



**Ann Thornton (she/her):** Good afternoon, I'm Ann Thornton, Vice Provost and University Librarian, and I'd like to welcome you all to this online program. Following the murder of George Floyd, Columbia University President Lee Bollinger said that every serious person and institution should seize the moment to embark on an honest and open self-evaluation in order to ensure that our values and our actions are aligned with the realities and magnitude of the crisis.

And, in this spirit, Columbia began a university-wide review focused on several areas. They included inclusive public safety, addressing the impact of racism on our surrounding communities, symbols and representations on campus, student inclusion and belonging, faculty diversity, staff experience at Columbia, initiatives at our schools and our institutes as well as anti-racism and healthcare at Columbia University Irving medical Center and symbols and representation on campus both by their presence and by their omission do signify what the university values. They codify history, and they also announce the priorities of the university.

And at Columbia most aspects of the built environment date primarily to the turn of the 20th century and that's really the moment when the Morningside Heights and Health Sciences campuses first began to take shape. And in considering symbols and representations on campus there are more questions than answers at present and that's really where we'd like to invite you into a conversation. How should Columbia's historical ties to slavery and its history of racism be acknowledged and addressed in the geographical campus? How should Columbia's anti-racist commitments be expressed visibly and what are the best ways to engage the Community both throughout Columbia and beyond Columbia in the choices that we can make about these forms of expression? The Columbia University and Slavery Project was established by President Bollinger almost a decade ago. It was led by Professor Eric Foner, the Dewitt Clinton Professor Emeritus of History. The library's participation in this project is overseen by Thai Jones, the Lehman Curator for American History in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and adjunct professor of history and Columbia University's Department of History and he's supported by Joshua Morrison, Postdoctoral Research Scholar, and the Department of History. Their work is also supported by many other library workers who are deeply invested in supporting students and faculty and primary source research that highlight Columbia's historical connections to slavery and its afterlives. An initial report on Columbia University and slavery authored by Professor Eric Foner lives on the Columbia University in slavery website and based on archival research that he did, and also by students in a seminar that he taught, the report reveals, not only the background of many names connected with buildings on campus but also the university's historical ties to white supremacy and intellectual and academic life, as well as efforts to limit diversity among students and faculty. And with continued support from the Office of the President, each year, new students participating in the Columbia University and Slavery course do additional archival research to uncover new information and they share their findings with the Community.

The project that we are discussing today is an extension of the Columbia University and Slavery Project. And it is one effort to reckon with the connections of Columbia with slavery and its legacies specifically in the built environment and considering what steps to take, we felt that it was important to start with special attention to residence halls, as these are literally homes. And we know that absences speak as loudly as commemorations about the university's values and Columbia has a responsibility to create an environment that is truly welcoming to all by both recognizing and repairing the harm that has been and is caused throughout the manifestations of physical campuses. It's a small, but we hope meaningful step, and we want to share the information that students and faculty have researched, engaged with communities within and beyond Columbia and really generate interest in understanding this history and addressing it.

So this will be one of many conversations and opportunities for members of the Columbia Community, our neighbors, and collaborators to share feedback and ideas about the experiences of the built environment on our campuses and also how we can address and begin to repair them meaningfully. We are especially eager to engage students and the historical research, also in the designing of exhibits and displays that we hope will represent people and events connected to spaces on campus and also in community outreach within and beyond Columbia.

Here is the survey that was shared with everyone who is participating today, and we would appreciate hearing ideas from you, either on an anonymous basis or with contact information, if you would like to get involved. Please feel free to answer as much or as little of the survey as you're comfortable with. All of the questions are optional and we will send out that survey again to everyone who registered for today, so I want to thank you for joining us for this presentation and conversation and I'll pass the microphone over to Josh Morrison, our postdoctoral research scholar.

**Joshua Morrison:** Hi, so my name is Josh Morrison hope you can see me as well. So for this presentation today, I took a look at the history behind that the residential hall John Jay Hall, and so, if you go to the next slide we'll see a picture of Jay and we'll see some of his achievements that made him such a notable man as well as Columbia affiliations, so he actually graduated from King's College, the precursor to Columbia and for a brief time served on the Columbia College Board of Trustees, but you can see here on the right, that he also served in these very important positions during some of the early years of The United States and actually during the American Revolution as well. So John Jay served as president of the Continental Congress during the American Revolution, he served as an essential diplomat during early years of American history as Minister to Spain. He served as Secretary of State, Chief Justice of the United States, as well as the Governor of New York, so a very accomplished man.

But specifically relating to John Jay and slavery things got a bit more complicated, if you want to go the next slide. So John Jay falls under what we can broadly categorize as anti-slavery. And so, throughout his life, Jay was a firm believer in the immorality of slavery and he supported gradual emancipation, which means very slowly ending slavery, with as little disruption as all, so I'll talk through some of these quotes in a minute. So Jay still, even though he believed slavery

was immoral and he has all these quotes you can see here about just how immoral it is, Jay still enslaved people for most of his life, if you want to go the next slide. So the next slide has a list of 15 to 20 people that John Jay enslaved at some point, throughout his life, although he ultimately emancipated most, if not all of them.

So while Jay consistently criticized slavery, as you've seen he carefully weighed his immorality against any impositions on white people. In his own case Jay proved willing to enslave people to ensure his financial interests and in his mind at least to protect their well-being. So, as long as enslavement ended in freedom, Jay considered his ownership of humans as broadly acceptable. So more a reformer than a radical, Jay still stood at the vanguard of white anti-slavery politics in New York and throughout his life worked consistently to help build support for ending slavery.

So Jay was born to a slave holding family. He grew up in an estate outside New York City where roughly a dozen enslaved people were forced to care for him and his family. Long before his birth, both Jay's father and grandfather had invested in a variety of mercantile ventures that included bringing enslaved people from the Caribbean to New York. And then in 1774, Jay married Sarah Livingston who is part of another elite rich mercantile family that had also been involved in importing slaves and owning enslaved people so that Jay is really marrying into kind of New York elite and tying himself a little deeper into slavery.

But, as early as 1777, John Jay supported a ban on slavery in New York, only two years later, however, he purchased an enslaved man for himself named Benoit and, although he eventually drafted a plan for Benoit's freedom, John Jay claimed he refused to free Benoit until he had earned quote "a moderate compensation for the money expended on him." But in 1785, John Jay helped found the New York Manumission Society an essential early anti-slavery organization. With Jay as President, the group proclaimed quote "It is our duty, both as free citizens and Christians to endeavor by lawful ways and means to enable enslaved people to share equally with us in that civil and religious liberty." And while serving as the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court during the 1790s, Jay continued to enslave five people. As you later noted he purchased enslaved people and manumitted them after quote their faithful services afforded a reasonable retribution.

And so Jay ran for governor and 1792 and he was actually defeated and one of the reasons he was defeated is that his opponents claim that he was this abolitionist who is going to immediately come in and end slavery, take away people's property and really ruin the economy and so Jay's support of slavery help cost him that election. But Jay pushed back, said no, I'm not an abolitionist. He re-articulated his long standing support for gradual emancipation, while noting that enslaved people had a natural right to freedom. And John Jay was really a savvy politician, so he lost in 1792 but then he's elected governor and becomes governor in the next cycle, and when he finally became governor, he didn't really talk about slavery, knowing that it was a little too hard to touch on, but he did lend support to build a gradual emancipation bill that was supported by the New York Manumission Society and, of course, Black New Yorkers.

That passed and went to law in 1799 as Jay was governor. And so, although this bill ended slavery, it was really incredibly gradual, so the bill did not free, a single person in 1799. Instead it stated that slavery would eventually slowly become illegal, I think, by 1827.

But it did really begin to shift New York away from slavery and we can see this in John Jay's his own life. In 1800 Jay still enslaved five people but 10 years later that number has dwindled down to one. And so, and then John Jay did live long enough to see slavery finally outlawed in New York, which happened in 1827 and he died, two years later in 1829. So that's my little mini presentation and thanks for being here.

**Thai Jones:** Good afternoon, everyone, my name is Thai Jones. I'm going to speak briefly about Samuel Bard.

Samuel Bard entered King's College at the age of 14 and would become the first professor of medicine at King's College. He helped found the Columbia Medical School as well as New York Hospital, acted as physician to George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and others and then served as a college dean and trustee for decades. So Samuel Bard was one of the two or three most prominent medical doctors of the early republican era.

The residence hall at the medical center uptown was known as Bard Hall, the name Bard Hall was on the building since 1931 but in 2020 the name Bard Hall was removed from the building. Here's a photo of the building as it looks now with the name removed and this action took place at the request and demand of students and faculty who lobbied for some time to have the name removed.

And their feelings about Bard really stemmed from this one single document that one of the students in the Columbian slavery course discovered. Jordan Brewington found this document, one of our students and it's a runaway slave ad posted by Samuel Bard describing a man named James who had attempted to escape, and you can see here Samuel Bard's description of this man James and his offering of a \$10 reward to have him returned. Jordan and her research searched all of the King's College affiliates and we thought, maybe, she would find one or two of these runaway slave ads but, in fact, she found almost 50 of them so King's College affiliates, students, faculty, trustees, were deeply engaged with slavery and all of its aspects in New York.

In 1765, John Bard, who was Samuel Bard's father, who had invested in upstate real estate, leased his plantations to an overseer for the sum of 200 English pounds, a large sum of money in order to finance Samuel Bard's education and you can see here in in the language of the time that included in that transaction was access to the labor of a woman named Jamaica, a man named Cuffy, and a girl named Prida, and there was also a stipulation that if one of them died during the time of the lease, they would be replaced by a servant of equal value.

As with Jay, we can trace the Bards' enslavements, enslaving of others through the census records. John Bard held four slaves in 1790. Samuel Bard three. In 1800 Samuel Bard claimed

seven enslaved people in the 1810 census he claimed eight people and this is, I think, just the tip of the iceberg. There's evidence that his enslavement of others was much broader. "All my ancestors had held slaves," wrote his great grandson in the early 20th century. Another source says that the Bards were among the largest slave owners in Dutchess County. Like the Jay family, the Bards were connected by marriage to other very prominent slave owning families, including the Crugers and the Livingstons who were both also important Columbia families and, in fact, Wallach Hall was originally named Livingston, until that name changed.

These are the names, we know so far of people who were enslaved by the Bard family. We have not yet been able to find descendants, current descendants of these people, or any of the people enslaved by Columbia and King's College affiliates but this remains a top research priority, and so we were extremely excited to discover the story of Richard Jenkins, who was enslaved by Samuel Bard, but after emancipation in the 1820s served for decades as a deacon at the Bard family church in upstate New York, and his children and grandchildren were prominent members of the African American Community in the Hudson valley into the 20th century, so this is a promising research lead and we definitely plan to pursue it in the years to come, thank you.

**Tommy Song:** Hello.

**Thai Jones:** Tommy we see you, hear you.

**Tommy Song:** Okay hi everyone. My name is Tommy Song, and I am a Toni Stabile Fellow in Investigative Journalism at Columbia Journalism School. As an undergrad from 2016 to 2020 I was part of the Columbia University in slavery seminar two years as a student, and two years as a teaching assistant, and today I am going to talk a little bit about Hartley Hall so the story that I construct of Hartley Hall begins in 1902 when a junior in Columbia College named Marcellus Hartley Dodge became a millionaire overnight. His grandfather, Marcellus Hartley the owner of Remington Arms Company had died unexpectedly, and when Dodge graduated from Columbia College in 1903, the later well-known philanthropist who became the chairman of the same arms company his grandfather led, donated much of the inheritance he received to create a new undergraduate dormitory at Columbia. And so that's in 1905 Hartley Hall opened with Livingston Hall, as Thai said, now known as Wallach Hall.

One of the two oldest undergraduate dormitories at Columbia, Hartley Hall was home to so many notable Columbia alumni perhaps the most famous of them was the renowned poet, the Harlem Renaissance Langston Hughes um and so, most of the time when Langston Hughes was on campus, Hartley Hall was a space that was extremely lonely for him. In the following excerpt from his autobiography that we see, I think, shows just what was on the poet's mind during his time at Hartley and Columbia, and so this is an excerpt from his autobiography. "When I went to get my room in the Hartley Hall dormitory on the campus the lady at the office look slightly startled and said "Oh, there must be some mistake all the rooms were gone long ago." I said, "But I reserved mine long ago and paid the required deposit by mail." She said, "You did? Then, let me see." Of course, she found my reservation made from [indiscernible] but

she kept looking at me in a puzzled and not very friendly fashion, then she asked if I were a Mexican. When she discovered I wasn't, she consulted with several other people. Papers fluttered, a telephone call was made, but finally they gave me the admitted slip to the dormitory. Having made my reservation early, I had one of the most convenient rooms in Hartley Hall, on the first floor, just off the lobby. But they didn't certainly seem any too anxious to give it to me because no doubt they realized, I was colored. Of course later I was to run into much of that sort of thing, and my grown up travels in America that strange astonishment on the part of so many whites that a negro should expect any of the common courtesies and conveniences that other Americans enjoy.

But despite the racism Langston Hughes was also able to befriend a student named a Shin Chan a Chinese man from Honolulu Hawaii during this time at Hartley. At a predominantly white institution, the two students found comfort and companionship in each other, owing to their common exclusion and again he writes in his autobiography, "by the end of my first term I got to know Chun, a Chinese boy, pretty well. Like me Chun, the Chinese boy didn't like the big university either. He said white people were much nicer in the missionary school in China, from which he came. Here, nobody paid any attention to him and the girls wouldn't dance with him at dances I didn't expect them to dance with me, but he did, not being used to American ways. Nobody asked him to join a frat and nobody asked me, but I didn't expect anyone to when I tried out for the Spectator, they assigned me to gather frat house and society news, an assignment impossible for a colored boy to fill, as they knew they were upperclassmen and I suppose not particularly interested in the relationship of Chinese and negroes to the rest of the student body anyhow. It was all a little like my senior year in high school except more so when one noticed that kids began to get a bit grown and girl conscious and stand-offish and anti-negro in the American way that increases when kids take on the accepted social habits."

And so, in the coming months, he spent most of his school days skipping class and leaving campus, falling in love with Harlem, not Columbia. His dorm mate Chun would often accompany Langston on travels into the depths of the city, showing him around Chinatown. And, by the end of the year he had even acquired a small Mandarin vocabulary. His friendship with Chun, however, was not enough for Hughes to stay because he left Columbia at the end of the year and began life on his own. He was 20 years old.

And the next slide shows some of the poems that Hughes publishes after he leaves Columbia in the Columbia Daily Spectator. After getting rejected by the Columbia Daily Spectator, after he leaves Columbia, 1921 he sends free poems, and is able to publish them because he uses a pseudonym that goes LANG-HU. And these are the three poems that I was able to find the Spectator archive. And indeed, you know other than Hughes, there are many more minoritized students who also experienced a sense of community belonging and solidarity at Hartley Hall. And among them were B.R. Ambedkar, a founding father of the Republic of India and a lifelong champion of the abolition of the caste system. One of the first Indian leaders to be educated in the US, Ambedkar was dalit, a group of people considered to be lower than the lowest caste and of the four caste, Varna system. Despite his caste identity, however, Ambedkar befriended many other students at Columbia, including a parsi student named Novell Batena. They

remained friends for the rest of Ambedkar's life. And apart from them, because there are also other students like Chinese students and Filipino students who were able to consolidate within Hartley Hall, as well as seen in the directory of Chinese students from 1912. Some of the first cohorts of Chinese students came to Columbia during this time, and this directory gives back 25 search results that include Hartley Hall, meaning there were 25 Chinese students who are living in Hartley Dorm during the time.

And all of this aside, just as a university can function as a space of knowledge production, it can also function as an extension of the state and empire. One example in which Hartley Hall operated as a space for the extension of state and Empire was through racist student organizations. And in 1940 a Spectator article from April shows that a group of students claiming to be the Columbia chapter of the Ku Klux Klan met the ninth and 10th floors of Hartley Hall. According to this article most members of this club were prominent men on campus meaning prominent fraternity men and prominent leaders of student organizations, like the Spectator.

And yeah that's the end of my presentation. Thank you so much.

**Trey Greenough:** Hi, Can you hear me?

**Thai Jones:** Yeah.

**Trey Greenough:** awesome my name is Trey Greenough. I'm an undergraduate history major here at Columbia University School of General Studies and I was part of the Columbia and Slavery project last semester with Professor Jones.

And I'm going to be talking a little bit about an incident that occurred on Columbia's campus on the lawn outside of Fernald Hall, on April 3, 1924 -- that incident being the burning of a cross in protest to a black resident in Fernald Hall, whose name was Frederick Wilson Wells. From the very beginning, Wells' story demonstrates a tenacity and hunger, to achieve a quality education, despite the racial barriers that existed at the time. Born in Union City Tennessee in 1899, he attended public school before entering Wilberforce University, which was the first private historically black college in the United States. He transferred to Ohio State University after two years, where he would graduate with a bachelor's degree in 1919. And then in 1921 he studied under a YMCA scholarship at Yale, until finally matriculating to Columbia law school in 1924.

You can do the next slide.

After receiving his acceptance, Frederick Wells submitted an application to the university committee that oversaw residence hall housing selection. Though due to a lack of vacancies, he was instructed to join the waitlist, he did just that and was placed in Room 528 in Fernald Hall, when it became vacant. He is believed to have been the only black dorm resident at the time, and he is also the second known black dorm resident in history of Columbia University. The

rooms Wells inhabited was rumored as, or was remembered as 513, following a renovation in Furnald Hall in the late 1990s and you can see it up there in the top corner the red arrow.

On March 5, 1924 Wells moved into his new dormitory room, which was tucked into the far corner of the fifth floor where he remained unnoticed and unmolested for several weeks. However later that month when it became apparent the 24 year old black male was indeed a student and not an employee of the university discontent began to stir. Subsequently the Furnald Hall committee body of elected student representatives from each floor met and voted to present the university with a resolution calling for the ejection of Wells from the building.

The source of the initial complaint varies within different sources, however Dean Hawks, the dean of Columbia College does assert that the catalyst for the event was one troublemaking student and several newspapers do credit a John B. Rucker as being that student. Though members of the whole committee disagreed, at the very beginning of April, Dean Hawks was informally asked to evict Wells solely based on his race. He denied the request and received a threat that foreshadowed the coming publicity.

On April 2 local newspapers began to publish stories about the residence hall controversy and at 12:30 am on April 3, 1924 a large cross was erected and set ablaze on the South lawn outside of Furnald Hall. As it burns, students ran up and down the fifth floor hallway shouting racial slurs. Wells, his room was -- It faced towards Broadway on so in the opposite direction, but he claims to have briefly laid eyes on the cross out front. It is reported to burn for around five minutes before being extinguished by some students and that night and for several days following the NYPD posted three bomb squad detectives outside of Furnald Hall.

Though, no, no one formally took responsibility for the event many suspected the Ku Klux Klan and the following day Wells did receive two letters one by mail and one was slid under his doorway. Both letters threatened him and suggested that he leave immediately and one was signed with klansmen and large block letters and the other one was stamped with the klan's official letterhead in the space for the signature. In the days following, Wells received an enormous amount of support from both local and national organizations, including the NAACP. Additionally, he received a great amount of support from fellow students who circulated a petition in support of wells in his presence in the dormitory that gathered around 150 signatures. Wells remained at Columbia and finished out the term he was very adamant about not leaving unless the university formally asked him to leave, which they did not. But unfortunately he did not graduate from Columbia law school for reasons unknown and I wasn't able to find. Some mentioned that he finished studying law at Cornell, but I haven't found definitive proof, but it was mentioned a few times so unclear on that, but the slide that's shown now is just some interesting news newspaper clippings that covered the event and what exactly happened. He received national and local attention so most of the white articles are from the New York Times, and one is from the I believe it's the Baltimore Sun and the brown ones are from the Columbia Daily Spectator.

Thank you.



**Olganydia Plata:** Hi everyone, thanks Trey. My name is Olganydia Plata Aguilera. I was also a student of the Columbia and slavery project with Trey and Professor Jones. I'm currently a junior at Columbia studying archaeology and Hispanic studies and for this presentation, I will be taking us across Broadway, as my presentation will consider Barnard, and the experience of residence or, rather, lack of experience of residence by Barnard's first black undergraduate Zora Neale Hurston.

I began my presentation by pulling out an exchange between Martha Carey Thomas, then the dean of the sister college Bryn Mawr and Virginia Gildersleeve, the dean of Barnard. Dated to December of 1930, Carey Thomas' letter on the left solicits advice from Gildersleeve on whether to admit a black woman into residence, she asks if a black woman had ever been admitted into residence at Barnard, and if so, as you can see, in the last two paragraphs, whether her black and man friends call on her. Gildersleeve in a response on the right admits, "no such," and I quote "experiment had been undertaken at Barnard, but at least two black undergraduate students lived at Johnson Hall at the time."

This letter opens the question of why had no black woman taken residence at Barnard which at the time, provided housing for roughly around 350 students at Brooks and Hewitt Hall as well as outside residents at a pre-approved residence halls and city, despite the admission and by this time graduation of the first black student Zora Neale Hurston, two years prior.

So before considering Zora I want to first take us to the reference Gildersleeve makes in her letter to Johnson Hall. Johnson Hall houses international Barnard students and women graduate students from Teachers College at Columbia from 1925 to 1974. It is worth noting that the hall was named after William Samuel Johnson, the first President of Columbia who bought and sold enslaved people throughout his life and career, including during this time as Dean, and President of Columbia. For more information on Johnson I highly recommend visiting our Columbia and slavery website. Just for sake of time I won't be able to get into his particular legacy and his tie to the naming of Johnson Hall, the hall was renamed to what it's now known as Wein Hall. I'm sure you of the people who live here on campus might recognize the building of the photograph on the right.

And returning to Gildersleeves's letter, Johnson hall was the only building on campus that housed black women, though they were just graduates graduate students of both Columbia Teachers College and no undergraduates it's also worth noting that the question of race is, was part of the admissions card to Johnson Hall, if you can see, I bolded it in like a red little box asking the race question. And if we move on to the next slide and move on in general to the reality, the first black women at Barnard were not able to take residence at Barnard at all. As indicated by Gildersleeve, even though by 1930, Zora Neale Hurston had already graduated and by this time we had one or two black women taking studies up at Barnard, no such experiment as residence had been undertaken by the College.

So how do we consider this in relationship to Barnard's first black undergrads specifically Zora Neale Hurston, who transferred to Barnard in 1925 from Howard and studied as an undergraduate at Barnard until 1928.

In a letter to [Antony Mayer]? in 1925 before she arrived up on campus Zora indicated her eagerness to take boarding at International House. A residence hall outside of Barnard, but under the approved residences for Barnard students. But she ultimately decided to live in the surrounding neighborhoods. Perhaps we should consider why Zora Neale Hurston did not live on campus or, rather, why she was not allowed to live on campus, in the general atmosphere of campus at the time.

Referencing Trey's presentation, Zora Neale Hurston enrolled just a year after the cross burnings on Columbia's campus and referencing Tommy's presentation this was the same time that Langston Hughes felt completely out of place at Hartley Hall. As Zora Neale Hurston tells us herself in her 1928 essay, "How to be colored, how it feels to be colored me." "Besides the waters, the Hudson she felt her race among the thousand white persons I'm a dark rock surged upon and overswept. But through it all, I remain myself." Even in this picture this picture of graduates in 1928 you can kind of see Zora Neale Hurston behind a bush circled and zoomed in because it's very difficult to see her at all in the main picture.

I conclude my presentation in the next slide by putting Zora Neale Hurston back into the picture, by mapping, where she did live during her time at Barnard. Through referencing her collection of letters, it is revealed that remain addresses during her time as an undergraduate she lived at one eighth West 130 first street which there is a picture of on in the Center it's a picture from 1940 but I assume it hasn't changed much. In likely during her latter half of her time at Barnard at 43rd West 66 street, and understanding Zora's ultimate decision, to not, or a rather rejection to live on campus, we can understand the experience of Barnard's first black undergraduates and how central the role of residences I turn it over into Stella.

**Stella Kazibwe:** Okay hi hi everybody I'm Stella I am a senior in Columbia College and I'm a history major and so I'm going to talk about the Columbia maid strike of the 1970s, so a lot of the time when racism and discrimination on campus is discussed the conversation centered around the experiences of students. Black students on campus and or decisions made by Columbia's administration or other figures on campus but my research sort of focuses on the experiences of discrimination of Columbia staff, so specifically maids. So Columbia University first had maids working on campus when it became a dormitory campus which was in the early 19th century or 20 century, and so I have some clips here that just sort of are highlighting the role that the maids played on campus and the kinds of tasks that they performed for their at the time like predominantly white male upper class student body, so this included bed making, laundry, floor scrubbing, among other things.

So then, in the next slide I kind of cover the evidence that we have to support the fact that these women were women of color who were the maids at Columbia. So, in a lot of the Spectator archives in different articles, the term colored maid is used very like colloquially and so not only

were these made subjugated to a role on campus when they were unwelcome to be students, but they were also black women working in a service role to a white male student population, and so, in my next slide. And we can skip to the next one. So in this slide, this is just sort of further highlighting the sort of the intimacy of the role that the maids played on campus so the maids mimicked maternalism. A very maternalistic role for the students, encouraging them to get two classes on time, folding the laundry, making their beds. So these maids played a very intimate role on campus but were also severely discriminated against in their experiences, and so we move to the next side.

So, in the 1970s, the Columbian maids during this time were still predominantly women of color, filed a discrimination lawsuit against Columbia. And there was a picket line on Low Library in the 1970s. That sort of asked the student body to demonstrate and be involved in advocating for equal pay and treatment for the maids, and so my next slide. And so, this is to the right is an image of some maids at the picket line and then to the left is a Spectator article I'm highlighting the strike and sort of the maids being represented by the TWU Columbia chapter and we move on to the next side. Okay, and then um so in the discrimination lawsuit it actually spent two years from 1972 to 1974, and so this is just a New York Times article sort of discussing the case itself and it going to trial and the people who are being represented, and so in that may be my last slide. I believe so okay yeah and then, and this is in 1974 the trial comes to a close and Columbia does win the case against the maids.

And so, all of this was just essentially to bring the Columbia staff into our discussion of how people of color on campus have historically been treated and yeah I believe I'm the last presentation so we'll move on to questions yeah Thank you.

**Thai Jones:** Thank you so much to all of you for these presentations which really are based on years of work and lots of time in the archives. For those who are listening, you might have noticed that that some of these conversations are about ancient history, the Bards and the Jays are our names from the 18th century as our other Columbia names such as Kent and Hamilton. And other stories here are much more modern. They're about people who lived in these buildings. So, on the one hand, we have the question of the buildings names and what they say about the university's priorities and on the other hand we have the question of how to commemorate and acknowledge these moments of more recent struggles. So, we would love to hear from people who are in the audience right now, I will be monitoring the Q and A, but in the meantime, I'd love to just hear from anyone who'd like to among the students here you know what they think would be an appropriate action in response to this research, how they've thought about Columbia campus about the residence halls and what they would like to see moving forward, as we wait for some Q and A's from the audience.

**Joshua Morrison:** Well, I'm happy to jump in until someone else wants to. So I'm not a student, I did not have kind of an undergraduate experience at Columbia, but I've been doing a lot of archival research and a lot of trying to build as much comprehensive information about early Columbia, Columbia history, and it's really interesting because the campus moved two or three times before coming to Morningside. So the Morningside campus was only really opened

around 1898 and so that there were two full other campuses farther downtown Columbia so it's a little different at Columbia versus some other universities that are looking into their older histories, legacies of slavery, and racism, and racial exploitation. Because besides, maybe some of the dorm names and some statuary the location has moved and, in many cases the locations that used to be the site of enslavement at King's college or Columbia have been bulldozed over five times and have new buildings there.

So, looking at the research there I think that's one of the most interesting things to me, especially as we open a discussion about kind of place and kind of relating it to the history is just how do you do that in somewhere as complicated as New York City where Columbia has moved around a bunch of times.

**Thai Jones:** Other thoughts? And we do us with your questions now, but anyone with anyone like that to that.

**Olga Plata:** I mean, I think something that probably hasn't been said already, but I think is very important to know is that this presentation is really a first step to a larger conversation that is continuing to go on and we are hoping like I was looking into the questions and there's a lot of questions of like bringing this information into the residence halls themselves. And not to speak for the entire group, but our goal as a group, is to bring this information into the residence halls we've been talking about placing historical markers placing this information through like digital exhibitions and for me personally, I think.

A very large part of like what I would like this research to go to is as like public information that we not only give to people who live in the residence halls, who work in the residence halls, and dining staff. But like admitted students in our everyday tours I know Tommy I don't know if you want to speak about the tours that you have given before but incorporating these histories into information in general, through like orientation or admitted students, or even visiting students and people in the Community, and like making this information accessible in like various ways, and not only through presentations like this, and not only through like places in the residence halls but making it kind of an interactive physical information sharing.

**Tommy Song:** I can speak briefly about some of the efforts that we've had in the past, so the Columbia University and Slavery seminar meets with President Bollinger at the end of each semester, each spring semester usually and we present our research to him; also we offer our thoughts on what the university should do with this kind of research. So we, often you know, have a set of recommendations that range from rename buildings to allocate you know money, for the ongoing displacement of black and brown people in west Harlem. So that's like one strand of efforts that we've been leading and another one is some classmates and I started a tour initiative originally called the Columbia University history tour initiative.

And we have to rename that for a lot of reasons, but now it's called the Columbia University and historical justice initiative; we offer tours - alternative walking tours of the Morningside campus and we're hoping to expand this tour to include other campuses including the medical campus.

So if you know folks who are watching right now, or watching later, who are from other campuses of Columbia, or even other schools in the city are interested in starting towards like this, please reach out to us and to me and hopefully we can get something going.

**Thai Jones:** Thank you. Tommy so yeah I'm looking at the questions that there are a lot of questions that are asking more about how this information can be made more available and more public in industry, I think we should have said a little bit earlier that the idea after today, you know we have sent around a survey and we hope to hear from you and we are hoping to install a set of historical markers in the residence halls that are the subjects of these reports so that will be a first step toward a series of public conversations and installations about buildings and statues on campus. These will also be on the website, and I do hope to they will be incorporated into orientation and Campus tours so we really are hoping that this will be the beginning of a series of conversations along those lines.

A couple of people have asked about Harvard's -- the announcement this week about Harvard's fund, which was 100 million dollars that was reported fund for studying universities' links toward histories of slavery and racism and I don't know Harvard that did this, but you know there's a question here about a fund for reparations and so you know, obviously this work, always has this question in the back of people's minds and, as I mentioned before, the question of finding descendant communities and distant family members is one of our really highest priorities, but I think we can think beyond you know the literal descendants of these literal people and think about neighboring communities, but I wonder if anyone wants to ask or answer this discussion about what other steps might be taken, beyond the historical commemoration along the lines of this idea of this idea of reparations or what students are thinking or talking about as other appropriate steps that the university might consider.

**Joshua Morrison:** I can just to start it off, I think that at Columbia this this project has been going on explicitly for about a decade, at least the Columbia and slavery both with the courses, the Columbian slavery course and, more recently, a Columbia 1968 course on kind of 20th century Race and Racism at Columbia. But I do think I've only been here for a year, so I might be a little naive, but I do think it's hitting a little bit of a critical mass at Columbia, both because of that course because of the research report done by Eric Foner. Of the research done by students, I was kind of hired as a postdoc to kind of do a little bit more historical research Thai and all of us are interested in markers and buildings. So I do think that the ball is getting rolling a bit more than it has been and it continues to build on it and it's definitely as a postdoc working with this project, this is definitely my mind moving forward I've been here for a year kind of done a bit of research gotten a better understanding of the lay of the land and, of course, with every participant's feedback all the students, all these people, to kind of take a little bit of a step back and be like we're beginning to have a decent picture of the history and that history points to decades and centuries of slavery, racism, and exploitation so then what, then, do you do when it's clear, it's documented, and how far should the university go, and then how far is the university willing to go?

**Thai Jones:** So a couple other really interesting questions. An anonymous question. No actually K asks, as I thank you for your presentations all of them were amazingly factual and well done. I'm curious to hear from the students about any artistic dreams, visions, or speculations coming from this work, and I do think that's speaks to how you think about what goes up as opposed to, or as a follow up to potentially some symbols from the past going down, and it is such an amazing opportunity to think creatively about the future of the campus and I'd love to hear from anyone who's had some visions, or has found this to be artistically productive to do this work and also, of course, from the audience as well. We on the survey do ask for your thoughts about what you'd like to see. So from the panelists, the question is, do you have any specific visions or artistic dreams about what might follow from this history?

**Olga Plata:** I'll take the question if that's all right. Kind of relating it to the last question, as to what I would like to see on campus, I don't know if I have particularly have had an artistic inspirations, I think it's more like I kind of want to say it's more metaphysical than that. For context I'm in archaeology student and for my Colombian slavery project I did a deep dive on Franz Boas and the anthropology department and Zora Neale Hurston. I spent most of my classes in Schermerhorn. Schermerhorn is being named after a merchant family undoubtedly also related to the history of enslavement here in New York, and so I think whenever I just walk around campus I'm just kind of reminded of this research, and this history and this knowledge. And artistically and, like the inspiration, what I would like to see on campus is more spaces, where we can acknowledge both that history but also making a space where we can also celebrate joy. And just in general, creating safe spaces. Like I think in particularly my research with Zora Neale Hurston, that story is part of a larger like in 1968 as part of the larger racial tension like racial frustrations on campus. At Barnard, the Barnard organization of soul sisters presented to the Dean, and like a list of demands being like hey we want our own floor, we want our own space, we do not feel welcome here and we would like to be able to have that physical space where we can create community, and while the segregated floor was desegregated in 1973, in at Barnard there still is the Zora Neale Hurston lounge, which I find fascinating because, from the very fact that she did not live here, but she's still here in residence in that very ... real, tangible way, and in that way for me that's a bit of artistic inspiration and so to answer that question also what I would like to see more on campus is like initiatives like that. Like administration in a very real physical tangible monetary way providing support to students through those spaces and also just like providing funding for like student groups such as The Barnard organization of soul sisters still exists it's B.O.S.S. now it's still B.O.S.S. it's been around for since 1968 and so providing organizations like that, with financial and like space in the administration to have concerns met is like both artistic inspiration and what I would like to see happen.

**Thai Jones:** Thank you so much, Olga. There's a question here from Sophie Ramirez, which I think is really crucial one for this part of the project. Sophie asks, what is your expectation from the staff and students working and living in residence halls upon educating them and yeah, I'll just answer briefly to say you know part of the idea here is that this information is really not available anywhere on campus and you know some of this research is being done originally by students right now in real time and it's really not available anywhere even in published sources.

Columbia's names tend to be a little bit more obscure, a little bit more complicated. There's no one like Calhoun. There's no version of Calhoun College and probably some of the most suspect names like the Havermeyer family who owned Domino sugar; very few people know that the Havermeyers were connected to sugar and enslavement. So you know, for me, I think this idea of just making sure that people have access to this historical information is a really valid first step and in line with the mission of the university's educational role and then and then what staff and residents and others choose to do that information is really up to them, but the first step is to just make sure that everyone has the chance to learn some of the history, about the spaces, where we find ourselves.

**Joshua Morrison:** We do have a big old Thomas Jefferson statue, at the very least.

**Tommy Song:** I could maybe briefly answer the staff and students question as well. I think one of the problems that one of the hopes that I have for current students, mostly undergrads is is that they consider really they be vigilant about how their actions are affecting others on campus um I personally as an undergrad now as a Grad student have witnessed I think a problem of hypocrisy on campus. Most students tend to practice includes the politics, on paper, but when it comes to practice - day to day practice, that is, I think most students miss the mark. And I hope these histories may inspire all of us to be vigilant about how our actions and behaviors are influencing others because I think any systemic change starts with the personal and the interpersonal and eventually the political so, yeah.

**Stella Kazibwe:** Kind of to add on to what Tommy was just saying, I think that, yes we're talking about history, but at the same time, like a lot of this is still happening and it's very current, Like I mean in speaking about I guess my own portion of research like staff on campus in multiple levels have to this day to this year, then having issues with the university in terms of equal payment and treatment, and we still have predominantly people of color working in staff and ground positions on campus and so just all of these things, I think bring up sort of what Tommy saying about the sometimes the hypocrisy about how we can claim that a university has come so far and done so many things, and that that can be true, but this can also be true and so I think that trying to I think that that like recognizing that as a good step in trying to sort of modernize what you do and make it into something that people feel that they can act upon now. So yeah I just I think that thinking of this as sort of a continuation, as opposed to something that happened in the past, is a really big part of I think what's important about all this.

**Joshua Morrison:** And I think we've in the kind of broader ideas of universities, looking at their history and looking at again, slavery and racism, we are seeing this trajectory both at Columbia, but elsewhere where kind of the first move was to look at slavery and part because it's so in your face and so obviously kind of immoral, but also because it's a little bit far farther in the past, so there's a way where it's maybe a little bit safer or a little bit easier to acknowledge and kind of separate ourselves from. So I think at Columbia and some other places the step has been exactly how do you bring it again, more to the modern issues is if administrator administration faculty students are willing to obviously condemn slavery, to look into slavery to kind of bear our collective responsibility as an institution to that does that stop in 1827 or 1865 and when we

looked at kind of late 19th century racism, of the 20th century racism, current racism, and exploitation, and inequality, how willing, is the university to talk about that how willing, is the university to address that. So I think that doing this historical research both 20th century and earlier does get, does contribute to that, but then again they can also almost silo it a little bit, especially when you can kind of tie a neat bow around slavery, say that ended in the 19th century and kind of move on.

**Thai Jones:** Alright, well, thanks everyone so much. We're at time and, and I think that's a good place to stop. We really do encourage everyone to fill out the survey, which we will distribute again via email to everyone who's registered and looking ahead, there will be more opportunities to pursue this conversation and by the fall or in the fall, we will begin to install a historical markers in the residence halls and eventually all around campus buildings. So thank you everyone so much for joining us today and you'll be hearing more from us, and we hope to be hearing from you to in the coming days.

**Ann Thornton (she/her):** And thanks so much to all of you for your great research and reporting out. It was really amazing. Thank you so much - great.