



To begin the conversation, the Warden made a distinction between “Denaming” and “Renaming” for the convenience of the Fellowship and clarity of conversation:

- *DeN*aming- removing of existing name.
- *ReN*aming-instituting of a new name.

The Warden notes that the Law Building, formerly known as Boalt Hall, has recently been denamed, and stipulates that it is difficult to weigh or place value on different peoples’ actions. This problem is exacerbated when we examine individuals who lived during times different from our own. Do misdeeds or harmful beliefs “cancel out” the good in a person? Or, does the good that someone does cancel out what would be considered blameworthy today?

The Warden reminds the Fellowship that the current naming principles for buildings align with UC Berkeley Principles of Community, listed below:

- We place honesty and integrity in our teaching, learning, research and administration at the highest level.
- We recognize the intrinsic relationship between diversity and excellence in all our endeavors.
- We affirm the dignity of all individuals and strive to uphold a just community in which discrimination and hate are not tolerated.
- We are committed to ensuring freedom of expression and dialogue that elicits the full spectrum of views held by our varied communities.
- We respect the differences as well as the commonalities that bring us together and call for civility and respect in our personal interactions.
- We believe that active participation and leadership in addressing the most pressing issues facing our local and global communities are central to our educational mission.
- We embrace open and equitable access to opportunities for learning and development as our obligation and goal.

A fellow discussed how they wrote to the Chancellor after the decision to dename Boalt Hall, expressing concern about the removal. The concern was not out of ignorance of John Boalt’s support of Chinese Exclusion Act. The Berkeley Principles of Community (above) address “honesty” (point 1) and “opportunities for learning” (point 7). There are a lot of things wrong with our past: the land the University was built on, historically, did not belong to us. But re-writing of history is troublesome for this fellow; the idea of eliminating names from our built environment should not be embraced. This fellow urges the Order against seeking to alleviate concerns of the present by erasing elements of our past. There should be a display of Boalt’s whole life inside the entrance to the Law Building. The whole idea of eliminating things about the past that we find uncomfortable was at one time exactly the widely-held attitude toward people of color in the United States, that this fellow finds irresponsible.

A fellow remarks that part of the building name review process includes historical and social context when determining whether or not a building's name is removed.

A fellow brings up similar issues facing the University of Mississippi. They tend to use practices in line with a previous fellow's comment, and might be a good example for us (and others) to follow; explaining context of the past, and how it relates to the world we live in now, is important to avoid rewriting history.

A fellow who was an advocate for Boalt's denaming adds to the conversation. This fellow, a Chinese American, had difficulty coping with the name of the Law School. To this fellow, naming should not be based on monetary giving alone, for money alone is not enough to give to the University.

A fellow agrees with the idea of a plaque. This fellow thinks that denaming should not be misconstrued with trying to erase a person from history, but it is rather a progression, stating that our current values are different from what they were in the past.

A fellow has inquiries about why buildings were named after certain people. A communal discussion about how our public buildings are named should exist. To this fellow, it is important, regardless of how long or arduous it would take, to have open discourse about history of our campus. There may be a number of buildings that come under scrutiny, but we should really rethink our policies surrounding what warrants having a building named after somebody. Should buildings be named after faculty, or those who made donations? The history of who the building is named after is of vital importance. We, as members of the campus, have a relationship to everyone who shaped the campus in the past. Defining the quality of our relationships to them is necessary, just as it is with family members.

A fellow agrees with acknowledging the history of people who impact our campus. They also wonder if there enough buildings named after women on this campus?

A fellow asks what buildings or names current students find disagreeable?

A fellow remarks that financial contributions only recently became principle reasons for naming a building after somebody. Before, this process was more concerned with individuals responsible for building up the campus. Our principles and guidelines may have changed in this regard. With respect to names, these principles are carrying us into the future, so that we will hopefully be more cognoscente about the process and run into fewer issues in years to come. These days, it is the money that decides the name of our buildings. This fellow feels that the campus should be more interested on where the money comes from. The person who gives the money may be wonderful, but the source of the money may not be so wonderful. The fellow also wonders about assets of the University that aren't buildings, including scholarships and financial aid? The campus encourages donations toward scholarships and financial aid, as well as faculty salaries. Do we always want to look under the rock when it comes to significant gifts to

pay faculty or fund scholarships? Can we afford to deny these gifts? This fellow thinks that we should, but does not know if we can.

A fellow returns to Boalt's denaming, and reminds the Order that it took three years for the process to be completed; this was far from rash decision-making. In order for a building to be denamed, a proposal has to be submitted by the community to the Building Review Committee. The Chancellor has a chance to approve or deny the recommendation made by the BRC. If the source of the name is honorific, a decision goes to UC Regents. If instead, the source is philanthropic, it is directed to the California Attorney General. This fellow agrees that we should avoid erasing narratives, but insists that we must look at the relationship between our community and our environment. This University is public: how can we make sure it is accessible to everybody? We are a center for learning, and a public service to the state. In Boalt's case, denaming was the solution. His legacy, according to this fellow, did not fit with our mission to be a frontrunner in diversity and inclusion. The mission is to make our campus process restorative. The Committee does review public comment. This fellow stresses the importance of their work, in reviewing names and how they align with our mission on campus.

A fellow offers their perspective about the vital importance of this conversation. Everything that is named is placed in time. We have to be careful about how we name things. This fellow would not want to name something after a Nazi leader, for example. The fellow also stresses the importance of investigating where our money comes from, and how much value it should hold when it comes to naming. As a person that favors inclusion, this fellow thinks that it is important to look at history of naming on this campus moving forward. They do not want to establish a precedent, but there are certain names that our campus has to look into. Given our mission of inclusion, maybe some of the older names do not fit, even if their owners were members of this Order. Boalt's name has opened up a can of worms- which names can stay, which do we have to remove?

The Warden asks a question to the Fellowship: what alternative or additional solutions are there to reconcile painful histories? Do others exist, besides de/renaming buildings?

A fellow wants to broaden the scope of the discussion. It has so far focused on the history of naming buildings at Cal, but Cal has really just been followed the history of naming in our society. We should be a trend-setter in this area, as we are in many others. If this is really an inclusive place, there are more than 30-some names worthy to be recognized... there are hundreds, even thousands. This fellow also wants to include plaques more centrally in the discussion. Many plaques, when addressing a couple, omit the woman's first name entirely, reflecting a male-dominant society. This fellow does not see the renaming of these plaques as a valid possibility. How do we have a discussion about this when many arenas over time are contributing? One person's voice can easily be perceived by others as disrespectful- but we strive to respect all the

voices involved, despite this. This topic unearths the ultimate discussion about the nature of our community and its values.

A fellow recognizes that we all will at some point have pain with a past event or hurtful behavior. None of the fellows in this room are indigenous to this place, and what the United States did to Native Americans has not ever been acknowledged appropriately, as has slavery among other things. This fellow wants to move away from the broad topic of these injustices toward the deep recollection of our own history. This fellow thinks that deepening our reasoning of history is more important than caressing our own wounds, according to our own values. Many people in the past did not adhere to our current values, and our even current values will one day be outdated. This fellow fears losing the clarity of this difference, because we believe that our own values in the present time are of the most importance. All views and opinions, even those over time, are part of the story, from the most progressive to the most conservative. Berkeley's story would be incomplete without them. How far are we willing to let denaming go? Before we leap off this cliff, we do need to step back and have a discussion about what it means to maintain history, and what is our society trying to reflect? Are we trying to uncover the past, reflect it more fully, or is it at the whims our generational and ever-changing values?

The Warden asks how the process denaming and renaming campus buildings affects or is affected by philanthropic contributions?

A fellow thinks about names that go on our current buildings. Oftentimes it is about donations from corporations or businesses. People feel upset about names, even when they are not controversial (for example, "Kabam" in California Memorial Stadium). It seems like the people trying to raise money care more about altering our landscape than maintaining it. We look for donors who want to change things. With regards to tracking the money, can beggars really be choosers? This fellow thinks we need to accept philanthropy whenever it comes our way. Even so, money from a bad name can still be used to do good. The fellow considers the Rhodes scholarships, and their namesake, a famous British imperialist. There is an irony in a bad name being put to good use.

A fellow remembers the Haas School of Business, and its original decided name as the Milken School of Business, before a scandal broke with its first namesake. There is a challenge in vetting where our money comes from. What if 75 years from now, we discover the misdeeds of various donors? This fellow recalls Alfred Nobel, the creator of dynamite. Though his contributions to science were destructive, his name is used for a prestigious award. If people donate, we can do good things with that money regardless of where it comes from.

The Warden recognizes that naming could be a tactic or tool to get philanthropists to give. Or, names can be used to make people feel more (or less) welcome. Are there any other ideas on how names can be used as tools?

A fellow recognizes this problem in society as well: a local Woodrow Wilson Elementary school was recently changed to Michelle Obama Elementary. While the exact reasoning for this change is unknown to this fellow, the new name might be more appealing to the population of the area or the student body.

One fellow wonders if the denaming of Boalt a way to generate more revenue? Now, there is a building that can be renamed, which might be an incentive for donors. This cycle of naming might be a self-update of where the values of the time lie. This is a very effective (both monetarily and value-wise) way that names can be tools.

A fellow notes that names can be used as tools to teach. LeConte Elementary was renamed to Sylvia Mendez Elementary. This is an opportunity to think critically about our own campus. With respect to other buildings, like Barrows, LeConte, and Kroeber Halls. Denaming is not the only solution, but how can we generate educational experiences? How do we make growing knowledge more accessible?

A fellow recognizes that naming can define a community, reflect our traditions, or foster belonging. Mendez Elementary is more striking than "PS34." A name gives identity, brings to mind community, history, and values. There is great value in having a name on a building. This is not even about people's names, but just names in general, including concepts or values themselves.

One fellow brings up a historical example from our own campus. When Harmon Gym (now Haas Pavilion) was built, it bore the name "University Gym." The student body begged for "Harmon" to be added, because of the significance of the old octagonal building that used to serve as the gymnasium for early (male) students.

A fellow returns to a previous speaker's comment that naming can lead to teaching. This fellow agrees wholeheartedly, but only if people actually know why things are named. Teaching requires faculty to be more self-aware for this to actually be possible.

A fellow recognizes another fellow who had reservations about attending class in Barrows, because the namesake would not have expected this person being educated. But according to this fellow, who better to take class there? This is one example of victorious irony over the past.

A fellow emphasizes that values change. They are quite transient in nature. How do we deal with changing times and changing values? This goes beyond naming buildings. Encouraging transparency can be done with plaques. We can fairly represent our history, with the pros and the cons. Could we even reserve the right to change names for any reason? Is this a good way of adhering to our values- when they change, we might be more free to change names as well.

A fellow recognizes that philanthropists want their names set in stone. Clauses that allow for changes of names would discourage people from donating.

Allowing names to be changed at will might eliminate or stifle public discourse, according to another fellow. Instead, they place emphasis on buildings named after values. “Ethics” school of Business, for example. People change, and our values evolve from what they were in the past. Should we allow people to make statements by donating directly to our “values” in the form of actual structures?

A fellow speaks to naming as a tool. When it comes to naming after huge donors, and our own values and policies of naming, people should want to give money because they want to further education, innovation, research, not simply because they want their own name to be propagated.

A fellow is generally against denaming buildings that have held names for a long time, because it erases part of our history. Building names are sort of a history book of our campus. Maybe we should do a better job at doing more to educate the campus community and visitors with our environment.

A fellow urges the Order to consider names off campus proper. For example, this fellow is thrilled to discover Slottman Hall, as they took class with Professor Slottman when they were a student here.

The Warden brings up the idea of a legacy: For example, Alexander Hamilton left behind a legacy as a writer. Does names on a building preserve the legacy of the namesake? What legacies are we trying to preserve on this campus?

A fellow recognizes a legacy is a story. None of us have actually met Hamilton, for example, but we know about his story. Would we like to leave a legacy? A legacy is a story, not necessarily the truth. There are stories attached to names on buildings. No one is perfect. There are lots of things to like about these people, and there are things about these people that folks dislike. In fact, there are no “perfect” names, because there are no “perfect” people.

The Warden considers what should be important when we think about choosing new names for our buildings.

A fellow recognizes that there is a very judicious feeling in our conversation, labeling things and people as “good,” “bad,” etc. Instead of judging according to these things, what is consistent with our values? Who even came up with our values? But once those values are solidified, we should always return to them; instead of debating the good or bad, debate the consistency or inconsistency with our values.

A fellow wants to distinguish our campus as a community from our campus as an educational institution. Are decisions made for institutional purposes? Or are they made by and for the community? If the community has to be consulted about building names, this is a different discussion than an institutionally-based query. There are in fact different avenues for processing ideas that will affect the campus.

A fellow notes that some names can be reflective (Such as Eshleman, Harmon) while others are aspirational (MLK Jr. Student Union). The fellow recognizes that we cannot always afford to choose the names of our campus buildings when it comes to donations, but encourages us to think about what we would do if we could always choose for ourselves. The fellow returns to the idea of campus names as members of a family. Do we like all of our family members or not? What are their legacies, and how do they fit into our campus today?

On the distinction between institution and community made by a previous speaker, this fellow notes that our culture has become more and more consumerist. The University has become more transactional. How do we let business decisions factor into the names on our campus?

Finally, when a fellow looks at the United States flag, they see the people of the nation. When they look at other country's flags, they seem to represent governments. We all are part of this University, and we have a long way to go in looking at how the community is emphasized by our community.

The meeting closed with song, and was adjourned promptly at 7:30 pm.

Meeting minutes taken and compiled by the Chronicler for the Order.

