

Cancel Culture Strikes Nearby

A Family Member Responds To Denaming

16 October 2022

This past week the endemic forces of higher education Cancel Culture dropped an unexpected bomb at nearby University of Richmond. We learned about it through receipt of a copy of a reply letter from Robert C. Smith, the double great grandson of T. C. Williams, for whom the Richmond Law School had long been named. Rob Smith's extensive and pointed response on hearing news of the Law School's denaming from Richmond's president, Kevin Hallock is brim full of analysis of errors made by the board and new president and the cultural forces igniting the decision. And it includes demands for financial retribution. It will be up to you, our readers, to make judgments about the validity of Rob Smith's viewpoint and arguments.

One perspective you may wish to consider when reading this piece is to consider the legacy that T.C. Williams bestowed upon the university. This is not so much in the sense of the ultimate, long run benefit of his financial gift(s) that undoubtedly led to the original naming decision. I believe it is fair to assume that the collective gift support had a very positive effect upon hundreds, if not thousands, of student lives over time.

What seems more germane to The Generals Redoubt is what else did T.C. Williams bestow from his highly successful life to generations of students as they began shaping their individual lives' journeys. One suspects that many students asked themselves who was this T.C. Williams. What did he do with his life that allowed him to make this and other gifts? Why did he make them, and why might I do something similar if I could someday invest in communities and causes? For instance, do I believe I could help make the United States of America become an even more successful constitutional republic?

A parallel examination is about our community, the one that embraces the historical legacies and discrete history of personal actions of both George Washington and Robert E. Lee. What led Washington to invest in education on the American frontier in the 1790's? What led Lee to accept the helm of a nearly failed Washington College in 1865 and lay the groundwork for what became a renowned liberal arts college and school of law, by the larger community leveraging his personal contributions and evolving legacy? And what inspired him to actively seek reconciliation of the nation after the Civil War, lending aid to cauterize the wounds that nearly tore America permanently apart? Citizens at the time from both the north and south honored this life redeeming work; a momentum that lasted until a decade or two ago. Why did this slowing of interest in Lee happen in a period contemporaneous with when the benefits of Martin Luther King's life's work were making great progress?

In closing, one might wish to consider the question of why does Cancel Culture exist? Based on an academic concept known as presentism, its fundamental thesis is that one may select aspects of the current culture, apply them to a prior period, and make judgments about both past culture and individuals. That is, they may make judgments about something they did not experience as an individual or member of the culture itself. Do T.C. Williams and Robert E. Lee and their particular times deserve such examination and judgment? Might it be better to leave the historical markers and milestones in place, so that future generations can measure their progress against the world as it was then and not be colored and distorted by glorified virtue award seekers of the current generation? And aren't those making these judgments today opening themselves up for similar examinations and historical retributions once they have passed on? Bottom line: might this be a very slippery slope to trod upon? Perhaps it would best to solve problems we have created and leave the past to qualified historians.

With or without the above contextual perspective, please see Rob Smith's views as he reflects on the recent denaming action occurring at the University of Richmond. I believe he will garner your attention.

Please donate to The Generals Redoubt to pay for professional research related to defending Lee Chapel as a National Historic Landmark, for future funding to educate students about the rich history and legacy of Robert E. Lee, and to help bring back diversity of thought. A confidential contributor has just given TGR a \$110,000 match gift which means for every dollar that is donated to TGR, the confidential contributor will match the gift dollar for dollar. We need your help if we are to save Lee Chapel as a campus and national treasure. Thank you in advance for your support. Information on how to contribute is found at <https://www.thegeneralsredoubt.us/support>

Thomas P. Rideout '63 & P'91
Tom Rideout
For The Generals Redoubt

As The University Of Richmond Caves To The 'Woke' Mob, My Response

By [Rob Smith](#)

Mr. Kevin Hallock, President of the University of Richmond

410 Westhampton Way,

Richmond, VA 23173

October 11, 2022

Dear Mr. Hallock:

Thank you for calling me to tell me the news about the Board's decision to remove the name of my great-great-grandfather from the Law School. Although not a Baptist, I knew when the University of Richmond disassociated itself from its Baptist roots that it was likely to lose its way and be swallowed up in the prevailing ignorance of popular culture. The University's mission is the pursuit of knowledge, but it has forgotten the most fundamental aspiration for those who truly seek knowledge is to understand what influences they let seep into our souls.

The University's decision to untether itself from its Christian founding is at the heart of it now not having the honesty or intellectual fortitude to defend itself from the Neo-Marxist woke mob. The difference between the character of T.C. Williams and that of the "Cancellation Culture Activists" could not be starker. T.C. Williams practiced the tenets of his faith, primarily to love and serve others. The mob that you and the Board are so afraid of worships hatred and ignorance. They feign indignation, but their real objective is destruction. You and the Board have fallen for this subterfuge.

The Board has insulted the honor of my family; thus, this response is necessary. Your decision seems much like an ex-parte Stalinist tribunal. The defendant does not get to defend himself, faulty evidence is presented, the "party" gets the verdict it wants, and a good man is liquidated, forever to be invisible. Could no one in my family be contacted to put on a defense? It is despicable to destroy the character of an exceedingly good man out of political cowardice.

Hatred and jealousy are the oldest and most pernicious sins of mankind. They are the jet fuel that propels Cancel Culture. Perhaps you and the Board do not realize that you are under attack, because this enemy has already infiltrated your ramparts. Academic enlightenment, tolerance and freedom of expression are anathema to the woke mob. Until you and the Board grow a pair of testicles, this enemy will destroy the University of Richmond.

Bob Dylan famously asked, “who you gonna serve?” I did not know T.C. Williams, but my grandmother who I knew well was alive before he died, and my parents were very close to all of his children. Having grown up among these people, I can tell you the difference between T.C. Williams and the cancel culture mob. T.C. Williams believed that all men were made in the image of God, and his mission was to love and serve others. This was the primary ethos I witnessed in my family and immediate ancestors, a loving, kind, benevolent family, imbued by the Spirit to help others. The mob you and the Board are afraid of worships a different trilogy, the gods of hatred, division and destruction. Moreover, its ignorance makes it incapable of understanding the nuances of 19th century life. They are blinded by their hatred. You and the Board have chosen to serve these forces.

The hypocrisy and virtue signaling of the Board’s decision is beneath the dignity of a great university. Obviously, the Board is interested in illustrating how virtuous it is to its very “left” leaning and out of touch political contingency. But how virtuous is it for the University to accept the services and largess of the Williams family for 150 years and then disparage the name of their benefactor? If suddenly his name is not good enough for the University, then isn’t the proper ethical and indeed virtuous action to return the benefactor’s money with interest? At a 6% compounded interest over 132 years, T.C. Williams gift to the law school alone is now valued at over \$51 million, and this does not include many other substantial gifts from my family to the University. Moreover, is it not a form of fraud to induce money from a benefactor, and then discredit the benefactor after he is long dead? Surely, the

Williams family would not have given a penny to the University knowing that the University would later dishonor the family. The ethical and virtuous decision is clear. Return the money.

The most disturbing element of the Board's action is the utter, simple-minded ignorance of a university whose mission is to pursue truth, learning and critical thinking. Not only is your poltroonery shameful, but it is void of any logic or academic rigor. One would think that a liberal arts university would understand that history evolves on its own accord, and that there are forces that shape it without unfairly casting judgment on its participants due to its fear of having to defend itself from loud voices of ignorance.

Institutions of human servitude have been around since the beginning of recorded history, and there are many still in existence today. It has only been 157 years since the 13th Amendment. Thus, slavery has existed for more than 99.99% of recorded human history, but suddenly, it is gone from the United States and the western democracies. It is an absolute miracle that we live in a place and time where there is no slavery. Instead of casting blame on people for the times in which they lived, perhaps true academics might examine why slavery has been extinguished in these places? Should we not be thankful of the wondrous age in which we live and perhaps focus on preserving our accomplishments so that our economy flourishes which will prevent slavery from returning? Perhaps true academics could recognize that the achievements of people like T.C. Williams contributed to the demise of slavery and created a bold economic and social order that gave men the opportunity to make a living for themselves and the human dignity derived from such efforts?

Perhaps if you and the Board members were the eternal gods of the universe you pretend to be, you would've created an economic and social construct where there was no slavery, indeed no hardship of any kind, and everyone could drink champagne, eat fois gras and have fairies pay everyone's bills with pixie dust. But

the people who actually lived and tried to survive for thousands of years before T.C. Williams was born created a different world. They had to survive the vagaries of life's hardships and create a social construct that would allow for survival for both the master and servant. Thus, since the beginning of time various forms of feudalism and servitude were formed. Obviously, you Board members are superior in virtue and intelligence than all humans who preceded you and had any one of you been alive there would never have been any slavery, wars, pestilence, famines or even bad hair days for anyone.

Against all odds, T.C. Williams amassed a great fortune. He may have been the wealthiest man in Virginia at his death. And what did he do with his wealth? He hired thousands of workers, many were blacks and women. Productive work and industry is the only thing that lifts people out of poverty. The Williams family gave away all of their immense wealth, most of it was anonymous and there were substantial inter-vivos gifts. Many Richmond institutions are the result of their goodwill and generosity. I would imagine that since you and the Board members obviously feel morally superior to T.C. Williams, then all board members are also giving away all of their fortune? Since this must be the case, and since my firm does substantial estate planning work, I will do all the estate plans for all the Board members for free. Please call me so we can set up the first appointments.

So, who was the better person? T.C. Williams, a man of his times, a devout Christian who proved his love of his fellow man, both black and white through the fruits of his good works or the shrieking low 80s IQ purple haired shrew mouthing non-sensical platitudes about "equity and race" while protesting outside your office? Who is more accomplished? More sophisticated? More loving? Who has done more for the University of Richmond, T.C. Williams, or all the collective efforts of the ignorant mob you cater to?

Mr. Hallock, are you a better man than T.C. Williams? Have you done more for the University of Richmond than he did? What exactly have you done other than spread division and dishonoring all the people and families who devoted themselves to the University and made it great? These are people of real accomplishments as distinguished from the unhinged and doltish purveyors of ignorance and hate you and the Board grovel to.

And why does the Board cater to the mob? Out of complete and utter cowardice. Its members are afraid that the violent and unhinged perpetrators of ignorance are going to yell at them, picket their offices, break their windows and threaten physical violence against them and their families. You know and the Board knows that this is true. For over 100 years, the law school has been named for T.C. Williams, but suddenly when the hate filled mob shows up on your doorstep, it is fashionable to de-name the law school. I will remind you that just like Stalin had Trotsky killed, the Left always eats its own. They will never be satisfied. They are coming after you. Their mission is always to destroy.

The University itself participated in slavery! Using your Orwellian logic, then shouldn't the University have to change its name? Kim Jong-Un University has a nice ring to it, and it is multi-cultural! Using your T.C. Williams logic, then don't you have to resign since you preside over a school that participated in slavery? Since all history has to be erased, perhaps you can eliminate the history department and use the money to buy therapy dogs, cupcakes and cotton candy for all those poor souls triggered by facts. Then again, you could use the money to bolster your Campus Ministry of Truth and just eliminate facts. After all, facts are bad, they make snowflakes cry.

Your decision to dishonor my family is anti-intellectual, cowardly and hypocritical. I will refrain from calling you a perfidious, busy-body, know-nothing Yankee. Generally, ad hominem attacks don't bolster arguments, even when the

veracity of such statements are evident. However, the hubris is duly noted. Within a year of your arrival at the University of Richmond, you dishonor the families that have supported it for generations. By the way, this is the South, when you dishonor generations of someone's family, you basically have started a nuclear war.

Since receiving your phone call, my brothers and I and our paralegals have been researching the Board members and faculty at the University of Richmond. Oh boy is this fun! "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone!" From what we have found and have catalogued, the level of hypocrisy of the Board's action is truly stunning. So far, we have found an avowed Satanist, who posts dead animals on his Instagram account. Many virulent racists who publicly announce their racial hatred. Faculty members who advocate infanticide. Faculty members who favor and advocate for the mutilation of children. There are those who wish to cancel free speech and imprison anyone who veers from a nationwide creed of Marxist dogma. We now also know of students who have damaging long term medical problems due to the Board forcing them to take an experimental vaccine, as well as the Board's knowledge of this likely danger. Mmm, I'm not aware that T.C. Williams drugged people against their will and gave them heart problems! Come to think of it, I am pretty sure he was against murdering babies and lopping off the sex organs of children.

Despite these very disturbing findings, you and your cowardly board wants to attack a great benefactor of the University and the City of Richmond who died 130 years ago, while using his largess to pay the salary of a genuine, real life devil worshipper!

As mentioned, the university has lost its way. I would appreciate your immediately wiring my firm \$51 million, and I will distribute it to T.C. Williams' beneficiaries. Then we can discuss the other substantial gifts my family made to the University and the return of this money as well.

Very truly yours,

Robert C. Smith

P.S. Since the University of Richmond is now in the business of “banning books” and free expression, only allowing “woke” history that fulfills its Neo- Marxist agenda, I have attached a short primer on T.C. Williams and his times. Don’t worry, your head will not explode if you are exposed to ideas not approved by your Campus Ministry of Truth. However, for your own safety, you may want to read this in a closet with a flashlight. The woke mob can be pretty disagreeable at times.

Robert C. Smith is Managing Partner of [Chartwell Capital Advisors](#) and likes to opine on the Rob Is Right [Podcast](#) and [Webpage](#).