

## Demands for Justice: Yale Meets its Match

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Long heralded as one of the world's greatest research institutions, the statistics of Yale College are absolutely astounding: 15 million books are found in the university library, 66 percent of seniors participate in international studies, and over 40 student publications are distributed almost daily throughout the campus. However, behind the impressive numbers and beaming smiles found in catalogues, a wave of dissent is brewing at the elite university. According to many recent student protests, Yale has failed to be the promised land of opportunity they had believed in, as the university is still tainted by the traces of institutional racism.

The signs of racial prejudice at Yale vary from the explicit to the implicit. This past October, a member of the school's Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity allegedly turned away a group of women of color from a party due to the "white girls only" admission basis. The fraternity was not disciplined. Moreover, one of the eight residential campuses is named "Calhoun College" in recognition of alum-

ni John C. Calhoun, perhaps the most notorious defender of African bondage and slavery in all of American history.

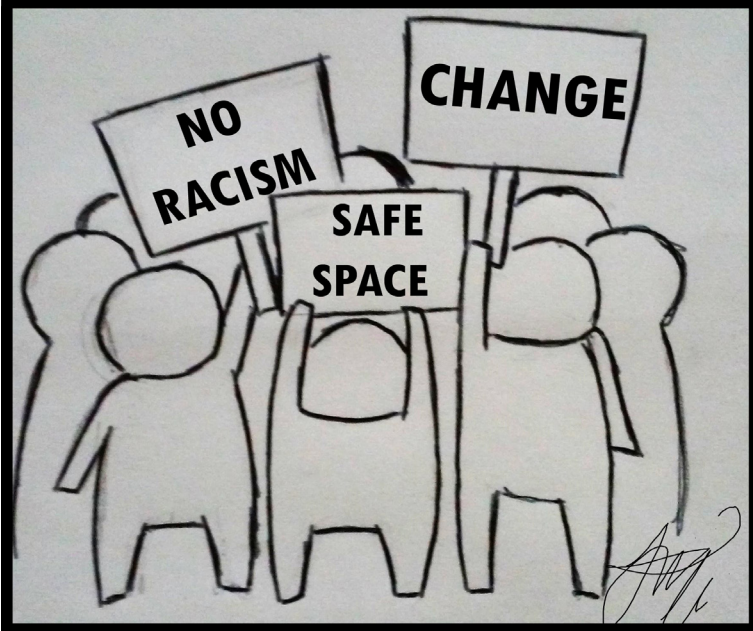
The incident that captured the most recent attention was when two faculty members wrote a well-intentioned, but poorly-received letter that asked for students to simply "look away" from

campuses, such as Claremont McKenna and the University of Missouri.

Protests are a proud expression of freedom of speech, and the students taking part in these particular fights against racism should be commended for their courage. Nevertheless, some methods these students used to voice their opinion are excessive, such as demanding resignation from faculty members on the basis of opposing viewpoints. But in the end, discounting the student's activism because they are too "rowdy" diminishes the worth of their message, which must be heard to preserve the reputation of such a prestigious American institution.

There is still a long way to go before the wounds of prejudice in history are healed, but the Yale president's response is a good step toward reaching this goal.

Noting Yale's commitment to equality, the president promised to launch a five year series of conferences on race, gender, inequality, and inclusion and provide training to faculty on combating racism among other actions intended to appease angry protesters. Ultimately, the students at Yale should be respected for striving for the college's motto of "Lux et veritas": light and truth.



racially insensitive Halloween costumes. This message led to an angry encounter between one of the faculty members responsible for writing the letter and a group of students demanding that the faculty member apologize and step down for failing to create a "safe space." The protests at Yale have only been one in a chorus of others fighting racial injustice at college

## CAN YOU DIG IT?



### With Pride

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I grasped the cold metal of my piccolo, dug my marching shoes into the turf field and exhaled an immense feeling of anticipation. It was T-minus three minutes before the band had to be done setting up, marking T-minus three minutes before my last time ever competing with the Mighty Moors Marching Band. There was a stillness in the air as our blue and gold band stood under those bright lights — all of us waiting for the intense "Band Atten-hut" that would start our performance. It was in this delicate moment of suspense and excitement that I realized how much marching band has provided me with over my four years of high school.

Once you are a band kid, you never stop being a band kid. I have developed a never-ending tendency to tap my feet and mark time to the tempo of any music I hear. Enduring band practices filled with marching basics and learning drill formations under the blazing sun has taught me the true meaning of physically and mentally pushing oneself.

Above all, there is a feeling of belonging that comes along with being part of the band. Special bonds are formed under the wan sunlight of each rehearsal's end, as every single person around you is sweaty and exhausted, but relishing in hard work. A sense of unity is developed when we all stand together to cheer for our name during competition award ceremonies, regardless of which place or rank we receive. Band has made me realize that it isn't about what you do in life, but the people you do it with. Band has meant beginning something difficult, but ending it with new friends, new levels of confidence and ultimately, a sense of pride.

There will never be anything that compares to the magical warmth of the band room, or the feeling of satisfaction from hearing the last note of a show ring on the field. To marching band and all it encompasses: I dig it.

## America Ranks Last in Modern Skills: Who's to Blame?

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The conversations that currently surround college often involve tuition, loans and affordability. However the public is overlooking a more important problem that plagues the U.S education system: lack of knowledge in important modern skills such as numeracy and literacy.

Recently, the ETS (Educational Testing Service) revealed a study that compared the education systems of 24 countries in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology rich environments. According to the ETS, although millennials are deemed as the generation with the most educational attainment in American history, our generation ranks extremely low when compared internationally.

The study ultimately proves that American schools fail to teach their students skills that will help them remain competent in today's highly competitive economy. The United States ranked in the bottom three in numeracy and problem solving and in the bottom ten when it came to literacy.

No matter how great the weight of college tuition is and how positive it would be to have free college, it is important that the U.S education system refocuses on what is really being taught in their classrooms. However this lack of achievement is not entirely the fault of the education system nor of teacher commitment; we as students should always strive for more and remain committed to our goals for the future. The opportunities for success exist, whether it be staying after school for tutoring or overall striving to improve your work ethic and dedicating yourself fully to an assignment. It is our job to take advantage of these opportunities and learn to achieve success independently, rather than depending on a teacher to shape the curriculum and make it easier for us.

The U.S rankings in the ETS study are shocking since millennials are considered the most highly educated group in comparison to previous generations. We need to refocus curriculums in American classrooms so that what students learn are relevant to modern society. It is important that children are taught the appropriate skills to succeed in the 21st century to create a better world for years to come.



## New Bill Gender-ously Reduces Transgender Discrimination

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There is no doubt that transgender people are discriminated against in many public places. Whether it is in a work environment, restrooms or locker rooms, some people believe that having opposite sexes in the same room is an invasion of privacy. Transgender people are individuals who do not feel comfortable conforming with the sex they were assigned at birth. Throughout their lives, transgender people face many complications and contentions, so the least society can do to diminish those burdens is to provide a restroom that acts as both a place of refuge and validation.

An issue was brought up in the Arcadia School District when a male-identifying transgender student was forced to sleep in a separate camp cabin during a school trip. After this, a new policy in California was updated, requiring all schools to grant transgender students entry to all sex-

segregated facilities, programs and activities based on their identified gender, according to the New York Times. No students should be put in



an uncomfortable position or be bullied, and this applies to transgender students who are regularly discriminated. This bill will help students be in a more comfortable environment.

Students from many schools have disagreements in which an individual should only be allowed in their gender designated restroom and sports

team. Parents in particular are concerned for their children and believe that having opposite sexes in the same space is an invasion of their privacy. However, students today rarely undress or shower in schools. Due to this, most of the time students would not know if another student is transgender.

Not allowing transgender students to go into restrooms they feel comfortable in invalidates and discourages the expression of their gender. With private stalls, there is no harm in the presence of a transgender student. Not only will this bill allow them to conduct their business in private, but it will help reduce bullying and discrimination among transgender students. Transgender students do not want to invade anyone's privacy and allowing them to use a bathroom they feel comfortable in is the least we can provide in helping them validate their already complex identity.

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