

University Slavery Reparations: Pathways through the Bramble Bush

Slavery reparations is a bramble bush. An unruly thicket that sprawls across the fields of moral philosophy, law, ethics, economics, public policy, African-American studies, and social justice.

Its spikey tendrils have now breached the university gates – smuggled in by historians of university complicity in slavery. To date, three major institutions of higher education have agreed to pay slavery reparations. More broadly, the practice of university slavery reparations has begun to outstrip the theory – to the detriment of both.

On Wednesday, September 29, 2021, Richard Cellini will deliver a presentation entitled: *University Slavery Reparations: Pathways through the Bramble Bush*.

Cellini favors university slavery reparations -- especially when someone else is footing the bill. But he will not make a case for the payment of university slavery reparations. Instead, he will carve multiple pathways through the bramble bush for intrepid explorers, by answering (and not just asking) questions like:

- What's special about university complicity in slavery?
- How widespread was it, and what forms did it take?
- What's the current state of academic theory on university slavery reparations?
- What are the basic elements of reparations?
- How should we frame our thinking about reparations?
- What's the prima facie case for paying reparations?
- How should we handle objections to reparations?

This presentation will hold special interest for students, faculty, administrators, trustees, working group members, alumni, donors, and friends affiliated with any of the 866 U.S. colleges and universities founded before 1900 (i.e., well within the economic plume of antebellum slavery). Cellini will be happy if you remember any of the points listed above when it really makes a difference.

The full paper and supporting materials will be available online at least seven days in advance. The formal portion of the presentation will last approximately 20 minutes, and will be followed by a lively Q&A session. Cellini will privilege questions, challenges, and critiques offered by skeptics, doubters, opponents, iconoclasts, conservatives, traditionalists, and independent thinkers of all stripes.