

Against renaming

Here are some of the reasons people might oppose renaming public spaces

Erasing history

Renaming public places erases the historical context in which these names were given and removes an important link to the past.

Diminishing accomplishments

Looking at historical figures through the lens of modern values is unfair and diminishes the accomplishments of people being evaluated outside of their own time. For example, Egerton Ryerson, whose name was taken off a Toronto university in 2022, was an education innovator. Blaming him for residential schools and erasing his name is seen by some as a needless distortion.

Cost

Renaming public places can be costly and may require changing signage, maps, and other materials, which can be a burden on taxpayers. The recent vote in Toronto to change the name of Dundas Street will cost taxpayers an estimated \$6.3 million.

Divisiveness

Renaming can be a divisive issue and an unnecessary distraction from more pressing issues. There may not be a consensus on what names to choose to replace the colonial names, which could lead to further conflicts and divisions.

Slippery slope

If we start re-naming public spaces, where is the line between acceptable and unacceptable, and where does it stop? The practice could lead to a never-ending cycle of name changes as values and societal norms continue to evolve.

Read More

- [Patrice Dutil: Erasing Ryerson, and the Henry Dundas hoax | National Post](#)
- [Opinion | The removal of statues in Canada reflects a will to erase history - The Washington Post](#)
- [Toronto city council votes to rename Dundas Street | CBC News](#)