

The following letter by Lord Patten, Chancellor of Oxford University was written in response to a movement (originating in South Africa) by some of its black students to have the statue of Cecil Rhodes removed.

*Dear Scrotty Students,*

*Cecil Rhodes's generous bequest has contributed greatly to the comfort and well being of many generations of Oxford students – a good many of them, dare we say it, better, brighter and more deserving than you.*

*This does not necessarily mean we approve of everything Rhodes did in his lifetime – but then we don't have to. Cecil Rhodes died over a century ago. *Autres temps, autres moeurs*. If you don't understand what this means – and it would not remotely surprise us if that were the case – then we really think you should ask yourself the question: “Why am I at Oxford?”*

*Oxford, let us remind you, is the world's second oldest extant university. Scholars have been studying here since at least the 11th century. We've played a major part in the invention of Western civilization from the 12th century intellectual renaissance through the Enlightenment and beyond. Our alumni include William of Ockham, Roger Bacon, William Tyndale, John Donne, Sir Walter Raleigh, Erasmus, Sir Christopher Wren, William Penn, Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA), Samuel Johnson, Robert Hooke, William Morris, Oscar Wilde, Emily Davison, Cardinal Newman, Julie Cocks. We're a big deal. And most of the people privileged to come and study here are conscious of what a big deal we are. Oxford is their alma mater – their dear mother – and they respect and revere her accordingly.*

*And what were your ancestors doing in that period? Living in mud huts, mainly. Sure we'll concede you the short lived Southern African civilisation of Great Zimbabwe. But let's be brutally honest here. The contribution of the Bantu tribes to modern civilisation has been as near as damn it to zilch.*

*You'll probably say that's “racist”. But it's what we here at Oxford prefer to call “true.” Perhaps the rules are different at other universities. In fact, we know things are different at other universities. We've watched with horror at what has been happening across the pond from the University of Missouri to the University of Virginia and even to revered institutions like Harvard and Yale: the “safe spaces”; the #blacklivesmatter; the creeping cultural relativism; the stifling political correctness; what Allan Bloom rightly called “the closing of the American mind”. At Oxford however, we will always prefer facts and free, open debate to petty grievance-mongering, identity politics and empty sloganeering. The day we cease to do so is the day we lose the right to call ourselves the world's greatest university.*

*Of course, you are perfectly within your rights to squander your time at Oxford on silly, vexatious, single-issue political campaigns. (Though it does make us wonder how stringent the vetting procedure is these days for Rhodes scholarships and even more so, for Mandela Rhodes scholarships) We are well used to seeing undergraduates – or, in your case – postgraduates, making idiots of themselves. Just don't expect us to indulge your idiocy, let alone genuflect before it. You may be black – “BME” as the grisly modern terminology has it – but we are*

*colour blind. We have been educating gifted undergraduates from our former colonies, our Empire, our Commonwealth and beyond for many generations. We do not discriminate over sex, race, colour or creed. We do, however, discriminate according to intellect.*

*That means, inter alia, that when our undergrads or postgrads come up with fatuous ideas, we don't pat them on the back, give them a red rosette and say: "Ooh, you're black and you come from South Africa. What a clever chap you are!" No. We prefer to see the quality of those ideas tested in the crucible of public debate. That's another key part of the Oxford intellectual tradition you see: you can argue any damn thing you like but you need to be able to justify it with facts and logic – otherwise your idea is worthless.*

*This ludicrous notion you have that a bronze statue of Cecil Rhodes should be removed from Oriel College, because it's symbolic of "institutional racism" and "white slavery". Well even if it is – which we dispute – so bloody what? Any undergraduate so feeble-minded that they can't pass a bronze statue without having their "safe space" violated really does not deserve to be here. And besides, if we were to remove Rhodes's statue on the premise that his life wasn't blemish-free, where would we stop? As one of our alumni Dan Hannan has pointed out, Oriel's other benefactors include two kings so awful – Edward II and Charles I – that their subjects had them killed. The college opposite – Christ Church – was built by a murderous, thieving bully who bumped off two of his wives. Thomas Jefferson kept slaves: does that invalidate the US Constitution? Winston Churchill had unenlightened views about Muslims and India: was he then the wrong man to lead Britain in the war?"*

*Actually, we'll go further than that. Your Rhodes Must Fall campaign is not merely fatuous but ugly, vandalistic and dangerous. We agree with Oxford historian RW Johnson that what you are trying to do here is no different from what ISIS and the Al-Qaeda have been doing to artefacts in places like Mali and Syria. You are murdering history.*

*And who are you, anyway, to be lecturing Oxford University on how it should order its affairs? Your #rhodesmustfall campaign, we understand, originates in South Africa and was initiated by a black activist who told one of his lecturers "whites have to be killed". One of you – Sizwe Mpopu-Walsh – is the privileged son of a rich politician and a member of a party whose slogan is "Kill the Boer; Kill the Farmer"; another of you, Ntokozo Qwabe, who is only in Oxford as a beneficiary of a Rhodes scholarship, has boasted about the need for "socially conscious black students" to "dominate white universities, and do so ruthlessly and decisively!"*

*Great. That's just what Oxford University needs. Some cultural enrichment from the land of Winnie Mandela, burning tyre necklaces, an AIDS epidemic almost entirely the result of government indifference and ignorance, one of the world's highest per capita murder rates, institutionalised corruption, tribal politics, anti-white racism and a collapsing economy. Please name which of the above items you think will enhance the lives of the 22,000 students studying here at Oxford.*

*And then please explain what it is that makes your attention grabbing campaign to remove a listed statue from an Oxford college more urgent, more deserving than the desire of probably at least 20,000 of those 22,000 students to enjoy their time here unencumbered by the irritation of*

*spoilt, ungrateful little tossers on scholarships they clearly don't merit using racial politics and cheap guilt-tripping to ruin the life and fabric of our beloved university.*

*Understand us and understand this clearly: you have everything to learn from us; we have nothing to learn from you.*

*Yours,*

*Oriel College, Oxford*

[more here - <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation/12094277/Cecil-Rhodes-Oxford-University-students-must-confront-views-they-find-objectionable-says-new-head.html> ]