ph.D., Dean of Yale College; Edmund S. Morgan Professor of African American Studies, History, and American Studies

Lalani Perry

Director of Communications, Human Resources

Dasia Moore

Yale Undergraduate, '18

Sharon Oster

Frederic D. Wolfe Professor of Management and Entrepreneurship; Dean, Yale School of Management (2008-11)

Stephen Pitti

Yale College '91, Professor of History and of American Studies; Director, Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity and Transnational Migration; Head of Ezra Stiles College

Wilhelmina M. (Mimi) Wright

Yale College '86

Wendy Xiao

Yale M.D./Ph.D. candidate (Neuroscience)

Report of the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming

I. Values and Priorities

II. Trials and Errors

A. The Calhoun naming question

B. The Committee's work

III. Names and Renaming

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- 1. Calhoun at Yale and beyond**
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IV. History and Mission

A. Change in buildings and names on the University campus is not new

B. The mission of the University

V. Principles

A. Presumptions: Renaming on account of values should be an exceptional event

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C. Decisions to retain a name or to rename come with obligations of nonerasure, contextualization, and process

I. Values and Priorities

The central mission of a university is to discover and disseminate knowledge. So concluded a Yale committee chaired by C. Vann Woodward more than forty years ago. Its conclusions ring as true today as they did then.

History is one of the forms of knowledge at the core of the enterprise. To erase a university's history is antithetical to the spirit of the institution. Erasing names is a matter of special concern, because those names are, in part, a catalog of the people whom the university has thought worthy of honor. Removing such names may obscure important information about our past.

To change, however, is not always to erase. Indeed, change is indispensable in a University that has evolved over more than three hundred years. When Yale rebuilt its campus in the tradition of the medieval English colleges in the 1920s and 1930s, it did so as part of a forward-looking plan to train the leaders of the twentieth century. Five decades ago, the University began to increase the numbers of women and people of color as students, faculty, and alumni. This demographic transformation has been, and will continue to be, crucial in allowing Yale to advance the frontier of excellence in research and to train the leaders of the century to come.

A university's ongoing obligation is to navigate change without effacing the past. The imperative in addressing renaming questions is that the University align any building name change with the mission of the University, with its deep history, and with its promising future.

A posture of humility points the inquiry in the right direction. At a university as old as this one, those who occupy the campus today are stewards of an intergenerational project. Hubris in undoing past decisions encourages future generations to disrespect the choices of the current generation.

Ill-fated renaming has often reflected excessive confidence in moral orthodoxies. One need only consider twentieth-century regimes that sought to erase their own past in the service of totalitarian propaganda. The Soviet Union conducted aggressive renaming campaigns of a kind captured by George Orwell's dystopian novel *1984*, in which a so-called "Ministry of Truth" wrote and rewrote history.

Renamings, however, are not inevitably Orwellian. In 1784, the change in the name of Kings College to Columbia College, now Columbia University, did not improperly efface its history. (The crown remains an iconic symbol of the institution.) Nor did name changes in West Germany after the Second World War, or in Russia after the fall of communism, or in South Africa after Apartheid. In each of these settings, and in many more, name changes have combined renaming with preservation of the historical record.

Nearly twenty-five years ago, the late Robin Winks identified a critical distinction between liberal and illiberal alterations of historical monuments. Winks, the former master of Berkeley College, who served on the Yale faculty from 1957 to 1999, wrote that there are "two different concepts of history." In one conception, history is a record of things from the past that should

not be forgotten. In this view, removing an item from the historical record is like lying; as Winks put it, such removals are akin to the work of the infamous “Great Soviet Encyclopedia,” in which history became whatever the Party leaders wanted it to be at any given moment in time.

In a second conception, however, history is the commemoration and memorialization of the past. Commemoration, Winks noted, often confers honor and asserts pride. It can also convey mourning and loss. Either way, commemoration expresses values. In this second conception of history, a change in the way a community memorializes its past offers a way to recognize important alterations in the community’s values.

Winks’s distinction lies at the foundation of our thinking about naming and renaming. Both conceptions of history matter. A university ought not erase the historical record. But a great university will rightly decide what to commemorate and what to honor, subject always to the obligation not to efface the history that informs the world in which we live.

This last point directs us to one further observation at the outset. The University is rightly a guardian of academic freedom. This is so even when, and indeed especially when, academic freedom leads scholars and students, as Woodward put it, to “think the unthinkable, discuss the unmentionable, and challenge the unchallengeable.” The names on the University’s buildings, however, perform a different function. They do not mark the boundaries of permissible speech on campus. The decision to change a building name is emphatically not a decision to remove a book from a library, change the contents of a syllabus, strike an idea from a course discussion, or rule out a dining hall conversation. In its building names and its campus symbols, the University communicates values, confers honor, and expresses gratitude to those who have contributed to its mission. In other words, the University itself speaks through its building names. In its role as speaker, the University need not, and ordinarily will not, express the unthinkable ideas that it is obligated to protect and foster in its capacity as guarantor of the academic freedom of its faculty and students. To the contrary, when the University speaks, it chooses its message in light of its mission, just as it has chosen its messages for more than three centuries. One of the values the University rightly communicates is the importance of genuine inclusiveness for all those who will make it a leading center for research and teaching in the years to come.

II. Trials and Errors

A. The Calhoun naming question

The events precipitating our Committee commenced in August, 2015, when President Peter Salovey’s Freshman Address took as its central topic the horrific, hate-filled killing of nine African Americans at a prayer service earlier that summer at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The murders, which were committed by a young white man who surrounded himself with symbols of white supremacy, launched a national conversation on the meaning of such symbols. The State of South Carolina removed the Confederate battle flag from its capitol grounds, where it had flown since 1962, when it was raised in the midst of controversy over racial desegregation.

In his address, President Salovey asked the assembled freshmen to consider what the Charleston shooting had to do with Yale. One in twelve freshmen in the audience, he observed, had been assigned to a college named for John C. Calhoun, a principal architect of Southern secession and a crafter of what the President called “the most powerful and influential defense of his day for slavery.” Indeed, although the President did not mention it, the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston is on Calhoun Street, and the killings there took place a block from the city’s 80-foot high monument to Calhoun and his legacy. Calhoun, President Salovey explained, connected the Yale campus to “white supremacy and slavery.” The President raised the prospect of renaming the college. But he explained that renaming was not so simple. It would be dangerous, President Salovey warned, to judge the past by present day standards, or “to efface or distance ourselves from our own history.” The campus, he reasoned, would need to “give careful consideration” to the criteria it should use in reviewing a name associated with such a historical figure. Like South Carolina, he concluded, Yale would need to have its own “difficult conversation” about history.

With President Salovey’s address, Yale opened a webpage titled “An open conversation,” which gave community members the opportunity to share their views on whether to change the name of Calhoun College. A series of campus events on the topic followed, a number of them held in Calhoun College itself. In November, during a period of student protest, a coalition of student groups listed the renaming of Calhoun College among its aims and called for the University to rename the college (and the two new residential colleges now under construction) for people of color. In January, Senior Fellow Margaret Marshall of the Yale Corporation held two open forums, as well as a session for Calhoun College students in particular. That same month, Calhoun College took three portraits of its namesake down from its walls, including one that had hung prominently in the dining hall. The college also replaced its ceremonial mace, which had been John C. Calhoun’s cane, with one made from a tree that once stood in the college courtyard.

In late April, President Salovey announced that Calhoun College’s name would be retained. The president reasoned that Yale has obligations of teaching and learning, and concluded that renaming would “obscure[] the legacy of slavery rather than address[] it.” “Erasing Calhoun’s name from a much-beloved residential college,” he explained, risked hiding the University’s past, “downplaying the lasting effects of slavery, and substituting a false and misleading narrative” that “might allow us to feel complacent or, even, self-congratulatory.”

Reactions to the Calhoun decision were swift and varied. Off the campus, many applauded it as a courageous refusal to give in to the fashion of “political correctness.” Two thirds of the 350 Yale alumni responding to an unscientific *Yale Alumni Magazine* poll supported the decision.

On campus, opposition to the decision was pronounced. A faculty member’s *New York Times* opinion essay two days after the announcement called the decision “a grievous mistake.” Another faculty member wrote the president to ask how he would feel about a college named for Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi propagandist. The *Yale Daily News* called it “our missed opportunity.” Hundreds of students staged a renaming ceremony on the Cross Campus Green for what they described as “the college formerly known as Calhoun.” At a May 5 meeting of more than 200 members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, faculty expressed grave disappointment.

National press associated Yale with racism; “Yale Will Keep Name of a White Supremacist on a College,” read the *New York Times* headline.

By the end of May, an open letter calling on President Salovey to reverse his decision on Calhoun had garnered 396 faculty signatures in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), including 335 of the roughly 650 FAS tenured or tenure-track faculty from an array of departments and disciplines. The letter endorsed the president’s goal of addressing the complexity of the University’s history. But it asserted that the name of a residential college also confers honor on the namesake. The letter noted, too, that residential college names at Yale shape the student community in a distinctive and lasting manner. Around the same time, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Senate voted 18 to 1 to submit a letter to President Salovey “strongly request[ing]” that he reconsider his decision.

Two months later, President Salovey sent a letter to the Yale community. “[I]t is now clear to me,” he wrote, “that the community-wide conversation about these issues could have drawn more effectively on campus expertise.” The University, he said, “would have benefited from a set of well-articulated guiding principles according to which a historical name might be removed or changed.” Accordingly, President Salovey appointed our Committee and asked us to return once more to the renaming question.

B. The Committee’s work

Our Committee’s charge asked us to review the experience at Yale and at other institutions and to develop principles for how renaming questions should be resolved.

In order to gain perspective, we read and discussed material from the literature on the history and theory of naming and renaming. We made careful examination of renaming controversies at other institutions and in other places. We spoke with decision-makers at a number of the universities that have taken up questions about naming and campus symbolism over the past several years. At the end of September, we held meetings and a public forum with leaders at Georgetown University, Harvard Law School, Princeton University, the University of Richmond, and the University of Texas at Austin. Each of these universities has grappled with its own distinctive questions of naming and memorialization, but such questions have had some similarities to the naming issue here at Yale.

We studied Yale’s own renaming controversy, too. Working with the University’s Chief Research Archivist and the Head of the University Archives, and with the help of graduate student research assistants versed in working with manuscripts, we combed the University’s archival collections to learn about the processes by which the University has selected names for its buildings, and about the meanings those names have taken on in subsequent years. Our aim was to ensure that the Committee made every effort to understand the many facets of the question before us.

We also gave members of the Yale community an opportunity to share their views about the principles that ought to apply to renaming questions.

The committee hosted a webpage on the Yale University website that gave interested parties the chance to submit comments. As of the date of this writing, more than 300 comments have come to the Committee through the website, including comments from alumni, faculty, staff, and students, and from some with no formal Yale affiliation at all. The Association of Yale Alumni graciously agreed to reach out to its membership and invite comment. The chair of the Committee also met with several groups of alumni during the course of the fall semester.

On campus, we held meetings with undergraduates as well as with students in the graduate and professional schools. We made presentations to, and solicited input from, groups from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and reached out to the staff of the Yale College Dean's Office, including the directors of the campus cultural centers. We contacted the deans of each of the graduate and professional schools at the University and held meetings or listening sessions in conjunction with those deans at several of the schools. We also created outreach efforts specifically designed for Yale employees.

We received a wide array of ideas through each of these channels. At one extreme, some members of the community insisted that the best principle would be a rule of no renamings at all, under any circumstances. At the other pole, some interlocutors suggested that building names ought to change according to a regular schedule, perhaps every fifty years. One commenter suggested that the University should alter the name of one building on campus each year. The idea behind such suggestions was that the campus might constantly update to reflect its current values.

No part of the University community spoke with a single voice. Alumni expressed a wide diversity of views. Many alumni of Calhoun College, for example, told us of the feelings of camaraderie they had experienced around the name of their college. Calhoun alumni who reported these sentiments expressed differing views on the future of the name. Some noted that as students they had barely known who John Calhoun was, let alone associated the college name with a theorist of white supremacy; for them, the name designated their residential college and little more. Others, including some African-American alumni, recounted being critical of the Calhoun legacy, but nonetheless said that they had not advocated a change in the name; they reported that the name had served as a useful reminder to them of the history of slavery and discrimination. Still other Calhoun alumni, especially but not exclusively from recent years, reported that even though they had been Calhoun College students, they believed strongly that the name of their college should change. It was embarrassing and offensive, they said, to continue to honor Calhoun; moreover, they contended, the name Calhoun ought not serve as a symbol around which Yale asks its students to form community.

It is fair to say that, on balance, alumni were more skeptical than other parts of the University community about the prospect of renaming. Many voiced a deep reluctance to evaluate people in the past by contemporary standards. A persistent thread in comments from alumni was the concern that renaming was tantamount to rewriting history, and that the push to rename buildings on the basis of objections to their namesakes was a dangerous form of "political correctness." Renaming, many alumni insisted, is part of a broader trend in which exaggerated claims of emotional harm are used to create taboos that stifle normal campus discourse. Some such alumni

viewed our Committee with derision and scorn. They contended that if the University were to change the name of Calhoun, it would create a “slippery slope” down which many other building and residential college names would slide. Even the name of the University might have to change, they warned. After all, Elihu Yale served as the governor of an East India Company colony that engaged in the slave trade at the end of the seventeenth century.

We heard a diversity of views from students, as well, undergraduate and graduate students alike. Some expressed the kinds of concerns that alumni articulated; renaming, such students worried, might lead to ongoing controversy over symbols when the University’s energies were better spent elsewhere. Of the students who communicated with us, however, the balance tipped toward principles that favored renaming. Many students focused attention on the relationship between a namesake’s beliefs and the University’s professed values of community and inclusiveness. Some students urged a broad principle of renaming whenever a namesake was found to have engaged in conduct that is immoral by contemporary standards. Many more students called for renaming when a building’s namesake pioneered a practice or idea that is deplorable by current standards, or took a leading role in preserving such a practice or idea.

Some students said that the Calhoun name was emblematic of a more general phenomenon of racial oppression and injustice at Yale. Such students stated that they see a pervasive white supremacy around the campus, in everything from the portraits that hang on walls, to the racial composition of the faculty, to the courses offered in the classrooms.

Faculty and staff expressed strong views as well. Faculty members touched upon many of the themes that appeared in the reactions of alumni and students. Several faculty members raised concerns about the effects of Calhoun College’s name on the reputation of the University and on the ability of the University to recruit excellent scholars. Some faculty raised concerns about the erasure of history. Others noted that this risk could be ameliorated by substituting different ways of remembering the past; they also offered skepticism about the idea that the residential college names have helped students learn about history. At least one asserted that to keep a name on the theory that it will serve as a teaching tool is condescending toward those students who know the history, as well as to the faculty who already teach about the history in their classrooms.

Some of the most valuable faculty ideas drew on areas of scholarly expertise. Scholars of cultures around the world wrote to share with us different ways in which renamings, for good and for ill, have symbolized change. Psychologists shared with us the findings of a literature on the effects of salient stereotypes on academic performance. Linguists brought to our attention the ways in which names can function as signals of affiliation and exclusion. Philosophers drew careful distinctions among ways of remembering.

Members of the University staff conveyed a number of different views, too. Some Yale staff expressed deep skepticism about any effort to rename buildings. Other staff members, including those who sought us out from Yale Hospitality and the dining halls, urged us to take into account the meaning for them of working in and being identified with a building that honors someone whose life was so closely connected to the institution of slavery. They asked us to consider what it said about the institution’s values and reputation to retain such a name. Some of them

expressed solidarity with a dining hall worker in Calhoun College who in June used a broom to break a stained glass window depicting two slaves carrying cotton.

Three themes were touched upon by voices from a number of different parts of the Yale community. First, many alumni, faculty, staff, and students distinguished between different kinds of spaces on the campus. Residential or community spaces, such commenters argued, ought to be considered with particular care. Relatedly, many observed that residential college names were distinctive because the University assigns students to colleges and encourages them to identify with the college names in everything from the shirts they wear to the songs they sing and the intramural athletic teams on which they play.

A second theme voiced by many was that a special problem arises when the offense given by a particular name is not evenly distributed across the demographic diversity of the campus. A building named after someone whose legacy is connected to white supremacy or misogyny, commenters reported, places burdens on some groups more than others. Accordingly, a number of interlocutors urged us to take into account unequal effects on different campus groups.

Third, voices from virtually every part of the community urged the University to establish a clear process for applying the principles on renaming a building.

As we worked, protests against the Calhoun name took place on a weekly basis. Each Friday during the fall term, community members organized protests outside Calhoun College, demonstrating outside the college gate on Elm Street and offering their own proposed new names for the college. At the end of October, a group of community organizations identifying themselves as the Change the Name Coalition sponsored a rally on the New Haven Green, which ended with approximately 200 people in Beinecke Plaza.

We would be remiss if we did not observe that some of the input from members of the University community produced challenging and difficult conversations. One theme, however, emerged as a source of inspiration for our Committee. Running through many comments we received was widespread agreement that the University can and should aim to be diverse and inclusive in a way that emphasizes its traditions of excellence and does not efface the institution's history. With these values in mind we took up the study of renaming issues at other universities and on our own campus.

III. Names and Renaming

A. Renaming around the country and around the world

The current round of controversies over university building names and symbols in the United States arguably began at the University of Texas in 2010. Research by a faculty member concluded that the Simkins Residence Hall had been named after an active Ku Klux Klan member. Moreover, it had been named in the weeks immediately following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. The Texas Board of Regents changed

the building's name. Since then, buildings associated with white supremacists and Klan members have been renamed at institutions such as Duke University (2014), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2015), and the University of Oregon (2016).

In late 2015, Georgetown University changed the names of two buildings that had been named for university leaders who sold 272 slaves in 1838 and used the proceeds to finance the modern Georgetown University. Around the same time, Princeton students challenged the name of the university's Woodrow Wilson School on the basis of Wilson's views on race and his support for racial segregation in his roles as president of Princeton and president of the United States. In the spring of 2016, after several months of study, a committee of Princeton trustees decided to retain the name, but also made commitments to tell the unvarnished story of Wilson's history and to diversify the names of campus buildings. Shortly thereafter, Stanford University initiated a study of its own relating to its campus's use of the name Junipero Serra. Serra, a Catholic missionary, was canonized by the Catholic Church in September 2015. But his history among Native Americans of the Pacific coast is complex and controversial.

Symbols and monuments on campuses have also come under challenge. This past spring, the fellows of the Harvard Corporation adopted the recommendation of a Law School committee that the Harvard Law School's shield be dropped because its image of three sheaves of wheat was designed after the crest of Isaac Royall, Jr., a slaveholder in Antigua and Massachusetts. A vigorous dissent advocated seizing the open-ended meaning of the shield's wheat sheaves and imbuing them with a different significance; the shield, urged the dissent, might recognize the slaves who worked on the Royall plantations, as well as the many civil rights lawyers from Harvard Law School who in more recent years have worked to eradicate the legacy of slavery. The University of Texas at Austin relocated, but did not remove, a statue of Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy. Amherst College kept its college name, but dropped its "Lord Jeff" mascot, named after Lord Jeffrey Amherst, whose association with smallpox-infected blankets in warfare against Native Americans made the mascot a divisive symbol.

In recent years, similar controversies have developed on campuses around the world. In early 2015, students at the University of Cape Town protested a statue of Cecil Rhodes, the British imperialist at the turn of the twentieth century. The university removed the statue, and later renamed a hall named for a second British colonial figure. Under the name "Rhodes Must Fall," the protests moved to Oxford University, where they challenged a statue of Rhodes on the façade of Oriel College. After inviting views from the College community and wider public on the topic of the statue, Oriel College ultimately decided to retain it and is now looking to provide a clear historical context to explain why it is there.

These campus controversies have features in common. Yet each episode has had its own distinctive dimensions. At Texas, Simkins Hall was named just as the university launched a massive effort to evade the legal mandate of desegregation. Duke's hall played little role on campus and was scheduled for demolition soon anyway. At UNC, a committee of trustees discovered that their early twentieth-century predecessors had named the hall specifically to honor its namesake's participation in the Klan. Princeton's Woodrow Wilson controversy featured the name of the man who had built the modern Princeton. In some cases, statues or

commemorations may be protected by historical preservation laws. Oriel College's statue of Rhodes, for example, is listed under such laws (as is the building on which it stands).

B. A renaming question at Yale

Yale's ongoing naming question offers its own distinctive pattern. We learned a great deal from our study of the recent (and not so recent) case of John C. Calhoun at Yale. This recent and prominent case on our own campus, together with renaming questions elsewhere, informed our thinking about the principles that should apply to renaming decisions. We therefore devote some space to describing what we learned.

1. Calhoun at Yale and beyond

At Yale, renaming debates have focused on Calhoun College. John C. Calhoun (1782-1850) came to Yale from his home in South Carolina in 1802 as a twenty-year-old student. He finished his course of studies in a short two years. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. In 1804, he was chosen as a commencement speaker, but sickness prevented him from delivering his speech. In 1822, Yale awarded him an honorary degree.

After graduating, Calhoun trained as a lawyer. He practiced law and ran his family plantation before going into public service in the South Carolina state legislature. A year later he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1817 President James Monroe appointed him secretary of war. Thereafter, he served as vice president under John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, as a U.S. senator, and as secretary of state.

Calhoun served in these positions with skill. His contemporary Daniel Webster, a U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, described him as "the ablest man I ever knew." A century later, a Senate committee chaired by then-Senator John F. Kennedy selected him as one of five outstanding members of the Senate in American history. ("Calhoun's name led all the rest," Kennedy later reported.)

The South Carolinian was a political theorist as well as politician. In particular, Calhoun became one of the leading architects of a theory of the United States Constitution that attributed extraordinary powers to the states. When Congress enacted a new tariff on imported manufacturing goods in 1828, Calhoun drafted protests against the legislation, arguing that it promoted Northern industrial interests at the expense of the agricultural South. Calhoun contended that, properly understood, the U.S. Constitution afforded states the authority to deem federal legislation "unconstitutional, and therefore null and void." In 1830 Calhoun drafted an address to the people of the United States on the occasion of South Carolina's "Nullification Convention," in which the state purported to nullify Congress's latest tariff law.

Over the next two decades, Calhoun developed his thinking into a carefully articulated theory of constitutional design. Rooting his thinking in first principles about mankind's essential characteristics, Calhoun's approach aimed to accommodate contending economic and sectional interests through a system of "concurrent voice" that would "give each interest or portion of the

community a negative on the others.” Calhoun’s theories were hotly controversial in their time. But they attracted widespread attention and respect as the work of a man with unusual analytic talents and singular gifts as a writer and speaker. In 1861, eleven years after Calhoun’s death, the prominent English philosopher John Stuart Mill described Calhoun as the best “speculative thinker” in American politics since the Founding era.

In recent years, Calhoun’s ideas about constitutional design have become more prominent. A school of thought known as “consociationalism” in political science takes up ideas such as mutual veto authority, executive power sharing, and decentralized autonomy. Each serves as a mechanism for managing constitutionalism in deeply divided societies. In particular, and ironically, devices designed by Calhoun to protect the interests of white slaveholders are now deployed as institutional defenses of minority interests against majoritarian tyranny.

2. Calhoun on race and slavery

John Calhoun was also a leading constitutional theorist in the defense of slavery. Many scholars contend that Calhoun’s constitutional ideas emerged because of, not merely in spite of, his views on slavery. In 1830, Calhoun suggested as much. He identified the tariff as “the occasion, rather than the real cause” of the controversy over state authority. The “real cause,” he wrote, was the danger that an active federal government’s support for Northern interests posed to the South’s “peculiar domestick institution.” Unsurprisingly, in his posthumously published *Disquisition on Government*, Calhoun used the constitutional controversy over slavery as a central example of his general theory of contending sectional and economic interests.

Calhoun led his generation in developing a new and more extreme justification of slavery, too. Going back to the Founding, many American statesmen had seen slavery as a necessary evil. Calhoun pioneered a different argument. Defending slavery on the floor of the Congress in 1837, Calhoun famously announced that

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 slave-holding States between the two, is, instead of an evil, a good – a positive good.

Slavery, Calhoun continued, “forms the most solid and durable foundation on which to rear free and stable political institutions.”

In his later years, Calhoun openly rejected the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence; it was “a great and dangerous error,” he said, “to suppose that all people are equally entitled to liberty.” While serving as secretary of state he wrote to Sir Richard Pakenham, British minister to the United States, that the character of Africans was well suited to slavery. Nowhere outside the American South, he asserted, “has the negro race ever attained so high an elevation in morals, intelligence, or civilization.” Freedom, by contrast, reduced people of African descent to “extremes of vice and wretchedness.”

For abolitionists, such views made Calhoun the embodiment of proslavery ideas. Frederick Douglass said that Calhoun saw slavery as “the veritable New Jerusalem that was to come down out of Heaven.” It was Calhoun, Douglass charged, “who first boldly declared the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence” to be “self-evident falsehoods.”

Calhoun also played a key role in establishing policy toward Native peoples in the early nineteenth century. In 1818, as secretary of war, Calhoun helped redesign the system of trading with Indians to suit the interaction between a “civilized” people, on the one hand, and a “savage people,” on the other. Early in his term as secretary, Calhoun was drawn into efforts to remove the Cherokee and the Creek from Georgia. In 1824, he established the Bureau of Indian Affairs. And in 1825, he drafted a blueprint for removing virtually all tribes remaining in the East to lands across the Mississippi River.

Calhoun warned against the “incessant pressure” of U.S. population on Native tribes and opposed the most aggressive conduct of Anglo-Americans toward those he called “the wretched aborigines of our country.” Nonetheless, Calhoun was intractably committed to moving Native peoples westward. He insisted on the view that the “Indians themselves are not the proper judges of their own interests.” He believed that until the “savage customs and character” of the Indian were extinguished and brought “within the pales of law and civilization,” the U.S. would have to rely on what he called “a proper combination of force and persuasion, of punishments and rewards” in its treatment of Native tribes.

3. Naming Calhoun College

In 1850, when Calhoun died, leaders at Yale, including his former teachers, deliberately separated themselves from the controversial South Carolinian’s views, and especially from his views on slavery, even as they marked his passing. The University’s president, Theodore Dwight Woolsey noted warily that the South Carolinian had possessed “unlimited sway over the minds of such as embraced his views of the Constitution.” Calhoun’s old mentor, Professor Benjamin Silliman, lamented that his student had been “in a great measure” responsible for bolstering support for slavery in the South. Thanks to Calhoun’s efforts, Silliman wrote with regret, the United States had “come to present to the world the mortifying and disgraceful spectacle of a great republic – and the only real republic in the world – standing forth in vindication of slavery.”

Yale named no building after Calhoun when he died. The University did little to imprint the record of his legacy on the campus for seventy years. It seems likely that his pro-slavery views were too controversial and too badly out of step with the views of Americans in the North.

By the early twentieth century, however, the sensibilities of Yale’s leaders had changed. Few of Woolsey’s and Silliman’s successors at Yale shared the earlier generation’s critical assessment of Calhoun’s vigorous defense of slavery. Accordingly, the University took part in the process by which many early-twentieth-century American institutions set aside the struggles of the Civil War generation for freedom and equality. The University remembered the Confederate States of America by inscribing Confederate soldiers’ names alongside those of Union soldiers on the marble tablets lining the corridor between Beinecke Plaza and Memorial Hall. Soon thereafter,

the construction of Memorial Quadrangle on the site of present-day Saybrook and Branford Colleges featured John Calhoun not once but twice, in a statue on the Harkness Tower and again as the name over an entryway in the Quadrangle.

In 1930, as the University began thinking about the names for the new residential colleges it was about to build, Calhoun's name rose to the top of the list. By the early 1930s Calhoun seemed to many in Yale's leadership to be an ideal choice. His statesmanship among Yale graduates seemed unrivaled.

Ironically, the Calhoun name was attractive for some precisely because in the 1930s he seemed unlikely to engender controversy among the University's students, faculty, and alumni. To the extent the name would be able to help draw students from the South, it seemed to hold out the prospect of a certain kind of diversification of the student body. Moreover, the committee charged with developing nomenclature for the new colleges aimed for names that would serve as unifying symbols for the student communities. Speaking to the alumni in 1931, University president James Angell said that contemporary names would "inevitably" produce an "acute controversial atmosphere." President Angell therefore decided to "avoid all personal names belonging to the last century." Angell seems to have meant that he would not consider names whose association with Yale fell within the previous 100 years. The decision excluded men such as president and chief justice William Howard Taft (B.A. 1878), who had died the year before.

Calhoun also seemed a useful symbol to Yale's leaders because he embodied their ambitions to produce statesmen of national stature. In the era of Jim Crow, when African Americans had been excluded from national politics, Calhoun came to figure in American political life first and foremost as a statesman of distinction. And so, in May 1931, the University committee charged with naming decisions approved the selection of Calhoun as "Yale's most eminent graduate in the field of Civil State."^{*} A day later, the Yale Corporation voted that the quadrangle at the corner of Elm and College streets would be named "Calhoun College" in order "to honor John C. Calhoun, B.A. 1804, LL.D. 1822, statesman."

4. The Calhoun name and its discontents

A handful of critics registered quiet objections to the Calhoun name at the time of its selection. Anson Phelps Stokes, former secretary of the University, was a philanthropist who sponsored efforts to improve the education of African Americans and Native Americans. In 1914, Stokes had listed Calhoun as the most significant Yale man in the history of American politics, though he noted that Calhoun had "unfortunately" been "on the side of the past rather than of the future." Fifteen years later, Stokes issued a private objection to the Calhoun name. The lot on which the college was to be built, Stokes observed, was the site of the old Divinity School. And so Stokes recommended that a college on that site be named after a theologian. Choosing his words carefully, Stokes acknowledged the propriety of "some adequate memorial to Calhoun at Yale." But he urged "a more fitting name" for the old Divinity quadrangle.

^{*}"Civil State" was a reference to the Yale's Charter, dating to 1701, which authorized the founding of a school "fitted for Publick employment both in Church and Civil State."

Another objection to the name Calhoun appears to have come from the trustees of the estate of John W. Sterling, class of 1864, whose gift financed the construction of the college to be built immediately to the south of the Sterling Library. In 1931, the University offered the Sterling trustees a short menu of names to choose from. The list included Calhoun. But the Sterling trustees apparently decided, as the *Yale Daily News* reported in 1941, that it would be “tactless to name his college in honor of a secessionist.” Sterling had been a loyal Connecticut Yankee, a man who attended a memorial service for Lincoln after his assassination. Accordingly, the Sterling trustees chose Jonathan Trumbull as the namesake of the college financed by the Sterling estate. The Calhoun name was attached (over Stokes’s objection) to the new college at Elm and College streets instead.

These two cautions about the Calhoun name did nothing to alter the University’s belief that the pro-slavery statesman would serve as a unifying namesake for the new college. Yale’s leadership proceeded to develop an interior design for the college with an array of stained glass windows that depicted an idyllic antebellum life of paternalistic slaveowners and submissive, happy slaves.

One last cautionary note emerged beneath those very windows when the college opened in the fall of 1933. At the college’s dedication banquet, the noted writer Leonard Bacon read a long poem to mark the occasion, with President Angell, the college’s new master, and all the students and fellows in attendance. Bacon’s great-grandfather of the same name (B.A. 1820) had been an antislavery preacher and later a Yale professor. The elder Bacon had written in 1846 that if the laws “by virtue of which slavery exists . . . are not wrong,” then “nothing is wrong.” Eighteen years later, Abraham Lincoln famously improved upon the formulation. (“If slavery is not wrong,” Lincoln said, “nothing is wrong.”) But the sentiment was the same. In 1933, the younger Bacon (who seven years later would win the Pulitzer Prize for poetry) led off his dedication with a reference to the peculiarity of Calhoun’s return to the North:

I suppose that I ought
To have bayed at the moon
Singing the praises
of *John C. Calhoun*.
But I cannot, although
He was virtuous and brave,
And besides my great-grandfather
Would turn in his grave,
If he dreamed of a monument
Raised to renown
Calhoun in this rank
Abolitionist town.

It was hardly Pulitzer-worthy stuff, to be sure. But its message was clear. Bacon refused to build a monument in words for the proslavery Calhoun.

After Bacon’s poem, there is little or no surviving evidence of early misgivings about the Calhoun name at Yale for several decades.

Outside Yale, however, the memory of Calhoun remained a vivid reminder of the history of slavery and racism in the United States. In his famous dissent in the *Slaughter-House Cases*, decided in 1873, Supreme Court Justice Stephen Field singled out Calhoun and cited his doctrines as the epitome of the proslavery view of the Constitution that the Civil War and the subsequent amendments to the Constitution had decisively rejected. The African-American editor T. Thomas Fortune spoke bitterly of the continuing and pernicious racial effects of “John C. Calhoun’s States’ Rights theories.”

Even as Yale was building Calhoun College, the country’s leading black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender*, excoriated Calhoun as the founder of the view that “slavery is a positive good.” Four years later, the editors of the *Pittsburgh Courier* cited Calhoun as “the Negro’s arch enemy and the premier defender of human slavery.” In the 1940s, the black writer and public intellectual W. E. B. DuBois listed Calhoun as one of those men “whose names must ever be besmirched by the fact that they fought against freedom and democracy in a land which was founded upon Democracy and Freedom.”

Such criticisms did not begin to gain traction at Yale until the 1960s, when the University’s racial demographics began to change. In 1931, when the first 10 residential college names were selected, there was only one self-identified African-American student enrolled in Yale College. Vanishingly few black students graduated from any of the residential colleges in the first decade of the colleges’ existence. The Class of 1960 had perhaps as many as five black members out of 901 graduates. Ten self-identified black students matriculated in the Class of 1964. For the next decade, the number of black students enrolled in Yale College doubled every two or three years. Nearly one hundred self-identified black students enrolled in the Class of 1973 (the first class to include women as freshmen). In 2016, black students make up about ten percent of the Yale College student body. Students of color now constitute approximately forty percent of the College.

As the demographics of the University changed, new conversations emerged about the legacy of Calhoun College’s namesake. At their 25th reunion, two African-American members of the class of 1968 recalled the “shock, anger, and then outrage” of encountering symbols of the Confederacy in Calhoun College. By the early 1970s, some black Calhoun students referred to the college as “Calhoun Plantation.” In 1973, the first African-American master of a Yale residential college accepted President Kingman Brewster’s appointment to the post in Calhoun College as a rebuke to Calhoun’s ideas about race and slavery. Professor Charles Davis, one of the intellectual founders of African-American Studies as a scholarly field, turned down the master position at Trumbull College and insisted that he would only serve as master of Calhoun. Davis served in that position for nearly a decade. From 2005 to 2014, Dean Jonathan Holloway, who sits on this Committee, served as the second African-American master of the college, holding the post in much the same spirit as Master Davis before him.

For the past quarter century, conversation has returned to the Calhoun name on an increasingly regular basis. In the late 1980s, pressure led the college to remove the image of a kneeling slave from a stained glass window depicting John Calhoun in the college common room. A campaign of leaflets in the residential college dining halls in 1991 culminated in an unscheduled 1992

commencement speech about Calhoun's racial legacy in the Calhoun courtyard by Chris Rabb, an African-American member of the graduating class descended from enslaved people and from slaveholders. Some critics of Calhoun, like Rabb, supported keeping the name to educate the University community on the ways in which Yale had benefited from slavery; changing the name, he asserted, would be like "book-burning." Others suggested that the college name should be altered to remove the honor that a Yale college name confers.

Concerns about the legacy of Calhoun became more widespread beginning in 2001, when a report produced by three Yale graduate students drew attention to the fact that eight of the residential college namesakes owned slaves. Some readers of the report called on the University to change the names of all eight colleges. (The number is now nine with the addition of Benjamin Franklin College, which opens next fall. Franklin owned slaves, but became an opponent of slavery later in his life.) The next year, a conference sponsored by the University took up questions of slavery and reparations and focused at least in part on Calhoun's legacy. And in 2006, a report by Brown University on its ties to the slave trade helped produce another round of discussions at Yale, including publication of a study by another graduate student on the history of Calhoun College's naming and a renewed discussion of the Calhoun College stained glass dining hall windows.

When news broke in 2007 of the possibility of two new residential colleges, questions about the Calhoun name gained additional momentum. Two years later, a group called the Undergraduate Organizing Committee used a campaign of chalk on walkways to challenge the eight college names then associated with slaveowners. Conversations continued as the naming of the two new colleges became an increasingly salient topic of discussion on campus. In the fall of 2014, a *Yale Daily News* story reflected the widespread expectation that the new colleges would give the University an opportunity to diversify the names of its residential colleges. The story called for the renaming of one or more of the existing colleges to ensure that the only college or colleges named for women or people of color were not "ghettoized" up Prospect Street.

In the summer of 2015, soon after the Charleston shooting, a student petition drive calling for the renaming of Calhoun garnered more than 1400 signatures, mostly from students and recent alumni. "Like the official display of the Confederate flag in South Carolina," the petition stated, "Calhoun College represents an indifference to centuries of pain and suffering," "conveys disrespect toward black perspectives," and represents "a barrier toward racial inclusiveness."

IV. History and Mission

The debates of the past half-century over the Calhoun name have been a part of a broader process of change. The University campus has long evolved to advance its mission in new conditions.

A. Change in buildings and names on the University campus is not new

Over the years, the campus has witnessed many changes in nomenclature and symbolism. As president in the 1960s, Kingman Brewster removed a series of racist caricatures of African Americans from the walls of Payne Whitney Gymnasium. A part of Pierson College was known as “The Slave Quarters” until 1980, when it was renamed the Lower Court. In 2004 it was renamed again and it is now Rosenkranz Court.

Other historical structures and building names at Yale have undergone processes of change over time as well. The old University Quadrangle at the center of the campus, for example, became the Hewitt Quadrangle in 1927 after a bequest from Frederick Hewitt. Since 1963, the space is more commonly known as Beinecke Plaza.

The building of the residential colleges themselves entailed substantial renaming. Memorial Quadrangle, named in memory of Charles Harkness (B.A. 1883), was completed in 1921. A decade later it was converted into Branford College and Saybrook College. The old Kent Hall was absorbed by Jonathan Edwards College, as was the Sloane Physical Laboratory. Berkeley College was built over Gibbs Hall, the former residence of one of Yale’s greatest scientific figures, Josiah Willard Gibbs (B.A. 1858, Ph.D. 1863). The old Vanderbilt Square, which was the residential campus for the Sheffield Scientific School, was renamed Silliman College when the Sheffield School was formally merged into the University. The same site had once boasted the home of Noah Webster, whose history there is recalled by a marker along Temple Street.

The creative destruction of buildings and names did not stop with the construction of the colleges in the 1930s. A listing of campus name changes appears in the Appendix on the Committee’s webpage. They suggest that for three hundred years, when the occasion has warranted, and when good enough reasons have appeared, the campus has moved forward to advance its mission, even at the cost of altering existing names.

B. The mission of the University

Ultimately, the answer to a question about renaming must arise out of the mission of the University. There was no formal statement until 1992. Since then, the mission statement of the University has shifted slightly. But statements of the University’s purpose stretching back at least a century, formal and informal alike, share a central connecting thread with the formal mission statements that have been articulated in recent years.

In the current formulation, adopted in the spring of 2016, the mission is set forth as follows:

Yale is committed to improving the world today and for future generations through outstanding research and scholarship, education, preservation, and practice. Yale educates aspiring leaders worldwide who serve all sectors of society. We carry out this mission through the free exchange of ideas in an ethical, interdependent, and diverse community of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

This mission statement elaborates on and implements the values of discovering and disseminating knowledge that are at the center of the University.

V. Principles

The University aims to create an ethical, interdependent, and diverse community of excellence in research, teaching, and learning for today and for tomorrow. Such a community, organized around academic freedom, supports the discovery and dissemination of knowledge. A community that genuinely includes people of excellence from a wide array of backgrounds thus represents the promise of the University's future. The principles for deciding a renaming question are rooted in the values reflected in the mission.

Our inquiry has led us to conclude that in considering a name change for a building, structure, or significant space, the factors listed below ought to guide the University's decision-making.

A. Presumptions: Renaming on account of values should be an exceptional event

There is a strong presumption against renaming a building on the basis of the values associated with its namesake. Such a renaming should be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

There are many reasons to honor tradition at a university. Historical names are a source of knowledge. Tradition often carries wisdom that is not immediately apparent to the current generation; no generation stands alone at the end of history with perfect moral hindsight. Moreover, names produce continuity in the symbols around which students and alumni develop bonds with the university and bonds with one another. Those bonds often help to establish lifelong connections of great value to members of the University community and to the University.

A presumption of continuity in campus names helps ensure that the University does not elide the moral complexity often associated with the lives of those who make outsized impressions on the world. Controversy has attached to countless numbers of the most important figures in modern history. For example, Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian independence leader who inspired a worldwide movement of nonviolent protest, held starkly racist views about black Africans.

The presumption against renaming would not in itself decide any such case. But it embodies the good reasons for giving continuity substantial weight. Holding all else equal, it is a virtue to appreciate the complexity of those lives that have given shape to the world in which we live. A presumption also helps to avoid the risk of undue debate over names, when time and energy may be better directed elsewhere.

The presumption against renaming is at its strongest when a building has been named for someone who made major contributions to the University.

When buildings are named for people who have made major contributions to the life and mission of the University, either through their work or by contributing resources that help the University pursue its mission, renaming will be appropriate only in the most exceptional circumstances. Altering a name in such instances is distinctively problematic because it threatens to efface an important contributing factor in the making of the University.

This consideration means that to change a name in one institution or place, where the namesake played a relatively modest role, is not necessarily to say that the name ought to change in another, where the namesake played a larger role.

B. Principles to be considered: Sometimes renaming on the basis of values is warranted

Tradition and history are not the only factors when considering renaming a building because of the values associated with the name. There is wide agreement, for example, that certain kinds of hypothetical names would be unacceptable. The problem is to determine when a clash between a name and the University's mission makes renaming appropriate. This is a hard question. But its difficulty does not imply that there are no stopping points or no principles to distinguish a name that ought to be altered from one that ought to remain.

We begin by distinguishing three distinct time frames to which our study repeatedly led us: the present; the era of a namesake's life and work; and the time of a naming decision. Each of these offers a relevant principle for consideration. We then turn to a factor relating to the nature of the building, structure, or space at issue.

No single factor is sufficient, and no single factor is determinative. We expect that renaming will typically prove warranted only when more than one principle listed here points toward renaming; even when more than one principle supports renaming, renaming may not be required if other principles weigh heavily in the balance. We do not list the principles in order of significance because their importance may vary depending on the circumstances of the relevant name.

Is a principal legacy of the namesake fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University?

We ask about a namesake's *principal legacies* because human lives, as Walt Whitman wrote, are large; they contain multitudes. Whitman, as it happens, contained virtues and vices himself. He excoriated the Lincoln administration for insisting on equal treatment for black soldiers held as prisoners of war in the South. But his principal legacies are as a path-breaking poet and writer. Frederick Douglass contrasted African Americans with Indians, who he said were easily

“contented” with small things such as blankets, and who would “die out” in any event. But his principal legacies are as an abolitionist and an advocate for civil rights.

Of course, interpretations of a namesake’s principal legacies are subject to change over time. They may vary in the eye of the beholder as well.

Three factors constrain such changes or limit their significance in the analysis. First, asking about principal legacies directs us to consider not only the memory of a namesake, but also the enduring consequences of the namesake in the world. As the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it, a legacy is “a long-lasting effect.” Principal legacies, as we understand them, are typically the lasting effects that cause a namesake to be remembered. Even significant parts of a namesake’s life or career may not constitute a principal legacy. Scholarly consensus about principal legacies is a powerful measure.

Second, even if interpretations of legacies change, they do not change on any single person’s or group’s whim; altering the interpretation of a historical figure is not something that can be done easily. Third, the principal legacies of a namesake are not the only consideration. They should be considered in combination with the other principles set forth above and below in this report.

Determining the principal legacies of a namesake obliges the University to study and make a scholarly judgment on how the namesake’s legacies should be understood. Prevailing historical memories may be misleading or incorrect, and prevailing scholarly views may be incomplete.

A principal legacy would be fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University if, for example, it contradicted the University’s avowed goal of making the world a better place through, among other things, the education of future leaders in an “ethical, interdependent, and diverse community.” A principal legacy of racism and bigotry would contradict this goal.

Was the relevant principal legacy significantly contested in the time and place in which the namesake lived?

Evaluating a namesake by the standards of the namesake’s time and place offers a powerful measure of the legacy today. Such an evaluation does not commit the University to a relativist view of history and ethics. An important reason to attend to the standards of a namesake’s time and place is that doing so recognizes the moral fallibility of those who aim to evaluate the past. Paying attention to the standards of the time also usefully distinguishes those who actively promoted some morally odious practice, or dedicated much of their lives to upholding that practice, on the one hand, from those whose relationship to such a practice was unexceptional, on the other.

The idea that people can have unexceptional relationships to moral horrors is one of the most disturbing features in human history. Examining the standards of a namesake’s time and place therefore does more than confront us with the limits of our own capacities. It helps us see people as embedded in particular times and particular places – and it helps us identify those whose legacies are properly thought of as singularly and distinctively unworthy of honor.

Renaming is more likely to be warranted (a) when insistent and searching critiques of the relevant legacy were available at the time and place in which the namesake lived, than (b) when the conduct of the namesake was unexceptional and therefore not subject to such insistent and searching critique.

Did the University, at the time of a naming, honor a namesake for reasons that are fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University?

Renaming is more likely to be appropriate when an institution, at the time of a naming, honored a namesake for reasons that conflict with the University's mission.

This principle inquires into a naming decision by asking about the reasons for the decision. It does not ask about the legacy of the namesake today. Nor does it look into the namesake's life itself. Instead, it asserts that where the University honored a person for reasons that were then, or are now, at odds with the mission of the University, the University has added reason to reconsider its naming decision. This principle may be most weighty when the University honored a person for reasons that contradicted the mission it professed at the time of the naming itself. The principle also points in favor of renaming when the naming decision rested on reasons that contradict the mission the University professes today.

An illustrative example of this principle is the change in the name of Saunders Hall at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Historians at UNC were unsure whether or not the namesake William Saunders had been a leader of the Ku Klux Klan. The university trustees nonetheless changed the name of the building when they discovered that university leaders had believed Saunders was a Klan leader and viewed this belief as reason to name the building in his honor. Another useful illustration arises out of the residential college here at Yale named for Samuel Morse. If University leaders had named the college after Morse not in honor of his invention of the telegraph, but to honor his nativist and anti-Catholic views and his support for slavery, that would be a consideration pointing in favor of renaming the college.

Sometimes a naming decision will have been made when key facts about the namesake were concealed or otherwise unavailable. This, too, may be a factor weighing in favor of renaming if those facts subsequently disclose a legacy fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University.

Does a building whose namesake has a principal legacy fundamentally at odds with the University's mission, or which was named for reasons fundamentally at odds with the University's mission, play a substantial role in forming community at the University?

The physical environment of a university is made up of many different kinds of spaces. Some are strictly utilitarian. Others house classrooms, laboratories, lecture halls, and museums. At Yale, a subset of the University's buildings is designed to shape the campus community of the students and to connect them to the University and to one another. The residential colleges for the undergraduate students are the paradigm example.

In at least one respect, the community-forming character of certain building names militates against renaming. When a building with a long-standing name has helped form bonds and connections among generations of community members, the fact of those bonds and connections offers a reason to keep the name.

In two important ways, however, the community-forming character of a building name points in favor of renaming. It is difficult to encourage the formation of community around a namesake with a principal legacy fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University. Such names may fail to do the work of fostering community. Moreover, assigning students without their choice to a particular building or residential college whose namesake has a principal legacy fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University essentially requires students to form their University communities around such a name. These considerations offer strong reasons to alter a name.

C. Decisions to retain a name or to rename come with obligations of nonerasure, contextualization, and process

When a name is altered, there are obligations on the University to ensure that the removal does not have the effect of erasing history.

Names communicate historical information, but they often confer honor as well. These two features of a name can be disentangled if renaming is accompanied by creative and substantial efforts to mitigate the possible erasure of history. Changing a name is thus not synonymous with erasing history.

When removing a name leaves other existing markers of the namesake on the campus, a name's removal from any one building, structure, or significant space poses a smaller risk of erasing history because the namesake has not been removed from the campus. Such markers may themselves require contextualization. But renaming one site does not require removal of a namesake from elsewhere on the campus. To the contrary, changing a name in one place may impose obligations of preservation in others.

In many instances, renaming a building will make it incumbent on a university to take affirmative steps to avoid the problem of erasure. Such steps may include conspicuous museum-like exhibits; architecturally thoughtful installations, plaques, and signs; public art; or other such steps. Selecting a new name that is thematically connected to the old one may be one further way to prevent renaming from becoming tantamount to erasing.

The decision to change the stained glass window in Calhoun College in the late 1980s probably ran afoul of this principle of nonerasure. The University altered the window depicting John Calhoun and a kneeling slave by removing the image of the slave but leaving Calhoun intact. The result was a regrettable erasure of the history and meaning of the window. It might have been wise to remove the window from its position of honor and place it in a museum-like exhibit. Under some circumstances, it might have been an option to add contextualizing information explaining the window's origins and its significance, but to leave the window otherwise in place. The University did neither of these things, and instead sanitized it for viewing, leaving Calhoun in a position of honor and removing the slave whose indispensable presence complicated that honor and indeed cast it into doubt. The student who pressed hardest for a change in the stained glass says that he soon came to regret the removal of the enslaved person. As he sees it, editing out the ugly history of the stained glass did not adhere to the educational mission of the University. We agree.

When a name is retained, there may be obligations on the University to ensure that preservation does not have the effect of distorting history.

When the University determines that a contested name should remain rather than change, it may have obligations of contextualization similar to those that accompany a name change. Examples already appear on the campus. A plaque recently installed in Ezra Stiles College memorializes the lives of Stiles's slave and two indentured servants.

The University ought to adopt a formal process for considering whether to alter a building name on account of the values associated with its namesake; such a process should incorporate community input and scholarly expertise.

A decision about whether to change a building's name is one that ought to be guided by a formal process that incorporates wide input and draws on scholarly expertise to ensure that the relevant history has been explored and that the relevant principles have been considered and applied. This is especially true for building names because they are meant to be enduring and to offer continuity to the intergenerational life of the University. In our study of other universities' naming controversies, we found that well-considered processes for evaluating the relevant considerations often produced constructive dialogue and debate, regardless of the particular outcome.

In our judgment, it is not within the authority of this committee to set out specific procedures to be followed. But a process would serve the University well. It has been our aim to gather information and conduct a scholarly inquiry in a way that models what such a process might look like.

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It bears observing that none of the principles we articulate here can override legal obligations arising out of any naming agreement into which the University may have entered. It is beyond the power of the University to undo such obligations unilaterally; it is perforce beyond the authority of this Committee to do so.

We close with a final observation. In our many conversations this fall, members of the Yale community on all sides of the issue warned us against symbolic politics. Move on, some urged, to the traditional work of the University. Move on, others said, to more tangible questions of justice and injustice. Despite such injunctions, we persisted. Symbols matter. The persistent history of controversy over the Calhoun name is evidence of that. Indeed, many of the most important markers of civil rights in recent decades have been heavily symbolic. The flaw in separate but equal was not exclusively that separate was so often unequal. Segregation alone sent a powerful symbolic message of racial hierarchy. Similarly, civil unions for same-sex couples may have had all the legal incidents of marriage. But without the name, they sent a powerful symbolic message of exclusion. Symbols matter.

Yet if Yale, as its mission urges, is to take up the work of “improving the world today and for future generations” by helping to educate the leaders of tomorrow, it will need to do more than reconsider symbols. It will need to continually dedicate and rededicate itself to carrying out its mission of excellence in teaching, research, and learning. Therein lies the vital task of the University.