

2019

When Building Namesakes Have Ties to White Supremacy: A Case Study of Oregon State University's Building Names Evaluation Process

Natalia M. Fernández

Oregon State University, natalia.fernandez@oregonstate.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives>

Part of the [Archival Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Fernández, Natalia M. (2019) "When Building Namesakes Have Ties to White Supremacy: A Case Study of Oregon State University's Building Names Evaluation Process," *Journal of Western Archives*: Vol. 10 : Iss. 1 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives/vol10/iss1/5>

This Case Study is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Western Archives by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact rebecca.nelson@usu.edu.

Footer Logo

When Building Namesakes Have Ties to White Supremacy: A Case Study of Oregon State University's Building Names Evaluation Process

Cover Page Footnote

I would like to acknowledge that Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon is located within the traditional homelands of the Mary's River or Ampinefu Band of Kalapuya. Following the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855 (Kalapuya etc. Treaty), Kalapuya people were forcibly removed to reservations in Western Oregon. Today, living descendants of these people are a part of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians. I would like to thank all the members of the OSU building and place names evaluation planning and implementation process, as well as the OSU and Corvallis area community members who engaged in the process. And, a special thanks to the Oregon State students, as well as faculty and staff, who collectively use their voice to ensure that OSU continues to make progress in the journey toward social justice within our university community.

When Building Namesakes Have Ties to White Supremacy: A Case Study of Oregon State University's Building Names Evaluation Process

Natalia M. Fernández

ABSTRACT

In recent years, more and more communities, including colleges and universities, across the United States are challenging the existence of memorials associated with the Confederacy and white supremacy. Archivists and special collections librarians are often called upon to provide historical context, and have the opportunity to engage their communities in productive and transformative discourses. As a case study, readers will learn about the Building and Places Names Evaluation process at Oregon State University; the process which included developing evaluation criteria, providing historical research assistance to scholars, designing a community engagement plan, and implementing a renaming process. Readers will be able to adapt the information learned to achieve successful evaluation processes within their own communities.

Building and place names play an important role in how community members interact with, remember, and revere their histories. In recent years, more and more communities, including colleges and universities, across the United States are challenging the existence of memorials associated with the Confederacy and white supremacy. These memorials, whether they are statues, building namesakes, or place names, are symbolic of the long historical threads of racism, institutionalized discrimination, and the use of public spaces to perpetuate dominant narratives. These issues must be addressed as part of the efforts of inclusivity and equity that increasingly characterize the culture of college campuses. In this environment, archivists and special collections librarians are often called upon to provide historical context. As archivists, we also have the opportunity to engage our communities in productive and transformative discourses. The community of Oregon State University (OSU) recently underwent a building and place names evaluation process, and the archives and archivists at the OSU Special Collections & Archives Research Center

were integral to the process.¹

When OSU names a building, it speaks to its values and efforts towards creating an institution that respects and affirms the dignity of all individuals and communities. Therefore, OSU community members who raised concerns regarding campus buildings whose namesakes may have held or espoused racist or otherwise exclusionary views, posed an important question: What does it mean for OSU to value equity and inclusion if individuals after whom its buildings are named did not? Beginning in 2016, OSU began a process to answer this question. This article is about the OSU building names evaluation process, from an archivist's perspective, with the hope that other archivists can apply parts of the OSU process and lessons learned to their processes at their institutions. This article will not cover the history of the building namesakes nor judge the outcome of the evaluation process. Instead, it will describe the various elements of the evaluation process. The elements include the formation of a committee, development of evaluation criteria, response to a student protest, development of a communications plan, the process of providing a team of scholars with historical research assistance, the design and implementation of a community engagement plan, the determination of a decision-making process, and a renaming process. Though OSU is still in the beginning stages of its plans for permanent education, this article will also briefly discuss the next steps in that part of the process. Each part of the process is explained, with appendices included as necessary, as well as a list of lessons learned. Readers will be able to adapt the information learned to plan for collaborations within their own communities, articulate the significance of building and place names with community inclusivity efforts, and advocate for the role of archivists to help inform productive and effective conversations.

Literature Review

In the past few years, it has become more common to see news articles pertaining to colleges and universities across the United States grappling with the challenge of reconciling their pasts regarding current controversies surrounding the histories of building and place namesakes on their campuses.² Though not all namesake controversies are tied to slavery, the Confederacy, or white supremacy, many are. Notably, it is not only universities that deal with these issues; for years, communities

1. The OSU Special Collections & Archives Research Center (SCARC) formed in 2011 with the merger of the Oregon State University Archives and the OSU Libraries Special Collections. More information can be found on the OSU Special Collections & Archives Research Center website, <http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/about-us.html>.
2. Throughout the OSU building and place names evaluation process, the members leading the process read a number of news articles to keep up-to-date on the processes of other institutions. Our success was based in large part on looking at what other colleges and universities had done, avoiding their pitfalls and adopting the elements that seemed successful. On the OSU Building and Place Names website, <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names/about/resources>, there is a list

have dealt with controversies surrounding the names of parks, schools, and landmarks.³

There are a number of themes found within the literature, which extends from a variety of disciplines, including an analysis of the importance of building and place names, the typical reasons argued for not renaming, and community education as the essential component to any renaming process. In an article on the connection between geography and white supremacy, the authors Bonds and Inwood describe white supremacy as a concept to analyze geographically and state that “the interactions between hierarchies of people and hierarchies of space create a geographically nuanced white supremacist reality within settler societies.”⁴ In another geography-based article, Inwood and his fellow authors argue that “campuses are wounded due to their connections to white supremacy” and that those “wounded campuses reproduce structural inequalities and perpetuate geographies of white supremacy.”⁵ However, wounds can be difficult to heal, especially if community members do not acknowledge the wound or argue against caring for it. In an essay that analyzes the response of community members opposed to renaming a park named after a Confederate General, the author Vail distills the common reasons used in opposition to a name change as being rooted in historical accuracy, pragmatism, and politics. However, he concludes that ultimately, it is not about the name, but what it symbolizes.⁶ It is about the social identity and power of a particular group in connection to that group's geographic space, and their claim to it. In his article “The Law and Morality of Building Renaming”, the author Brophy explains a number of legal reasons for and against the renaming of buildings in a number of settings; in the context of a university setting, he states, “the questions are of morality and

of selected articles pertaining to Brown University, George Mason University, Princeton University, University of Oregon, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Westfield State University, and Yale University.

3. Holly Epstein Ojalvo, “Beyond Yale: These other university buildings have ties to slavery and white supremacy,” *USA TODAY*, February 13, 2017. For examples of non-university related cases, see Mark T. Vail, “Reconstructing the Lost Cause in the Memphis City Parks Renaming Controversy,” *Western Journal of Communication* 76, no. 4 (2012): 417-437; Derek H. Alderman, “School Names as Cultural Arenas: The Naming of U.S. Public Schools after Martin Luther King, Jr.,” *Urban Geography* 23, no. 7 (2002): 601-626; and Wendy C. Kelleher, “A Contemporary Public Naming Controversy in Phoenix, Arizona: The Changing Social Perspectives on Landmark Nomenclature,” *Names* 52, no. 2 (2004): 21-47.
4. Anne Bonds and Joshua Inwood, “Beyond White Privilege: Geographies of White Settler Supremacy and Settler Colonialism,” *Progress in Human Geography* 40, no. 6 (2016): 722.
5. Jordan P. Brasher, Derek H. Alderman, and Joshua F. J. Inwood, “Applying Critical Race and Memory Studies to University Place Naming Controversies: Toward a Responsible Landscape Policy,” *Papers in Applied Geography* 3, no. 3-4 (2017): 294.
6. Mark T. Vail, “Reconstructing the Lost Cause in the Memphis City Parks Renaming Controversy,” *Western Journal of Communication* 76, no. 4 (2012): 417-437.

expediency rather than law.”⁷ The author proceeds to pose a number of questions to consider when evaluating a building place name, shares both pros and cons of renaming, and expresses the importance of remembering. Both Vail and Brophy stress the need for community engagement and education as a part of the evaluation process. However, it is in the article “Applying Critical Race and Memory Studies to University Naming Controversies: Toward a Responsible Landscape Policy” that these ideas are truly named and described. The authors Brasher, Alderman, and Inwood state that this “memory work” is essential because the “power to name and remember gains one access to the power to define a sense of place (or out of place), not only for oneself but for others who internalize, use, and draw identity from these memorialized place names.”⁸ They describe a number of short case studies in which universities engaged their communities in naming evaluations of campus buildings.⁹

Archivists have the potential to take an integral role in building and place name evaluation processes. In the article “Social justice impact of archives,” Duff and her fellow authors argue that whether the public is aware of archival materials and archivists or not, members of the public do usually interact with or feel the effects of the work we do.¹⁰ In a process that includes community conversations about history, archivists have the power to bring archival documents to the forefront of a community’s awareness and understanding. The authors state that archivists are challenged to “utilize the past to inform and change the present through concrete action” and that methods of doing so include “proactively enabling participation and access to the archive” as well as “understanding how archives can facilitate restorative-reparative-transitional justice through protection, supplementation to and promotion of the record.”¹¹ On the blog “Off the Record”, Tanya Zanish-Belcher, the 2017-2018 Society of American Archivists president, wrote a post on the importance of this issue within the archival profession. She includes a compiled resources list, “Memorials and Monuments of Oppression: Bibliography for Archivists Working with Communities.”¹² While Zanish-Belcher noted that the list of resources—which includes online resources and organizations, as well as articles and monographs—is a

7. Alfred L. Brophy, “The Law and Morality of Building Renaming,” *South Law Texas Review* 52, no. 37 (2010): 52.

8. Brasher, et al., 301-302.

9. The authors describe the renaming controversies of three public universities including Oklahoma State University, University of North Carolina, and Middle Tennessee State University, as well as three private schools Stanford, Yale, Princeton, and Georgetown. More literature comparing and contrasting various approaches is needed, but is beyond the scope of this article.

10. Wendy Duff, et al, “Social justice impact of archives: a preliminary investigation,” *Archival Science* 13 (2013): 332.

11. *Ibid.*, 330.

12. Tanya Zanish-Belcher, “Grappling with our Difficult Past: How Can Archivists Help?,” *Off the Record*, May 7, 2018, <https://offtherecord.archivists.org/2018/05/07/grappling-with-our-difficult-past-how-can-archivists-help> (accessed January 28, 2019).

work in progress, there was a notable absence both on her list, as well as in the research I conducted: there is a lack of in-depth case studies on building and place name evaluation processes, especially from an archivist's perspective. This article seeks to begin to fill that gap in the literature.

A Brief History of Race Relations in Oregon and at Oregon State University

Oregon State University is located in Corvallis, Oregon, a small college town in the Willamette Valley, with additional campuses located on the coast and central Oregon. OSU was originally established as Corvallis College, and in 1868, the Oregon legislature designated it as the state's land grant institution.¹³ Since its inception, OSU has been a predominately white institution, in a predominately white state with ties to white supremacy and slavery.¹⁴ The state of Oregon has a history of exclusion and racism against people of color in the 19th and 20th centuries that continues into the present day.¹⁵ As occurred all over the United States, in Oregon, white settlers caused the deaths or the displacement of Indigenous peoples. The OSU Corvallis campus itself is located within the traditional homelands of the Mary's River or Ampinefu Band of Kalapuya.¹⁶ While there were a few Native American graduates in the school's early decades, and students from international backgrounds as early as the 1900s, OSU's first known African American graduate was enrolled during the 1920s and the next was not until the 1940s. More students of color began to enroll in the 1970s and

13. For more detailed information pertaining to OSU's history, see the OSU Special Collections & Archives Research Center "Chronological History of OSU" online exhibit <http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/chronologicalhistory>, as well as William G. Robbins' *The People's School: A History of Oregon State University* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017).
14. In *Breaking Chains: Slavery on Trial in the Oregon Territory* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2013), Gregory Nokes explains how white southerners, many of whom were anti-slavery for economic reasons, were also deeply racist, and some who owned slaves were the ones who came westward to the Oregon territory during the 19th century. Today, according to the US Census Bureau, people of color make up about 26 percent of the state's population, with half of that percentage being individuals who identify as Hispanic, Latino/a, and/or Latinx.
15. Histories include, but by no means limited to, Black exclusion laws written into the state's constitution in the 1850s, the segregation and mistreatment of Chinese immigrants in the late 1800s, the discrimination endured by the Mexican workers who came to Oregon as part of Bracero Program during the 1940s, the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, the enforcement of Sundown Laws in various towns, and the redlining of neighborhoods to keep cities segregated. A number of these histories are available via The Oregon Encyclopedia at <https://oregonencyclopedia.org/>
16. Following the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855 (otherwise known as the Kalapuya Treaty), Kalapuya people were forcibly removed to reservations in Western Oregon. Today, living descendants of these people are a part of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians.

over the decades, the university has made efforts to recruit and retain students of color. In 2018, about 25 percent of the student population are students of color. Over the past 50 years, OSU students of color have been protesting against institutional racism, as well as a campus and local area climate of discrimination and racism they continue to face to this day.¹⁷ In addition to establishing offices and programs to confront and take on these issues, over the past two decades, OSU has engaged in efforts to reconcile and come to terms with its racist past and mistreatment of students of color.¹⁸ The reconciliation efforts have included building names, specifically the naming of new buildings. The university decided to name two residence halls in honor of the first two African American graduates, both of whom were not able to live on campus during their studies in the 1920s and 1940s.¹⁹ The campus community and public celebrated the naming selections. However, even though renaming buildings is quite common on the Corvallis campus, de-naming a building due to a namesake's historical legacy had never been done on the campus.²⁰ The university's reconciliation efforts and actions to address past injustices are part of an ongoing process. This building names evaluation process is a continuation and expansion of those reconciliation efforts.

Evaluation Process Timeline

The OSU building and place names evaluation process officially began in March 2016. Below is a timeline of the major events part of the process over the past few years:

- Prior to March 2016: Over a period of years, OSU community members, including students, faculty, alumni, and members of the Corvallis
17. In 2017, OSU student Lyndi-Rae Petty wrote her honors thesis "The Never-Ending Story: An Analysis of Student Activism at Oregon State University" (undergraduate honors thesis, Oregon State University, 2017) in which she examines the history of student activism at OSU relating to campus racism and race relations and the administrative response to student demands. Her thesis is available online in OSU's institutional repository ScholarsArchive@OSU, http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/honors_college_theses/mk61rn475.
 18. For example, in 2008, OSU offered honorary degrees to the Japanese American students forced to leave their studies during World War II, and in the mid-2010s the university raised funds to build a number of new campus cultural resource centers. More information on these stories and others can be found on the Untold Stories: Histories of Students of Color website, <http://scalar.library.oregonstate.edu/works/untold-stories-guide/index>.
 19. Ibid. Carrie Beatrice Halsell Ward is OSU's first known African American graduate; she graduated in 1926. In 2002, the university named a residence hall, Halsell Hall, in her honor. William "Bill" Tebeau is the university's first known male African American graduate; he was in the class of 1948. In 2014, OSU hosted the dedication ceremony for its new residence hall, Tebeau Hall.
 20. The renaming of buildings at OSU dates back to at least the early 20th century. Renaming is typically done when a building changes function—for example, Furman Hall changed from Agriculture Hall to Science Hall in 1909—as well as to honor someone—for example, in 1920, what is now Kearney Hall changed from Mechanical Hall to Apperson Hall.

community, raise concerns citing potential racist and exclusionary views held by the namesakes of four buildings on the OSU Corvallis campus—Arnold Dining Center, Avery Lodge, Benton Hall, and Gill Coliseum.²¹

- March 2016: Responding to concerns raised by OSU community members, the Architectural Naming Committee and the Office of Institutional Diversity call for the formation of an advisory committee to help the university determine how to appropriately acknowledge and reconcile the legacy of any Oregon State University buildings or places named after individuals who may have held and acted on racist and exclusionary beliefs.²²
 - April 2016—February 2017: The Building and Place Name Evaluation Advisory Committee meets and drafts the “Recommendations to the Architectural Naming Committee for a Renaming Request Evaluation Process.”
 - March 2017: Students demonstrate on OSU's Corvallis campus calling attention to the namesakes of Arnold Dining Center, Avery Lodge, Benton Hall, and Gill Coliseum. The Building and Place Name Evaluation Advisory Committee present their recommendations to the OSU community and hold a community forum to discuss a process to evaluate the names of Arnold Dining Center, Avery Lodge, Benton Hall, and Gill Coliseum.
 - April 2017: The Building and Place Name Evaluation Advisory Committee is renamed the Building and Place Name Evaluation Subcommittee. Its charge is to coordinate the evaluation of building and place name evaluation requests, including the evaluation of Arnold Dining Center, Avery Lodge, Benton Hall, and Gill Coliseum.
21. The primary reasons for evaluation of each of the building namesakes, as well as brief building histories, are as follows: Benjamin Lee Arnold, OSU's second president (1872-1892), came from a slave holding family and served in the Confederate Army. Arnold Dining Center was constructed in 1972 and was part of a group of buildings named by the OSU Building Naming Committee after the first three OSU presidents. Joseph C. Avery, Corvallis co-founder and early supporter of then Corvallis College, had ties to the *Occidental Messenger* newspaper, which advocated for slavery prior to Oregon voting whether or not it would become a pro- or anti-slavery state in the late 1850s. Avery Lodge was an OSU cooperative residence that opened in the fall of 1966. It was renovated in 2016 to host a number of administrative offices. Thomas Hart Benton, a United States senator from Missouri, was a well-known advocate of westward expansionist policies and his belief in the supremacy of the white race. Although in the case of Benton Hall the building was named after the residents of Benton County, which was named for the senator, the association could not be removed. Lastly, Amory T. “Slats” Gill, longtime OSU basketball coach during the 1920s-early 1960s, was accused of resisting the racial integration of the OSU men's basketball team. Gill Coliseum is the university's athletic facility for basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, and wrestling teams. It opened in 1949 and in 1966, it was named to honor Gill.
22. The Architectural Naming Committee is a longstanding OSU committee charged with maintaining and applying the university's policy for naming or renaming buildings, streets, landmarks, structures, and property that OSU owns or operates. The Office of Institutional Diversity had just been established a few months prior, in January of 2016. Its mission is to design, plan, lead and implement, in collaboration with university partners, institutional change actions, initiatives and communications to advance diversity, equity and inclusion throughout all facets of Oregon State University.

- May 2017: A larger group called the Building and Place Name Evaluation Workgroup is formed. It consists of the Building and Place Name Evaluation Subcommittee members, as well as members of the Architectural Naming Committee and community stakeholders.
- August 2017: The university administration announces the timeline for evaluation of Arnold Dining Center, Avery Lodge, Benton Hall, and Gill Coliseum. It also includes a fifth building, Benton Annex. Its connection is by name only to Benton Hall.²³ The Building and Place Name Evaluation Subcommittee launches an informational website.
- September—October 2017: A team of scholars write historical reports regarding each building namesake and the public is invited to participate in various community engagement sessions.
- November 2017: The Building and Place Name Evaluation Workgroup and Architectural Naming Committee evaluate community input and historical inquiry findings. They make recommendations to the OSU president on whether to rename the buildings; the president announces his decisions regarding the buildings under review.
- February—Fall Term 2018: Members of the Building and Place Name Evaluation Subcommittee work on the Building Name Selection Project. The project includes inviting the community to submit naming ideas, as well as a community engagement forum in April. The new names for the buildings to be renamed is announced in the summer of 2018. In the fall term of 2018, the planning for the permanent education regarding the building namesakes' histories begins.

Forming a Building and Place Name (BPN) Evaluation Advisory Committee

On February 29, 2016, OSU's Office of Institutional Diversity hosted a Campus Town Hall on equity, inclusion, civil and social justice. Just a few days later, the university's student newspaper published the article "It's all in the name" that exposed some of the controversies of various campus building namesakes with a number of faculty and staff quoted as seeing a need for further research and for possible renaming.²⁴ In response to the Town Hall Meeting as well as the article,

23. Benton Annex has been home to what was the Women's Center since the early 1970s. It was named Benton Annex at about the same time as a matter of pragmatism since the building is geographically close to Benton Hall. Previously, the building had a variety of names based on the building's function. As a result of this evaluation process, the building is now named the Hattie Redmond Women and Gender Center.

24. Marcus Trinidad, "It's All in the Name," *The Daily Barometer*, March 2, 2016.

about a week later, the interim Chief Diversity Officer emailed a follow-up with next steps to take action for positive change as part of the building namesakes issue. One of the next steps was for “the university [to] determine how to appropriately acknowledge and reconcile the legacy of any Oregon State University buildings or places named after individuals, who may have held and acted on racist and exclusionary beliefs.”²⁵ As a member of the Special Collections & Archives Research Center (SCARC), I reached out directly to the chair of the Architectural Naming Committee and Vice President for University Relations and Marketing to offer our department’s support, citing our historical knowledge and research expertise. In April 2016, both the SCARC director, Larry Landis, and I joined the BPN Evaluation Advisory Committee.

In May, the group met for its first meeting. In addition to the two of us, the group consisted of colleagues in the Office of Institutional Diversity (OID); the School of History, Philosophy, and Religion; and the Educational Opportunities Office; as well as student representatives.²⁶ Landis and Professor Joseph Orosco served as co-chairs, and Scott Vignos of OID was the university administration liaison and meeting facilitator. Our charge was to research the policies and historical context of naming and re-naming buildings, develop evaluation criteria for de-naming buildings, and recommend a role for the community as part a building name evaluation process. During our first meetings, Landis and I dedicated our time to sharing information about our work as archivists with the committee as well as learning about the work of the other committee members. Early on, we discussed the significance of the endeavor and the time commitment it would require from us, and potentially from our department as whole. Due to OSU’s quarter system with terms ending in mid-June and the next academic year not beginning until late September, the full group’s last meeting took place in June. Over the summer of 2016, the Advisory Committee tasked Landis and I with conducting preliminary research and pulling together relevant documents from our archival collections. When the group reconvened in August, we began the process of drafting the evaluation criteria. Our task was to report our findings to the Architectural Naming Committee.

Lessons Learned

- Request to be a part of the process, from start to finish
- Educate committee members about archives and the work of archivists
- Build trust among committee members

25. OSU Interim Chief Diversity Officer Angela E. Batista email message to the Oregon State University community, March 10, 2016.

26. Oregon State University, “OSU Building and Place Names: Committees and Groups,” <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names/about/committees-and-groups> (accessed January 28, 2019).

- Ensure your department and colleagues are clear on your role and theirs
- Set boundaries regarding your time and commitment to the process
- Determine how much capacity you have to participate in the process, and whether or not you are able to take on leadership roles

Researching the History of OSU's Building Naming Policies and the Development of Evaluation Criteria

Considering there are over 90 buildings on the OSU Corvallis campus named after individuals, when we began the research process to determine the history of building naming policy, we found documentation to be quite scarce. However, the content we did find, located in a variety of record groups, was important to share with the group members in order to have a better understanding of why and how building namesakes were and continue to be selected. Although buildings on the OSU campus have been renamed for various reasons, including change in function, there was no policy on how to deal with names community members found problematic for moral or ethical reasons. In the summer of 2016, we began preliminary research into the buildings with namesakes that the university administration designated as problematic. We delegated the bulk of the work to a trusted longtime graduate student archives worker with a great deal of university history knowledge and research experience. Once the committee began meeting again in late August, we met every two weeks until late November. Discussion topics included developing a better understanding of past and current building naming policies, drafting recommendations for a process to examine an existing name and vet a proposed name, and brainstorming community education and engagement options. The committee used Google Drive to share documents and kept meticulous notes. The development of the criteria took place over numerous meetings and iterations. Even within the group, there were mixed ideologies of whether or not buildings should be renamed. It was essential for the committee members to be respectful of each other's views and keep an open mind as part of all of our discussions. As our meetings progressed, we kept up-to-date with other universities' decisions and rationales for building name changes.

Ultimately, we determined that the main question we wanted answered by the building namesake evaluation process was: Should a building be renamed because the "context" of an individual's life and legacy is inconsistent with OSU's contemporary mission and values? Although we reviewed the criteria used by other institutions, we determined that for our process, "context" would be evaluated by a set of five key points. The five points are: 1) Actions taken by an individual vs. viewpoints held by an individual; 2) the individual's public vs. private persona; 3) the progression of an individual's viewpoints and life as a whole; 4) whether and how an individual's actions and viewpoints corresponded to OSU's mission alongside OSU's and society's values at the time; and lastly, 5) how the current OSU community engages with the "context" of an individual's life (see Appendix A). Regardless of whether or not a

building was to be renamed, the criteria also stated that the university would be committed to creating permanent education about a building and its namesake after it underwent an evaluation. The committee also developed a three-step process to review renaming requests.²⁷

Lessons Learned

- Review other institutions' evaluation criteria and determine if you will adapt it or create your own
- If applicable, create criteria broad enough to address future evaluations, not just building namesakes currently under review
- Include information regarding planned permanent education
- Plan to directly connect the criteria to requests for community input and community engagement activities

Responding to a Student Protest

As the committee neared the completion of the evaluation criteria and review process during the week of February 27, 2017, a group of students protested for four days by marching and chanting throughout the Corvallis campus. The group called to attention the many micro-aggressions students of color face on a daily basis, and specifically called out the campus buildings with namesakes that had ties to white supremacy. The following week, the OSU student newspaper *The Barometer* reported on the protest, and in the article, a university administrator cited the work of the Building and Place Name Evaluation Advisory Committee.²⁸ It was in this context that the university made the committee's work public. Against the recommendations of the committee, the university's administration determined that there needed to be a public forum to share the committee's progress. The committee quickly prepared for a public forum on March 13, less than two weeks after the protest. It was not well received.²⁹ The committee attempted to state from the beginning that the evening's presentation would solely be about the evaluation criteria and the planned process for review, but that was not what the attendees wanted to discuss. They wanted to talk about the building namesakes' histories, not the plans for an evaluation process. The forum took place in a room in the round with theatre style seating; students and

27. Oregon State University, "OSU Building and Place Names: Process," <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names/evaluation-process/process>. The idea behind this process was that anyone could make a request for any campus building name to be changed. However, the committee never fully realized this process; in the coming months, it became clear that there were four specific building namesakes that needed to be evaluated.

28. Valerie Maule, "Students March in Solidarity," *The Daily Barometer*, March 6, 2017.

29. James Day, "Boisterous OSU Discussion on Building Names," *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, March 13, 2017.

community members sat together based on affiliation. The students involved in the protests walked out, and the question and answer session became a shouting match. Overall, the evening as planned was not productive.

There were, however, a number of benefits to the forum. At the conclusion of the forum, several attendees remained in the room to ask more questions. Individuals, who were previously shouting across the room at one another, were in small groups respectfully discussing various issues with committee members. While the experience spotlighted the need for the committee to increase the pace of the process, it also highlighted the need for the committee to be mindful of the need to proceed with care when inviting the community to talk about these issues. Later on, this public forum experience greatly influenced how the committee chose to design the community engagement sessions that took place that next academic year. During the forum, it was clear that there was quite a bit of misinformation within the public discourse on these issues that the committee needed to address in order to have productive conversations. A very beneficial outcome of the forum was that we received a great deal of questions from which we were then able to create a FAQs page as part of the future website. Lastly, the experience of the forum stressed to the committee that it is not just about the building names; it is about the institutional racism that negatively affects students of color. The building names are symbolic of the institutional racism within the university and the committee needed to acknowledge this.

Lessons Learned

- Voice your opinion and push back on the administration as needed
- Be transparent with the public as to the who's who of the process
- There is an urgency to the process, but a need to "get it right" is more important
- The process needs to include facilitated, small group discussions
- Determine if there is a need for historical research to address misinformation
- Develop FAQs to address community concerns
- Always remember that it is about the students who feel excluded and harmed by the institution's racist past—and present

Developing a Communications Plan and Website

After the March 13 forum, the Advisory Committee was renamed the Building and Place Name (BPN) Evaluation Subcommittee and the administration charged it to coordinate the evaluation process of building and place name evaluation requests, including the evaluation of Arnold Dining Center, Avery Lodge, Benton Hall, and Gill

Coliseum. The Subcommittee's members expanded to include the Vice President for University Relations & Marketing and the Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer. The BPN Subcommittee determined that it needed to have a strategic plan in place to communicate effectively with the public. A subset of the Subcommittee, in addition to a few other university staff, formed the BPN communications committee. The Vice President for University Relations & Marketing, who is also the chair of the architectural naming committee, served as the communications committee chair. The goals of the committee were to identify community stakeholders, design a communications plan with both the public and the press, and to create a BPN website.³⁰

When identifying community stakeholders, we had to think broadly and include the OSU community such as students, faculty and staff, but also alumni, donors, the board of trustees, and the local Corvallis community. We also had to consider specific campus groups, such as the student protest organizers, with whom we determined we should meet privately prior to any public community engagement activities. In addition, we needed to ensure good communication with the press, which predominately consisted of the town's local newspaper and the university student newspaper.

We decided that first and foremost, the process needed the full support of the institution.³¹ For us, this meant that all email communications about the process intended for a large audience needed to be a message from the president, not the committee. Since we had a large number of individuals working on direct aspects of the process, we wanted to keep the message clear. As a group, we developed key talking points and designated specific committee members to serve as the public face for the group.³² We also created an email address for people to submit their thoughts.³³ Throughout the time the public contacted the communications

30. Oregon State University, "Building and Place Names," <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names>. The website includes committee members, a process timeline, the historical reports, and videos of the recorded community engagement sessions. Currently, the site contains information about the renaming process.
31. Our chair of the communication committee, the Vice President for University Relations & Marketing, was well versed in working with the press and the public; however, it was beneficial that he was open to listening to the committee's thoughts regarding how to discuss and promote this challenging and for some, controversial process.
32. The talking points included explaining that part of the purpose of the evaluation process was to reveal, not erase, history, as well as expressing our sincere desire for people to participate in the process by sharing their thoughts. In addition, we also stressed that regardless of whether or not a building name is changed, we intended to create permanent public education for the community to learn the namesakes' histories. The designated committee members to serve as the public face for the group included the communications committee chair, the BPN Subcommittee co-chairs, and the Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer.
33. It was inevitable that individuals sent messages and called the president of the university, as well as others on the committee, but they were redirected to the people designated by the committee to respond.

committee, we tried to be mindful of who was contacting us that simply wished to be heard in comparison to others who genuinely wanted to engage in a conversation. Thanking people for being willing to share their thoughts and engage in the process, as well as having clear talking points for face-to-face and phone conversations and set language for electronic messages was essential.

To create the OSU Building and Place Names website,³⁴ we wanted to be as transparent as possible with the process, as well as enable the opportunity for community members to have their questions answered and provide feedback. One of the best decisions the committee made was to create a feedback form on the website, linked to the email account we had created, that required individuals to provide their thoughts based on the evaluation criteria.³⁵ Though there were still those who chose to merely state their disagreement for the process even occurring, many did take the time to think about how the building namesakes' histories matched the criteria.

Lessons Learned

- Within the communications committee, determine the role of each member and design a protocol for communication
- Identify community stakeholders, and determine if and when it would be appropriate to engage in separate meetings with selected groups
- On the website, include as much relevant and up-to-date information as possible to ensure transparency of the process

34. The website took several months to build. We worked with the university's Digital Communications Manager to ensure the design and branding of the website was appropriate. Two members of the BPN Subcommittee, including myself, had backend access to the website and added content. Other committee members could access previews of the site before it was promoted as live. It was essential for the website to be ready in time for the announcement regarding the community engagement sessions. The BPN Subcommittee officially published the website in late August 2017. The main webpage featured messages from the president, as well as general information about the process, dates of community engagement sessions, a brief overview of the renaming criteria, and a list of the building names under consideration. The website includes information about the background and timeline of the committee's work, the committee's composition, and a list of resources including articles pertaining to news nationwide of other universities undergoing similar processes. The evaluation process is clearly defined; basic information about the buildings under review is included; and there is an entire page with about two dozen FAQs.

35. The main elements of the criteria were listed, along with a link to the webpage that described the criteria in more detail. For each part of the criteria, individuals were asked to share relevant information and reasoning for their thoughts. Individuals were asked to name themselves and include their affiliations (to the university or community). We wanted individuals to claim ownership of their comments, and not provide a form in which they would easily remain anonymous. Though a handful chose to not submit their names and contact information, most did. There was a drop-down menu option to select the building under consideration to which they could provide feedback; the form could be submitted multiple times. In some cases, individuals shared their thoughts on all four buildings under consideration where others only submitted content based on the buildings of the most interest to them.

- When engaging with the press, ensure that only designated committee members speak on behalf of the group and that those individuals have pre-determined talking points

Providing a Team of Scholars with Historical Research Assistance

As archivists, we were involved in all aspects of the building and place names evaluation process, and one of the roles in which we were the most instrumental was assisting a team of scholars with their research to write their historical reports for each building namesake. Early on in the process, Landis and I conducted preliminary research and began to gather relevant archival information. During the first few months of 2017, we worked on the creation of a LibGuide, which we published prior to the March public forum.³⁶ The LibGuide features information on how to access SCARC materials, OSU building policies and procedures, and collection citations, along with some digitized content. There was no analysis or interpretation of the content provided, however, we did include information to refute some of the misinformation that was publically disseminated. In some cases, we added collection information to records that we thought would be of use, even if we did not know for sure if there would be relevant content. Even before the team of scholars was established, we knew that at some point there would be historians who would be taking a deeper dive into the materials. The process of creating the LibGuide made us realize the gaps in our collections. It enabled us to prepare for questions regarding why we did not have answers for certain historical inquiries. We also digitized selected materials to include on the guide, but did not engage in a mass digitization process to get the content online. We decided that if any students or community members wanted to conduct research, it would be best for them to physically come to the archives so we could meet with them in person. We emailed our entire department, and spoke with our reference desk staff, to prep them on the materials and let them know that we could be called upon to assist researchers. Notably, the LibGuide was available to the public six months prior to the launch of the BPN website, so for a long period of time, this was the site people used to learn about the buildings under evaluation. Even with the launch of the BPN website, we retained the LibGuide. The BPN website included minimal historical information and linked out to the LibGuide.

In August of 2017, the university president determined that by the end of November he wanted the evaluation process to be complete and to make his announcement on whether or not building names would be retained. Based on that timeline, all in-depth historical research and written reports needed to be completed and accessible to the public by late September or early October. One of the things we had to make clear to the administration was that as archivists we could assist in the

36. Oregon State University, "OSU Buildings History—SCARC Archival Resources," <https://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/osu-buildings-history> (accessed January 28, 2019).

research process, but that we would not be the ones to write the reports. We knew that it would be valuable to have scholars outside of SCARC do the deep research and report writing. While we as archivists were capable of conducting the in-depth research, we did not have the capacity to do the research and writing ourselves, and it would have been a conflict of interest to do so while also serving as members of the BPN Subcommittee. Initially, the BPN Subcommittee sought out non-OSU faculty to serve as a more independent voice without a university affiliation; however, the timeline was too short for them. The administration and committee determined that the best option would be to contact members of the OSU faculty.

The administration selected a team of five scholars, including a team leader, based on their expertise. The team consisted of four historians and one sociologist. All except one scholar were OSU faculty. Each scholar was responsible for researching and writing one report, however, two scholars worked on one of the reports that we deemed would likely require more research than the other three. The team leader created report guidelines, managed the coordination of deadlines, and acted as an editor to all of the reports. A benefit to having the scholars be predominately OSU faculty was that they had experience using our archival materials and we had professional working relationships with them. To begin the process, we met with the team leader to discuss her expectations and intended process. We determined that we would use Google drive to share digitized content, drafts of reports, and any other relevant materials. While the research process was relatively standard, my level of assistance was not. Above all my other work duties, I prioritized the scholars' requests for materials, digitized content, and made myself available for in-person meetings. Two SCARC student employees also assisted with these tasks. In some cases, we offered the scholars information provided by community members via the online feedback form. Examples include suggested potential oral history interviewees as well as research leads and sources on which to follow up. As part of the scholars' writing process, Landis and I read and gave feedback on drafts of reports. Because they shared their drafts with us, we were able to offer more sources for them to review, and in some instances gave notes on how to write about certain pieces of information. Since the reports were intended for a broad audience, we offered suggestions as to the language used and how we thought the public might react to the content. Ultimately, we trusted the research team to be the great scholars that they are.

As a member of both the communications committee and community engagement team, I connected the work of the historical research team to both of those groups. The communications committee determined that to protect the scholars from the press, we would not release their identities until we published the reports. The community engagement team desired to make the reports for each building available at least a few days prior to the community engagement session, so I coordinated those dates with the scholars.

Lessons Learned

- Begin the research process early, anticipate needs and do not wait to be asked
- Plan for the appropriate amount of staff and student assistance
- Build in extra time to assist scholars and develop research plans
- Review and discuss content researched with the scholars, if desired
- Provide constructive criticism to report drafts, if requested
- Share the information uncovered with other committee members as needed

Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan

A sub-group of the BPN Subcommittee served as the community engagement team. It consisted of myself and two members of the Office of Institutional Diversity. The three of us brought complementary skill sets to the team, including facilitation skills and campus community engagement experience. As an archivist, I brought my historical research knowledge and instruction experience. In addition, I acted as a liaison to the historical research team. I was able to both inform the community engagement team of the historical research being conducted, and I was able to keep the scholars abreast of the plans for the community engagement sessions. In designing the community engagement sessions, we were greatly influenced by the experience of the March 2017 public forum. We determined that we wanted community members to think deeply and critically about the purpose of building and place names, the legacies of individuals after whom university buildings and places are named, and how evaluating these names advance Oregon State University's values and mission to create an educational environment that respects and affirms the inherent dignity of all individuals and communities. We treated the development of the sessions as we would a class by establishing clear goals, learning objectives, and conversation ground rules called the "Intentions of RESPECT" that we shared with the community (see Appendix B).

We determined that there should be two types of community engagement sessions: the first would discuss why the university had undertaken the process, and the second would involve building-specific discussions.³⁷ Since the university's term

37. While the BPN Subcommittee was pleased with the overall outcome of the community engagement sessions, there were some challenges. The university hosted the community engagement forums in two rooms, the Memorial Union Horizon Room and the Memorial Union Ballroom. Both of these rooms were in a central, well-known campus location, and both were large enough to accommodate the number of forum participants. The rooms were set up with round-tables, seating eight-ten people each, so that facilitated dialogue could occur. The sessions took place in the evenings so more people could attend, but we had to be realistic with our start times and each session began about 5-10 minutes late. For the most part, participants were willing to sit where assigned. However, in some

begins in late September and the decision announcement deadline was late November, we had a very tight timeline to host the community engagement sessions. All six two-hour sessions took place between late September and mid/late October, essentially over a three-week period.³⁸ All of the sessions followed a similar format: information sharing during the first half and facilitated small group discussions during the second hour. In the weeks prior to the first session, we recruited and trained a group of over 40 OSU faculty and staff, along with some student volunteers, to serve as conversation facilitators and note takers. We estimated the need for 10-24 volunteers per session in order to have one notetaker and one facilitator per table for about eight participants each.

The format for the first set of sessions, the overview of why the university is engaging in the evaluation process, took place in the early weeks of the term. The session began with the three members of the community engagement team explaining the session's purpose, giving a brief history of the evaluation process, and sharing some national context of the need for universities to have building name evaluations. The team also reviewed the reasons why it is important for the university community to reflect on its past, and finally, we shared the overall evaluation process timeline, including what happens after the evaluation process is complete. We made sure to stress that, as part of the future of the evaluation process, there would be a permanent education component for each of the buildings under consideration, whether they were renamed or not. For the second half of the session, we transitioned to the engagement component. We aired a portion of a speech given by New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu in May 2017 in which Mayor Landrieu articulates why the city of New Orleans removed its Confederate monuments.³⁹ The speech explores the importance of examining and learning from history in order to pursue reconciliation. We selected the video to provide a springboard for dialogue about these national issues. Prior to the beginning of the facilitated conversations, we reviewed the "Intentions of RESPECT" and encouraged attendees to introduce

cases, certain individuals, typically non-OSU community members or older adults did not want to be separated from their groupmates. We made every attempt to explain our reasoning, but in some cases, we did have to make accommodations. We only had one incident in which an individual spoke out during a presentation, and we politely but firmly asked that person to refrain from sharing opinions until the designated discussion time. When we informally spoke with some of the session facilitators, a few noted that certain individuals tended to dominate the conversations, especially those who came with prepared comments expecting to be able to share their thoughts with the entire group of attendees. The sessions were fairly well attended and there were some individuals who attended the majority of the sessions. Ideally, we would have only hosted one session per week, but our timeline did not permit us doing so.

38. The "Overview" Community Engagement Sessions, Part 1 took place September 28 and October 2 (the same session was repeated), and the Building Name Evaluation Sessions took place for Arnold Dining Center on October 11, Avery Lodge Discussion on October 16, Benton Hall and Annex on October 17, and Gill Coliseum on October 19, 2017.
39. Derek Cosson, "Transcript of New Orleans Mayor Landrieu's Address on Confederate Monuments," *The Pulse*, May 19, 2017.

themselves to their tablemates. Each table had a set of questions to discuss topics such as how communities remember history, what reconciliation with the past means, and what story they want OSU to tell (see Appendix C).

The four sessions that were building specific were all the same format, with the same speakers.⁴⁰ We shortened, but essentially repeated, the introductory information from the “overview” sessions. However, for these sessions, one of the BPN Subcommittee co-chairs, Professor Joseph Orosco, spoke about the significance of building names. In addition, he gave an in-depth explanation of the evaluation criteria. The other BPN co-chair, Larry Landis, gave a presentation on the historical research findings based on the reports produced by the scholars. Landis and I developed these presentations, and sought input from BPN Subcommittee members, as well as the scholars themselves. The presentations included a short explanation of the historical review team, its purpose and process, and the building's history. The bulk of each presentation was about the namesake's history along with the controversies surrounding their life and legacy.⁴¹ We aimed to have at least 45 minutes of discussion time. As with the “overview” sessions, we reviewed the “Intentions of RESPECT” and the facilitators and notetakers began their tasks. All of the tables had copies of the criteria, the historical reports, and presentation slides. The facilitated conversations were based on the evaluation criteria. We specifically wanted to tie in feedback gathering into the sessions that would be consistent with the feedback we were already gathering via the website. At each table, attendees thought about the over-arching question, “Should a building be renamed because the ‘context’ of an individual's life and legacy is inconsistent with OSU's contemporary mission and values?” and discussed all five components of the evaluation criteria. In observing the discussions, many attendees used the reports and presentation slides provided, and some used the report copies they had printed and read.

40. Some elements from the first sessions that worked well we then repeated in the building-specific sessions. First, when attendees entered, we gave them nametags with assigned table numbers. We did this so that people who came together in groups would be seated separately with the idea being that there would then be a higher likelihood of differing perspectives at each table. On each table, we included notecards for participants to provide written responses, as well as a sheet for attendees to note their affiliations (OSU faculty/staff, student, or non-OSU community member). Beyond that, we did not ask for any other attendee information. We recorded the sessions to make them available online, but did not record the actual discussions. We hired sign-language interpreters for all of the sessions. Although most individuals stayed until the end, we allowed the tables to disperse as they concluded their discussions. At the end of session, we briefly recapped upcoming sessions, encouraged attendees to visit the website for more information, and thanked all participants for their time. We purposely did not allow time for participants to speak openly to the entire group.
41. Although each historical report was made available a few days prior to its corresponding community engagement session, we knew there would be attendees who had not read the reports. We needed to include enough information so those individuals could fully engage in their table discussions, but not so much that there would not be enough time for the discussions. For practical purposes, but also because of anticipated scrutiny, we created the presentation content directly, usually word-for-word, from the historical reports themselves.

Lessons Learned

- Develop sessions that feature both information sharing and ample time for engaged dialogue
- Have a contingency plan by involving the public safety office
- Know your audience (students, faculty/staff, alumni, non-OSU); assign tables randomly
- Be transparent about the process and repeat key pieces of information
- Recruit and train facilitators and notetakers
- Keep the times and locations, as well as the format and speakers, of the sessions consistent
- Connect the evaluation criteria to the facilitated conversation prompts
- Outline participant expectations, review “Intentions of RESPECT”
- If administrators choose to be present but not participate, or if they purposely decide to not attend, acknowledge this to the session participants
- Do NOT have an opportunity for the entire room of participants to comment all together

Implementing a Decision Making Process and Announcing the Outcomes

In May of 2017, the BPN Subcommittee identified various stakeholders to serve on the Building and Place Name Evaluation Workgroup. In addition to the community stakeholders, the Workgroup consisted of members of the Architectural Naming Committee, as well as the Building and Place Name Evaluation Subcommittee. After the completion of the community engagement sessions and an assessment report, the Workgroup met in late October and early November for two four hour-long discussions.⁴² The Workgroup used the historical reports and the assessment report to frame the discussions. Similar to the community engagement session, the group engaged in small group conversations. However, the Workgroup

42. Members of the Office of Institutional Diversity coordinated the assessment gathering and summary report, which they completed in late October. The BPN Subcommittee collected qualitative data via the website feedback form as well as the notes from the community engagement sessions. The “Summary and Assessment of Community Engagement Data” report included the methodology used, sample demographics, and a summary of answers based on themes the analysis team identified, as well as a number of direct quotes from the community feedback. The report concluded with an overall summary and observations.

then held a full room, open discussion to determine the recommendations it would make to the president regarding each building. All Workgroup members were asked to not share information from the discussion with anyone outside of the group. In mid-November, the Workgroup met with the president for a two-hour conversation in which group members shared their thoughts; the president listened and asked follow-up questions. Soon afterwards, the Architectural Naming Committee met with the president, and by late November, the president came to his decision.⁴³

On November 29, 2017, OSU's President Edward Ray announced that of the five Corvallis campus buildings that underwent an evaluation, three would be renamed. The university would retain the names of Gill Coliseum and Arnold Dining Center and determine a new name for Avery Lodge, as well as for Benton Hall and Benton Annex. In addition, all five would have permanent education materials created about them and made available to the public.

Lessons Learned

- Be clear about the decision-making process and timeline with the public
- Place the ultimate decision responsibility and announcement on the administration
- Document the process and make a version of that documentation available to the public
- Be prepared for pushback from the community on the decision by developing talking points to respond to comments and inquiries

Engaging the Community in a Renaming Process

The renaming process was very similar to the evaluation process. It began in February 2018 with the same members of the BPN Subcommittee. Similar to the evaluation process, the BPN Subcommittee created an online form to gather naming suggestions and organized a community engagement session in early April. The BPN Subcommittee again invited community stakeholders to form a small group for each of the three buildings to act in a similar fashion as the BPN Workgroup. A BPN Subcommittee member served as the lead contact for each small group.

43. Throughout the process, we explained to the OSU community and the public that President Ray, who became OSU's 14th president in 2003, would make the final decision. At our institution, the students called upon the university's administration to address the building names controversy; it was therefore an important component of the process for the university president to take on the decision-making and announcement responsibilities. In addition, in the case of deciding building and places names, the OSU Board of Trustees delegated this authority to the university's president, and the Board has the authority to amend the delegation.

A decision that made the renaming process much easier to manage was that from the beginning of the process, the president announced that he wanted the proposed names to address specific criteria.⁴⁴ These criteria enabled the committee to determine which naming suggestions were legitimate and which were not. As archivists, we stressed the need to review the submissions submitted via the website feedback form. Each week we received a spreadsheet with the most recent suggestions. My student worker organized the names based on various themes such as OSU-related, generic names, names not OSU-related but related to the local region, names of famous individuals, and naming suggestions that were jokes or non-relevant. These themes made it easier for us to review the content for any potential research leads as well as to be able to notify committee members of information submitted that was historically inaccurate. We also wanted to be at the ready for requests when we would inevitably be asked to provide historical information and sources for some of the naming suggestions. Fortunately, we were able to determine that we had a number of resources within our collections for the name suggestions that matched the criteria.

The community engagement session took place on the evening of April 2, 2018. It was recorded and live-streamed. Participants sat at tables with facilitators who were also members of each building stakeholder small group. During the 90-minute session, the first 20 minutes were dedicated to a brief presentation summarizing the evaluation process from the previous term and the renaming process structure, intended outcomes, and next steps. The remaining 70 minutes focused on small group discussions as well as an opportunity for participants to share their final naming suggestions (see Appendix D). Afterwards, the BPN Subcommittee compiled the notes, posted the session recording online, and held a debriefing meeting.

As part of the decision making process, the three community stakeholder groups met shortly after the community engagement session with the goal of reviewing the suggested names and recommending their top choices, along with the rationale for each choice, to the Architectural Naming Committee. The BPN Subcommittee suggested providing three names to recommend. By mid-April, each of the three subcommittees submitted three names to the Architectural Naming Committee for their group's building. Some of the naming options were generic terms and required no follow-up research. For the names that were associated with individuals, the archives provided relevant, but brief, historical research. In late July 2018, President

44. There was naming criteria for each of the three buildings: A name for Benton Hall that appropriately recognizes the many contributions of Benton County community residents in the 1860s, 70s and 80s, particularly the fundraising in the 1885-87 period to build what is now Benton Hall which supported the founding of OSU; a name for Benton Annex that appropriately recognizes the building as home to the Women's Center, a valued student resource center; and a name for Avery Lodge that portrays a sense of the geography or place that OSU's Corvallis campus has in the Willamette Valley, the university's 150-year history as Oregon's land grant and statewide university, or the building's purpose. The Subcommittee also determined that the buildings would not be named after any living individuals.

Ray announced his decision: Avery Lodge is now Champinefu Lodge, Benton Hall is now Community Hall, and Benton Annex is now the Hattie Redmond Women and Gender Center.⁴⁵

Lessons Learned

- If done in relatively quick succession, for the renaming process, be consistent with the community feedback gathering and engagement strategies used as part of the evaluation process
- Define criteria for each building's new name
- Invite selected community stakeholders to participate in the recommendation-making process
- If relevant, reach out to descendants or community members of potential namesakes

Future Plans for the Creation of Permanent Education

Throughout the evaluation and renaming processes, the BPN Subcommittee reiterated that the university planned to create and place permanent educational information for each building. The intent is that current and future community members will be able to learn about the building's name and history of its namesake, why the name was evaluated, and why a decision was made to retain the name. We currently have plans to meet with the members of the BPN Subcommittee to begin discussions about what other universities and colleges have done. As archivists who create physical and online exhibits, and have a great depth of experience describing historical materials and providing historical context for a variety of audiences, we know that our expertise will be invaluable. At this point, we have informed the public that the permanent education could be in the form of a plaque, exhibit, website or other media—and that the form may vary depending on the building.

Concluding Thoughts

When I first contacted my university's administration to be a part of the building and place names evaluation process, I did not quite imagine my role in the process.

45. It took several months for the university to announce its decision due to the need to work in collaboration with members of Siletz tribal leaders, Native American linguists, and historians to ensure that naming of Champinefu Lodge was consistent with the wishes of Indigenous community members. In the dialect of the tribe that inhabited the OSU and Corvallis area region the word "Champinefu" is translated to mean "at the place of the blue elderberry." Blue elderberries are specific to the Willamette Valley and the areas around the OSU campus are where tribal members historically would travel to harvest blue elderberries. The name Community Hall reflects the contributions of local residents in establishing the university. Hattie Redmond was a leader in the struggle for women's suffrage in Oregon in the early 20th century. Her work is credited with laying the groundwork for the civil rights movement in Oregon in the mid-20th century.

However, I did know it was essential for me, as an archivist, to be pro-active and get involved in the evaluation process from its inception. It has been an incredible opportunity to offer my research abilities, as well as to use my primary source literacy instruction knowledge to help design the community engagement sessions. My hope is for other archivists to be able to adapt what I learned to plan for similar processes within their own communities (see Appendix E).⁴⁶ While ultimately, it is not just about the building namesakes, and it is essential to place these naming controversies within the context of systemic racism, addressing problematic building namesakes is an important part of the journey toward social justice. As an archivist, I intend to continue in my role, dedicating my time and knowledge, on that journey.

46. See Appendix E for a compiled list of lessons learned.

Appendices

Appendix A

The Building and Place Name (BPN) Evaluation Advisory Committee developed the evaluation criteria and made it available to the public in the spring of 2017. The text included below is from the “Renaming Criteria” section of the OSU Building and Place Names website, <https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names>.

The Renaming Criteria

A full evaluation of renaming requests will be based on the question: Should a building be renamed because the “context” of an individual’s life and legacy is inconsistent with OSU’s contemporary mission and values?

“Context” is evaluated by:

- *Actions taken by an individual vs. viewpoints held by an individual*—typically, actions taken to advance racist or exclusionary viewpoints are considered more severe than holding racist or exclusionary viewpoints alone.
- *The individual’s public vs. private persona*—typically, actions taken or viewpoints held as part of an individual’s public persona are considered more severe than actions taken or viewpoints held as part of an individual’s private persona.
- *The progression of an individual’s viewpoints and life as a whole*—typically, where an individual attempted to redress or rectify racist or exclusionary viewpoints or actions later in life, this is considered less severe than consistently acting on or holding racist or exclusionary viewpoints throughout life.
- *Whether and how an individual’s actions and viewpoints corresponded to OSU’s mission and OSU’s and society’s values at the time*—OSU’s mission and OSU’s and society’s values have changed over time. In some circumstances, an individual’s racist or exclusionary views may have aligned or been supported by the institutional and societal values of the time. How these value systems interacted should be considered in evaluating the “context” of an individual’s life.
- *How the current OSU community engages with the “context” of an individual’s life*—the “context” of an individual’s life will resonate differently with different community members. As an institution, we must be able to engage in difficult but constructive conversations around difference in opinion regarding the “context” of an individual.

Overall, consideration of “context” as part of a renaming request must acknowledge and engage with the complexity of an individual’s life and the time in which the individual lived. People are complex. Viewpoints and actions are complex. Society

and institutions are complex. Reducing an individual's life to "bad" or "good" denies us the inquiry necessary to acquire understanding and engage in informed restoration.

By examining the "context" of an individual's life as a university community, we can examine the viewpoints and actions of an individual, and the university's values, practices and policies that may have enabled or supported racist or exclusionary views.

If a renaming request satisfies the evaluation criteria:

- If a decision is made to change the name of a building, OSU will engage in a process to select a new name for the building. Additionally, the university will create permanent educational information so that current and future community members will be able to learn about the building's previous name and namesake, how and why the decision to change the building's name was made, and why the new name was chosen. This permanent education could be in the form of a plaque, exhibit, website or other mediums.

If a renaming request does not satisfy the evaluation criteria:

- If a decision is made to not change the name of a building, the name of the building will remain, but the university will create and place permanent educational information so that current and future community members will be able to learn about the building's name and history of its namesake, why the name was evaluated, and why a decision was made to leave the name. This permanent education could be in the form of a plaque, exhibit, website or other mediums.

Appendix B

Community Engagement Goals

The text included below is from the "Community Engagement" section of the OSU Building and Place Names website, <https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names>.

- Provide information, enable dialogue and build community consensus on the importance of acting on OSU's mission and values through evaluating building names and places;
- Review the history of these buildings and their namesakes in the context of OSU's history;
- Transparently engage the community in this process by reviewing and discussing findings;
- Enable OSU community members and stakeholders to openly, constructively and safely share their views on this subject;
- Reconcile the building namesakes' views or actions with the contemporary values of the OSU community and the university's mission;
- Gather community and stakeholder input on whether to change the names of the buildings; and
- Share and explain the history of these buildings and places and their namesakes, regardless of any decision.

Intentions of RESPECT

- Recognize your communication style
- Examine your own perceptions and assumptions
- Speak from your own experiences
- Participate honestly / Pass openly
- Engage in the learning process
- Consider confidentiality, seek curiosity
- Take responsibility for your actions

Appendix C

BPN Community Engagement Workshop Questions

For September 28 & October 2, 2017

Discussion questions based on New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu speech on May 19, 2017.

1. What do you think the difference is between remembering history and revering history?
2. What does “reconciliation” mean to you? What does reconciling the past with the present mean to you?
3. Consider this quote from President Bush at the 2016 opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C.: “A great nation does not hide its history. It faces its flaws and corrects them.” What are your reactions to this statement? How do you think this statement connects to evaluating the names of buildings at OSU?
4. What does or could it feel like to walk into a place named after a person who stands for something at odds with your values, or the values of the university?
5. At this point in history, what story do you want OSU to tell through the names of its buildings? Through its language, symbols and actions?

Appendix D

Remaining Process—Community Engagement Session Agenda

Overview Presentation (20 minutes)

- The 2017 fall term evaluation process
- The renaming process structure, intended outcomes, and next steps

Visioning (20 minutes)

- Purpose: Participants talk about what it means/looks like to move forward.
- Question Posed: In your experience, what does moving forward look like to you? What about in the context of this building and place name process?
- Table Task: As a table, please come up with a collaborative definition of what it means to move forward.

Elaborate (20 minutes)

- Purpose: Participants create names and give meaning to them based on the previous visioning conversation.
- Question Posed: “What are some suggestions you have for the renaming of these buildings?”
- Table Task: Relate your suggestion(s) to the collaborative definition of our community moving forward.

Clarify (20 minutes)

- Purpose: Participants ask each other clarifying questions in order to come up with a final list of names to write on the notepad.
- Question Posed: “Which building suggestions on the list meet the collaborative definition of moving forward?”
- Table Task: Identify which building suggestions need more clarification.

Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

1. Have each table group put their final list of names on the walls around the room.
2. Participants walk around the room looking at the list from each table group.
3. Afterwards, participants are free to leave the space. They can also leave additional comments via blank notecards at the table.

Appendix E

Compiled List of Lessons Learned

Forming a Building and Place Name Evaluation Advisory Committee

- Request to be a part of the process, from start to finish
- Educate committee members about archives and the work of archivists
- Build trust among committee members
- Ensure your department and colleagues are clear on your role and theirs
- Set boundaries regarding your time and commitment to the process
- Determine how much capacity you have to participate in the process, and whether or not you are able to take on leadership roles

Researching the History of Building Naming Policies and the Development of Evaluation Criteria

- Review other institutions' evaluation criteria and determine if you will adapt it or create your own
- If applicable, create criteria broad enough to address future evaluations not just building namesakes currently under review
- Include information regarding planned permanent education
- Plan to directly connect the criteria to requests for community input and community engagement activities

Responding to a Student Protest

- Voice your opinion and push back on the administration as needed
- Be transparent with the public as to the who's who of the process
- There is an urgency to the process, but a need to "get it right" is more important
- The process needs to include facilitated, small group discussions
- Determine if there is a need for historical research to address misinformation
- Develop FAQs to address community concerns

- Always remember that it is about the students who feel excluded and harmed by the institution's racist past—and present

Developing a Communications Plan and Website

- Within the communications committee, determine the role of each member and design a protocol for communication
- Identify the community stakeholders, and determine if and when it would be appropriate to engage in separate meetings with selected groups
- On the website, include as much relevant and up-to-date information as possible to ensure transparency of the process
- When engaging with the press, ensure that only designated committee members speak on behalf of the group and that those individuals have pre-determined talking points

Providing a Team of Scholars Historical Research Assistance

- Begin the research process early, anticipate needs and do not wait to be asked
- Plan for the appropriate amount of staff and student assistance
- Build in extra time to assist scholars and develop research plans
- Review and discuss content researched with the scholars, if desired
- Provide constructive criticism to report drafts, if requested
- Share the information uncovered with other committee members as needed

Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan

- Develop sessions that feature both information sharing and ample time for engaged dialogue
- Have a contingency plan by involving the public safety office
- Know your audience (students, faculty/staff, alumni, non-OSU); assign tables randomly
- Be transparent about the process and repeat key pieces of information
- Recruit and train facilitators and notetakers

- Keep the times and locations, as well as the format and speakers, of the sessions consistent
- Connect the evaluation criteria to the facilitated conversation prompts
- Outline participant expectations, review “Intentions of RESPECT”
- If administrators choose to be present but not participate, or if they purposely decide to not attend, acknowledge this to the session participants
- Do NOT have an opportunity for the entire room of participants to comment all together

Implementing a Decision-Making Process and Announcing the Outcomes

- Be clear about the decision-making process and timeline with the public
- Place the ultimate decision responsibility and announcement on the administration
- Document the process and make a version of that documentation available to the public
- Be prepared for pushback from the community on the decision by developing talking points to respond to comments and inquiries

Engaging the Community in a Renaming Process

- If done in relatively quick succession, for the renaming process, be consistent with the community feedback gathering and engagement strategies used as part of the evaluation process
- Define criteria for each building's new name
- Invite selected community stakeholders to participate in the recommendation-making process
- If relevant, reach out to descendants or community members of potential namesakes

Bibliography

- Alderman, Derek H. "School Names as Cultural Arenas: The Naming of U.S. Public Schools after Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Urban Geography* 23, no. 7 (2002): 601-626.
- Bonds, Anne and Joshua Inwood. "Beyond White Privilege: Geographies of White Settler Supremacy and Settler Colonialism." *Progress in Human Geography* 40, no. 6 (2016): 715-733.
- Brasher, Jordan P., Derek H. Alderman, and Joshua F. J. Inwood. "Applying Critical Race and Memory Studies to University Place Naming Controversies: Toward a Responsible Landscape Policy." *Papers in Applied Geography* 3, vol 3-4 (2017): 292-307.
- Brophy, Alfred L. "The Law and Morality of Building Renaming." *South Law Texas Review* 52, no. 37 (2010): 37-67.
- Cosson, Derek. "Transcript of New Orleans Mayor Landrieu's Address on Confederate Monuments." *The Pulse*, May 19, 2017. <http://pulsegulfcoast.com/2017/05/transcript-of-new-orleans-mayor-landrieus-address-on-confederate-monuments> (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Day, James. "Boisterous OSU Discussion on Building Names." *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, March 13, 2017. https://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/boisterous-osu-discussion-on-building-names/article_7cfeodd6-fid7-5ad8-af20-6f70b892293a.html (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Duff, Wendy, Andrew Finn, Karen Emily Suurtamm, and David A Wallace. "Social Justice Impact of Archives: A Preliminary Investigation." *Archival Science* 13 (2013): 317-348.
- Kelleher, Wendy C. "A Contemporary Public Naming Controversy in Phoenix, Arizona: The Changing Social Perspectives on Landmark Nomenclature." *Names* 52, no. 2 (2004): 21-47.
- Maule, Valerie. "Students March in Solidarity." *The Daily Barometer*, March 6, 2017. http://www.orangemedianetwork.com/daily_barometer/news/students-march-in-solidarity/article_882822fe-0216-11e7-8eab-2foe9a35f726.html (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Nokes, Gregory. *Breaking Chains: Slavery on Trial in the Oregon Territory*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2013.
- Ojalvo Epstein, Holly. "Beyond Yale: These other university buildings have ties to slavery and white supremacy." *USA TODAY*, February 13, 2017, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/college/2017/02/13/beyond-yale-these-other-university-buildings-have-ties-to-slavery-and-white-supremacy/37427471/> (accessed January 28, 2019).

- Oregon State University. "Building and Place Names." <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names> (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Oregon State University. "Chronological History." <http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/chronologicalhistory> (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Oregon State University. "OSU Buildings History—SCARC Archival Resources." <https://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/osu-buildings-history> (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Oregon State University. "Special Collections & Archives Research Center." Accessed October 2018. <http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/about-us.html> (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Oregon State University. "Untold Stories Guide: Histories of Students of Color." <http://scalar.library.oregonstate.edu/works/untold-stories-guide/index> (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Petty, Lyndi-Rae. "The Never-Ending Story: An Analysis of Student Activism at Oregon State University." Undergraduate honors thesis, Oregon State University, Corvallis, 2017. ScholarsArchive@OSU. http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/honors_college_theses/mk6irn475 (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Robbins, Williams G. *The People's School: A History of Oregon State University*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017.
- "The Oregon Encyclopedia." <https://oregonencyclopedia.org> (accessed January 28, 2019).
- Trinidad, Marcus. "It's All in the Name." *The Daily Barometer*, March 2, 2016.
- Vail, Mark T. "Reconstructing the Lost Cause in the Memphis City Parks Renaming Controversy." *Western Journal of Communication* 76, no. 4 (2012): 417-437.
- Zanish-Belcher, Tanya. "Grappling with Our Difficult Past: How Can Archivists Help?" *Off the Record*, May 7, 2018, <https://offtherecord.archivists.org/2018/05/07/grappling-with-our-difficult-past-how-can-archivists-help> (accessed January 28, 2019).