

Position Statement

On the Removal of George Duncan Ludlow's Name from the University of New Brunswick Law Building



UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
STUDENT UNION

Adopted: October 20, 2019

Expires: October 20, 2021

Whereas:

George Duncan Ludlow was one of the last judges in the British Commonwealth to uphold the legality of slavery;¹ and

He did so at a time when slavery was not commonly-accepted as a fact of life, but rather an increasingly disfavoured practice that most other judges across North America had already struck down or refused to uphold;² and

Even were that not the case, the practice of treating human beings as property has never been acceptable and runs contrary to the values the University of New Brunswick publicly expresses; and

Ludlow further sat on the board of the Sussex Vale Indian Day School, where he advocated for the complete separation of Indigenous children from their families, communities, and culture;³ and

The University of New Brunswick has repeatedly expressed a commitment to honouring the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;⁴ and

George Duncan Ludlow did not attend the University of New Brunswick and has no meaningful connection to the university; and

The naming of university buildings is not solely a function of furthering historical knowledge, but also an honour bestowed on an individual, as well as a persisting implicit approval of the person after whom the building was named; and

¹

<https://nationalpost.com/pmnl/news-pmnl/canada-news-pmnl/unb-law-faculty-mulls-name-change-after-students-raise-concerns-about-namesake>

² David G Bell, "Slavery and the Loyalist Judges of New Brunswick," (1982) 31 UNBLJ 9 at 26-27

³ <https://tj.news/story/101071108>

⁴ <https://www.unb.ca/annualreport/2018/reconciliation/actionplan.html>

Even if building naming was primarily a function of furthering historical knowledge, there are ways that contextualize and denote the contributions of New Brunswick's early citizens that do not involve their name being emblazoned on a building; and

The continued presence of Ludlow's name on the building is a direct insult to the black and indigenous students who currently attend the University of New Brunswick Faculty of Law, forcing them to repeatedly cross the threshold of a building bearing the name of someone who at the very least tacitly approves of their being sold into bondage or separated from their culture.

Be it Resolved That:

The University of New Brunswick Student Union calls for the immediate removal of the building name "Ludlow Hall" from the Law Building, and from all associated maps and university literature; and

The University of New Brunswick Student Union calls for the creation of a plaque that appropriately contextualizes Ludlow's place in New Brunswick's history, highlighting both his contribution to the drafting of New Brunswick's first statutes as well as his upholding of slavery, and his commitment to separating Indigenous children from their parents and culture.