

Email template for:

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President Eisgruber

Dear Dr. Rouse,

I am urgently writing to express my frustration and anger with the recently-developing news regarding Professor Emeritus Alan Mann's horrendous and unethical storage and study of the remains of Black teens--likely Tree and/or Delisha Africa--who died in the 1985 MOVE bombing. While forensic anthropologists should use their profession to identify remains and give peace to families and victims of state violence, in this instance it is clear that Princeton and Penn added to the family's grief and trauma. Ivy League universities continued to house the remains of these children for decades, even after initially failing to positively identify them and without the permission or knowledge of their families, who believed all remains had been laid to rest. Professor Emeritus Alan Mann appears to have flagrantly disregarded the remains by storing them in a cardboard box and ferrying them from lab to lab seemingly at his own personal whims. Former Professor Janet Monge used these remains in an online course "REAL BONES: Adventures in Forensic Anthropology," without any permission from the family of the children. Finally, while it appears the remains are housed at Penn, as initial inquiries developed administrators at Princeton appeared to have no idea where the remains had been taken and when, reflecting a basic lack of reverence for these children's bodies.

I, along with many other students at Princeton, am disturbed by the department's immediate connection to Black death in light of the university's stated commitment to anti-racism and the current state of the nation. For us to reconcile with the forces of structural racism at work in our own institutions, there needs to be recognition and accountability. The Department of Anthropology released a statement acknowledging the racist history of anthropology as a discipline, but not actually apologizing to the MOVE family or taking steps to repair this wrong.

Princeton needs to work directly with the MOVE family and organization to decide next steps regarding the remains of the children, respecting that there may be different desires to engage within the family.

Specifically, MOVE member Mike Africa Jr has issued a set of demands in coalition with Black-led Philly organizations, including:

- 1) Princeton apologizes to the MOVE family and the Black community of West Philadelphia
- 2) Princeton engages with the MOVE family to provide reparations for their trauma

The MOVE 9 also articulated the importance of cherishing Black life by fighting for Mumia Abu-Jamal's release from prison. Princeton should devote resources wherever possible to MOVE's fight for his release.

As Princeton students, we articulate additional demands to provide reparations and to change the institutional structure that allowed this to happen in the first place, including:

- 1) Princeton devotes resources and monetary funds to support Mumia Abu-Jamal's release.
- 2) Princeton permanently removes the online course where the remains are used for instruction and uses any proceeds from the course to financially support Mumia Abu-Jamal's release.
- 3) Representatives of the Anthropology Department provide transparency regarding the institutional mechanisms that allowed this to happen and improve departmental policies to prevent future abuse, including:
 - a) Providing transparency about current and future repatriation efforts.
 - b) Centering the needs and desires of those whose cultural artifacts have been stolen or used.
 - c) Princeton should never use real remains for research or coursework, instead using 3D printed models.
- 4) Prior to the reopening of the art museum, Princeton conducts an external investigation into the practices of the Department of Anthropology. This external board is selected and overseen by the larger student body and the faculty signatories of the [Daily Princetonian opinion piece](#). This body will then conduct annual investigations to ensure continued accountability.
- 5) Princeton revokes Professor Alan Mann's emeritus status.
- 6) Classes, coursework, and syllabi amplify the voices that have been historically excluded/marginalized.

These steps are just a few small steps the university could take to prevent this from happening in the future. They are just a few steps the university can take but they do not absolve the university of the wrongs here, and the anti-Blackness on which it was founded.

Sincerely,