

Dear Colleagues,

I am responding to the request for evidence-based submissions to the Trinity Legacies Review Working Group's public consultation on renaming the Berkeley Library. I am a Professor in the School of English at St Andrews, Scotland, and published an intellectual biography of Berkeley in 2021.

Berkeley's ownership of people and the use of those enslaved people's labour to support his project to found a university either in Bermuda or Rhode Island is well documented in the Working Paper. The Working Paper also notes Berkeley's racialisation of the population he refers to as the Native Irish, and his willingness to entertain kidnap as a means of recruiting Native American students for his university. Berkeley associates Black, Native Irish and Native American populations when reporting in *A Word to the Wise* (1749) that 'The *Negros* in our Plantations have a Saying, *If Negro was not Negro, Irishman would be Negro.*' He adds that 'it may be affirmed with Truth, that the very *Savages of America* are better clad and better lodged than the *Irish Cottagers* throughout the fine fertile Counties of *Limerick* and *Tipperary.*' (p. 8) Berkeley's views on race and ethnicity, in combination with his social and religious belief in the importance of obedience to higher wills, are significant factors in his toleration of, and even advocacy for, the deprivation of liberty and the exploitation of labour of people from racialised groups. Those views are seen in many of his publications of the 1720s onwards, notably the his proposal for the college, the anniversary sermon he preached at the SPG in London on his return from America, and the *Querist*. Berkeley's ownership of enslaved people and these social and religious views seem to me a rational basis for the discomfort many people are expressing at the retention of Berkeley's name for the new library at Trinity.

I do not see the changing of the name of the library as having any strong association with or effect on the place of Berkeley in teaching curricula and research agendas. Teaching and research are developing their own reflective practices that may displace figures long regarded as canonical or insist on understanding them in their full context, including the histories of colonialism, racism and exploitation. I believe that process, as it relates to Berkeley, will continue whatever the decision with respect to the name of the library.

I believe that contextualising or removing a name or renaming the library would be most meaningful in the context of clearly articulated and publicly stated values and commitments. It would, of course, be for the College collectively to arrive at that statement of values. I understand the Legacies Working Group itself as part of the process of formulating and articulating such values, affirming a commitment to historical and critical reflection on the College as an institution. I wish the Group every success in that project. In the specific case of Berkeley, commitments to anti-racism and ending labour exploitation seem directly relevant to his legacy. It seems to me that any new name for the Library would wish to express the values arrived at by the Working Group in some way. With respect to commitments the College might make, the actions of All Souls College, Oxford in relation to their library, funded by a benefaction from Christopher Codrington, provide one example which I don't think is cited in the Working Paper: <https://www.asc.ox.ac.uk/codrington-legacy>.

Yours,

Tom Jones