



Campus Connections to White Supremacy: The Role of Archivists in Reconciliation through Community Engagement and Historical Research

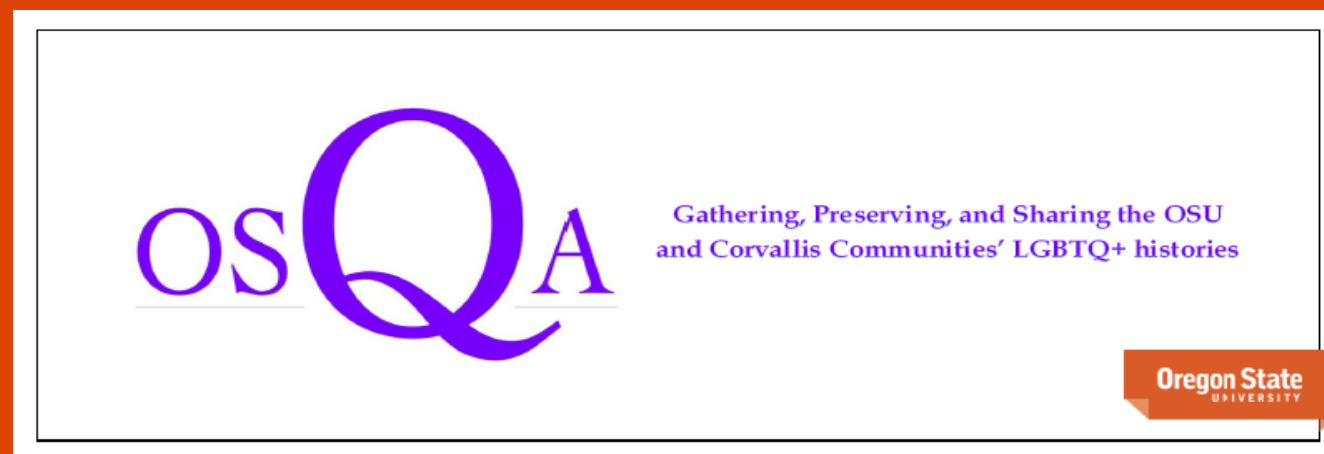
Northwest Archivists Conference 2018
Warm Springs, Oregon
Friday, April 27, 2018

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Pronouns (she/her/hers)

About Me, the OMA and OSQA



<http://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/oma>



<http://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/osqa>



The Evaluation of Building and Place Names ~ National Conversations



Building and Place Names Matter

- They play an important role in how community members interact with, remember, and revere their histories
- They are symbolic of the long historical threads of racism, institutionalized discrimination, and the use of public spaces to perpetuate dominant narratives

Conversations at Universities and Colleges Across the Country

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Brown University | U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill |
| • George Mason University | Westfield State University |
| • Princeton University | Yale University |
| • University of Oregon | |



The Evaluation of Building and Place Names ~ Local Conversations



Oregon State
University

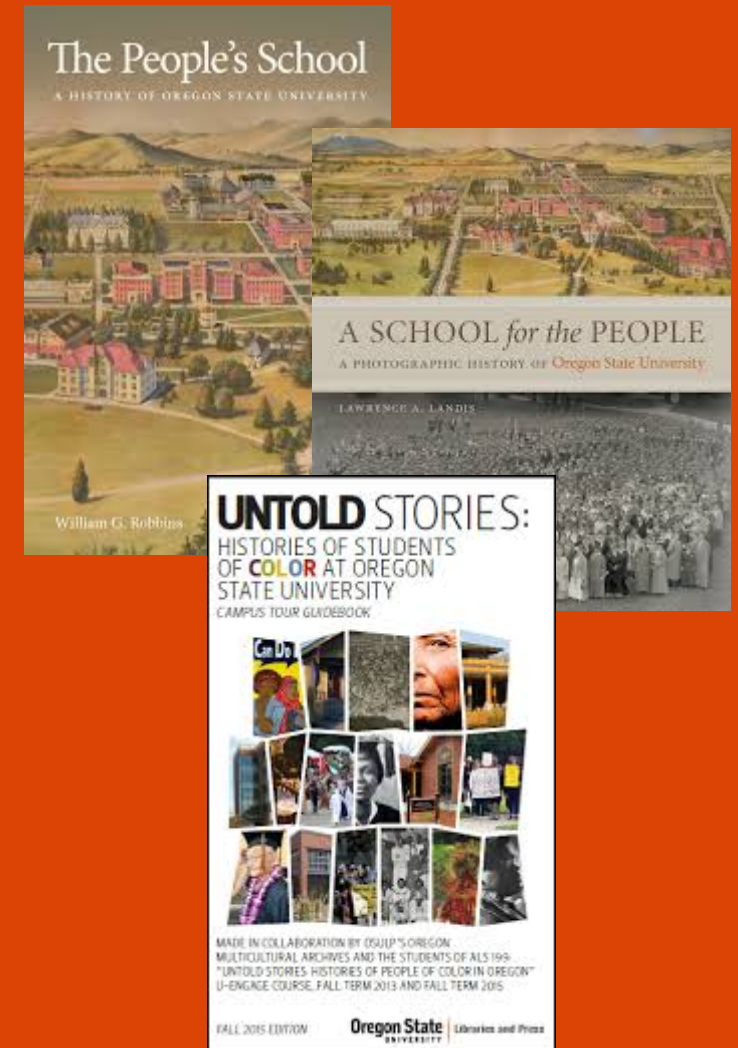
What about your institution or communities?

The Evaluation of Building and Place Names ~ at OSU



About OSU

- Located in Corvallis, Oregon; est. 1868. Is a PWI, in a predominantly white college town
- History of students of color protesting injustices since the late 1960s
- 2015 “Students of Color Speak Out” and subsequent establishment of the Office of Institutional Diversity
- Building renaming is common on campus; new buildings are named after individuals for a variety of reasons
- Reconciliation efforts and actions by the university to address past injustices are part of an ongoing process





The Evaluation of Building and Place Names ~ at OSU



As an institution, we asked ourselves:

“What does it mean for OSU to value equity and inclusion if individuals after whom its buildings are named did not?”



The Evaluation Process

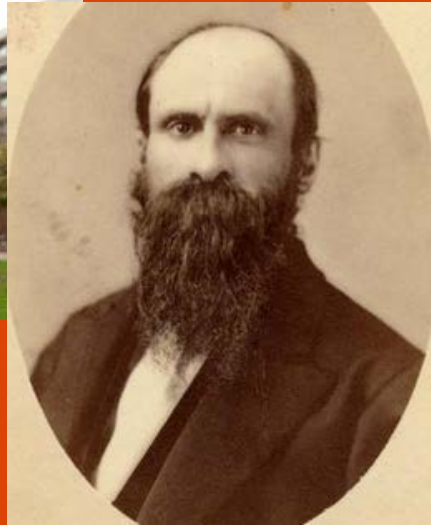


- Formation of a Building and Place Names (BPN) committee
- Development of the Evaluation Criteria
- Responding to a Student Protest
- Creating a Communications Plan
- Providing a Team of Scholars Historical Research Assistance
- Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan
- Decision Making Process
- Announcing the Decision
- Engaging in a Renaming Process
- Planning for Permanent Education Accessible to Community Members

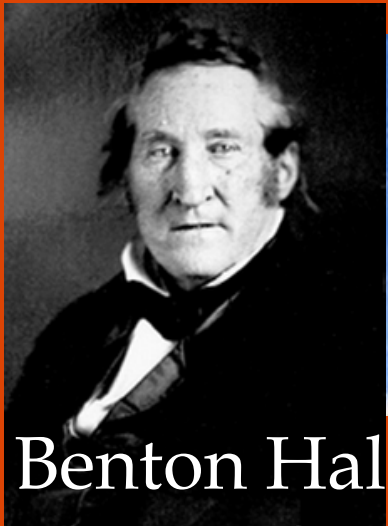
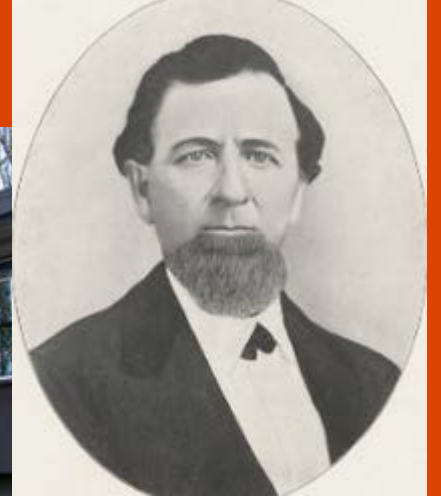
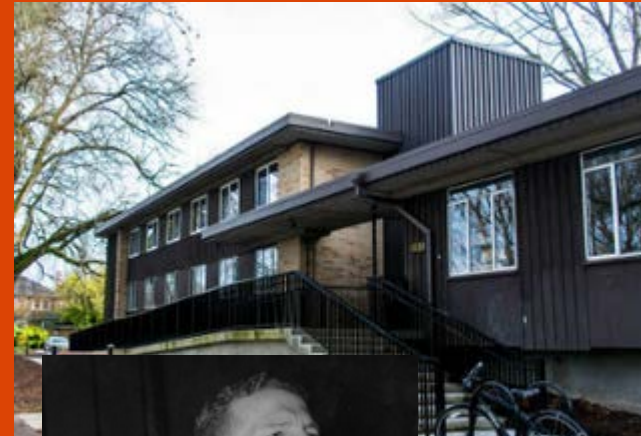
The Evaluation Process Outcomes



Arnold Dining Center /
Benjamin Lee Arnold



Avery Lodge /
Joseph C Avery



Benton Hall and Annex /
Benton County – Thomas Hart Benton



Gill Coliseum / Amory T. "Slats" Gill

Session Agenda



Lessons Learned

- Formation of a Building and Place Names (BPN) committee
- Development of the Evaluation Criteria
- Responding to a Student Protest
- Creating a Communications Plan
- Decision Making Process

Descriptions of the Processes and Lessons Learned

- Providing a Team of Scholars Historical Research Assistance
- Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan

Formation of a Building and Place Names (BPN) Committee



Lessons Learned

- Request to be a part of the process, from start to finish
- Set boundaries regarding your time and commitment to the process
- 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
- 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

Committees and Groups: <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names/about/committees-and-groups>

Development of the Evaluation Criteria



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
- Directly connect the criteria to requests for community input and community engagement activities

Criteria: <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names/evaluation-process/renaming-criteria>

Responding to a Student Protest

Lessons Learned

- It's not just about the building names
- There is an urgency to the process, but a need to "get it right"
- The process needs to include facilitated, small group discussions
- Need for historical research to address misinformation
- Need to address community FAQs
- Always remember that it's about the students who feel excluded and harmed by the institution's racist past – and present



Student Protest, February 28, 2017





Creating a Communications Plan

Lessons Learned



- Communications Committee
 - ~ determine roles
 - ~ follow protocol but also assess when to deviate
- Community Stakeholders
 - ~ identify / set meetings with student groups, alumni representatives, non-university specific community members, etc.
- Website
 - ~ provide photos and (minimal) historical information and context
 - ~ online form for feedback collection *based on the evaluation criteria*
 - ~ ensure transparency and provide as much content as possible
- Press
 - ~ develop talking points, as well as a clear narrative
 - ~ place the institution front and center

Decision Making Process



Lessons Learned

- Be clear about the process and timeline
- Place the ultimate decision on the administration
 - ~ Community input
 - ~ BPN committee and workgroup discussion and meeting with the President
 - ~ Architectural Naming Committee meeting with the President
- Document the process and make a version of that documentation available to the public
- Be prepared for push back on the decision



OSU President Ed Ray, 2003-present



Providing a Team of Scholars Historical Research Assistance



The Process

Oregon State University / LibGuides / SCARC / OSU Buildings History - SCARC Archival Resources / Home

OSU Buildings History - SCARC Archival Resources

Home

About this Guide and How to Access OSU Archival Resources

Building Naming Committee: Policies and Procedures

Arnold Dining Hall

Avery Lodge

Benton Hall and Annex

Gill Coliseum

Building News: Local and Nationwide

ABOUT THIS GUIDE AND HOW TO ACCESS OSU ARCHIVAL RESOURCES

Special Collections & Archives Research Center

The OSU Special Collections and Archives Research Center (SCARC) is home to the university's unique collections of manuscripts, archives, photographs, digital records, and books.

- Included within SCARC collections is documentation of the campus buildings as well as biographical information regarding building namesakes.
- This guide is a compilation of the known records within SCARC's collections pertaining to four campus buildings: Arnold Dining Hall, Avery Lodge, Benton Hall and Annex, and Gill Coliseum.
- While some materials are available online, the majority are only accessible by an in-person visit to conduct research in SCARC
 - Website: [Special Collections and Archives Research Center \(SCARC\)](#)
 - Location: Valley Library, 5th floor room 5069
 - Email: scarc@oregonstate.edu

Historic Reports on OSU Building Names

Research Coordination and Introduction
Dr. Stacey L. Smith

Building Historical Research Team
Dr. Thomas Bahde
Dr. Stephen Dow Beckham
Dr. Marisa Chappell
Dr. Dwaine Plaza
Dr. Stacey L. Smith



LibGuide <https://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/osu-buildings-history>

Historical Reports

Providing a Team of Scholars Historical Research Assistance



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



The Process ~ Goals

- 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; Share and explain the history of these buildings and places and their namesakes, regardless of any decision.

Community Engagement Information: <http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names/evaluation-process/community-engagement>



Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan



The Process ~ Calendar

Community Engagement Sessions

Session One, September 28, 5:30pm-7:30pm

Session Two, October 2, 12pm-2pm

Building Name Evaluation Sessions

Arnold Dining Center Discussion - Wednesday, October 11, 5:30pm-7:30pm

Avery Lodge Discussion - Monday, October 16, 5:30pm-7:30pm

Benton Hall and Annex Discussion - Tuesday, October 17, 5:30pm-7:30pm

Gill Coliseum Discussion - Thursday, October 19, 5:30pm-7:30pm

Community Input Analysis

A qualitative summary and assessment of the data gathered during the community engagement process is available online

All community engagement sessions were recorded and are available online

Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan



The Process ~ Part 1

- Began with intentions and expectations
- How did we get here?
 - The national conversation and OSU context; the reasons why it is important to reflect on our past
- What happens next?
 - The process timeline, what happens after the evaluation process is complete i.e. a remaining process and the permanent education component
- Workshop Plan
 - Review “Intentions of RESPECT”
 - Watch 9 min video of New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu speech, May 2017
 - Engage in facilitated discussion with trained facilitators and note-takers



Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan



The Process ~ Part 1

Facilitated Conversation Questions

- 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 African American Museum 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?

Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan



The Process ~ Part 2

- Repeat of Part 1 Content
- BPN committee co-chair presentation on the significance of building names and an explanation of the evaluation criteria
- BPN co-chair presentation on the historical research findings based on the reports produced by the scholars
 - ~ historical review team, purpose, and process ~ building history
 - ~ namesake history and controversies ~ summary points
- Workshop Plan
 - Review “Intentions of RESPECT”
 - All tables had copies of the criteria, the historical reports, & presentation slides
 - Engage in facilitated discussion with trained facilitators and note-takers

Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan



The Process ~ Part 2

Facilitated Conversations, based on the evaluation criteria

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 the following criteria:

- Actions taken by an individual vs. viewpoints held by an individual
- The individual's public vs. private persona
- The progression of an individual’s viewpoints and life as a whole
- Whether and how an individual’s actions and viewpoints aligned with OSU’s mission and OSU’s and society’s values at the time
- How the current OSU community engages with the “context” of an individual’s life



Designing and Implementing a Community Engagement Plan

Lessons Learned



- Develop sessions that feature both information sharing and ample time for engaged dialogue (have contingency plans i.e. talk with public safety)
- Know your audience (students, F/S, alumni, non-OSU); assign tables randomly
- Be transparent about the process and repeat key pieces of information
- Recruit and train facilitators and note-takers
- Connect the evaluation criteria to the facilitated conversation prompts
- Outline participant expectations, review “Intentions of RESPECT”
- Administrators were present but did not participate (Pres. Ray was not)
- Do NOT have an opportunity for comments to the room by participants



Website with More Information

[http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/
building-and-place-names](http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/building-and-place-names)

Q & A



General Q and A

Please feel free to email me
natalia.fernandez@oregonstate.edu
if you would like a copy of this
presentation or if you would like
more details about the process

