FROM THE FRONT

"Give light, and people will find the way."
ELLA BAKER CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST

Professors recall Yale response to terrorist attacks

REMEMBRANCE FROM PAGE 1


Harry Simperingham

nia. Ahead of the 25th anniversary of the attacks, Yale professors reflected on teaching in the days — and years — that followed.

"It may be something that changes the entire country for your next four years, possibly even for your lifetime. It may be something that falls short of that. We just don't know," Gaddis recalled saying as he began a lecture the day after the attacks, in front of a crowd of approximately 300 undergraduates.

He encouraged his students to mourn first, before returning to work, and to continue their Yale experience as normally as possible.

Nine Yale alumni lost their lives in the attacks: David Berray '84, David Berry '80, Bennett Fisher '66, Elizabeth Gregg GRD '77, Bradley Hoorn '01, Richard Lee '91, Charles McCrann LAW '72, Christopher Murphy '88 and Stacey Sanders '98.

In an emailed statement, former Yale President Richard Levin directed the News to a speech he gave at a 9/11 commemoration ceremony held on Cross Campus in honor of the tenth anniversary of the attacks. There, Levin — who led the University during 9/11 — spoke of Yale's response to the attacks beyond the classroom, which was marked by "tolerance and mutual understanding."

Levin said in the 2011 speech that these attitudes represented the biggest lesson of the attacks, "that the best weapon in the war on terror is an open mind." He applauded the opportunities the University offered students to challenge and develop individual beliefs, allowing them to "confront darkness and prejudice with light and truth."

In a Thursday article published in the journal "Just Security," history professor David Blight questioned whether the Sept. 11 attacks continue to be remembered with the same "intensity and meaning" today as they were 25 years ago.

"9/11 is forever a day and an event of enormous loss, grief, and foreshadowing of war, indeed 'forever wars,' which began with Afghanistan, Iraq, and now Iran," Blight wrote in an email to the News. "9/11 is also forever a marker in the history of the place of the United States in the world of nations."

While many Americans have grasped the complexity and tragedy of history and 9/11, "clearly some have not," Blight added. Pointing to "fierce attacks" by the Trump administration on historical institutions like the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History and the National Park Service, Blight claimed that "those who insist that history must tell triumphal, patriotic stories will never grasp the essential tragedy in the human condition."

Describing today's students as inheritors of America's past, Blight encouraged those born after 9/11 to pursue an education that engages with history and memory. The professor, who was born eight years after Pearl Harbor, said his own parents never stopped remembering World War II. Blight said he hopes the legacy of 9/11 is never forgotten.

"Whatever your interests become, whatever you choose to study, you should know that history is always waiting for you; it will come to grasp you, take you up in its currents, and throw you back down sometimes in places you will not understand. You cannot know when it is coming for you," Blight said.

In total, 2,977 people died on the day of the Sept. 11 attacks.

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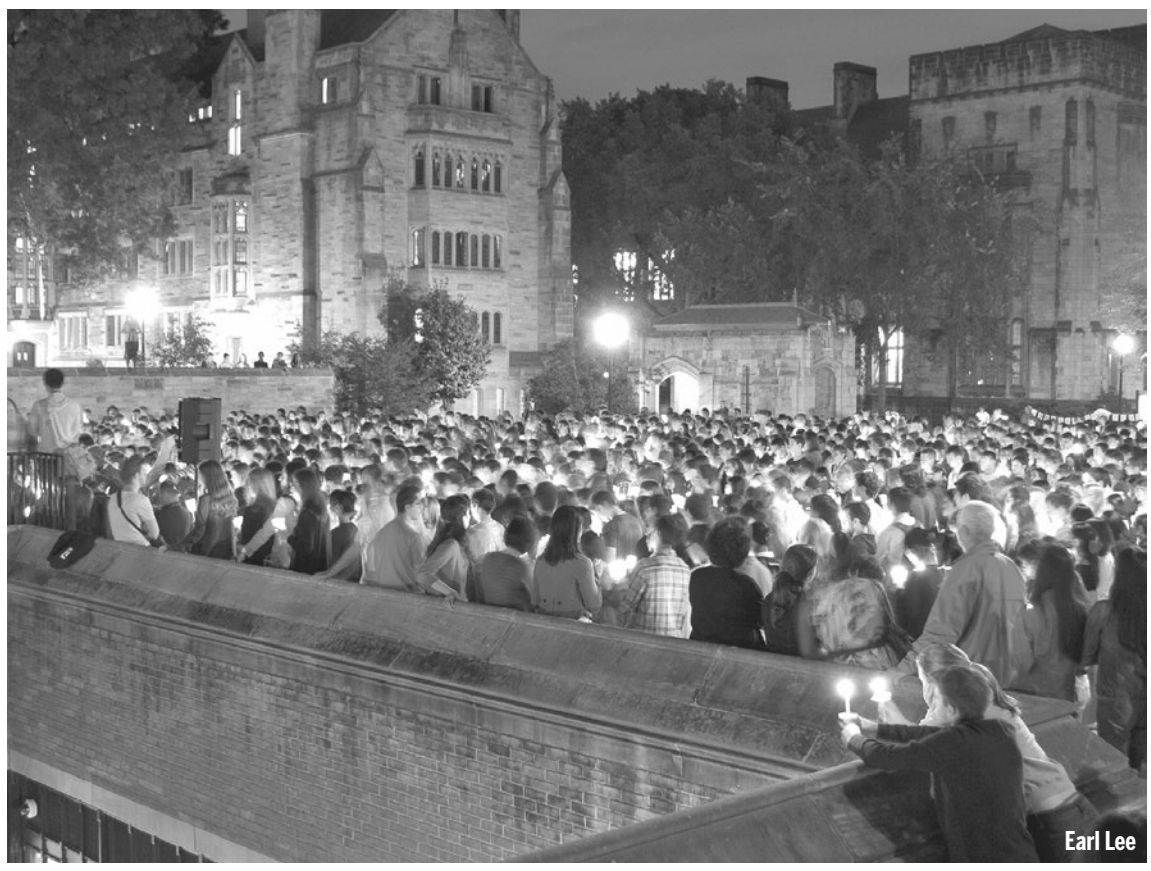
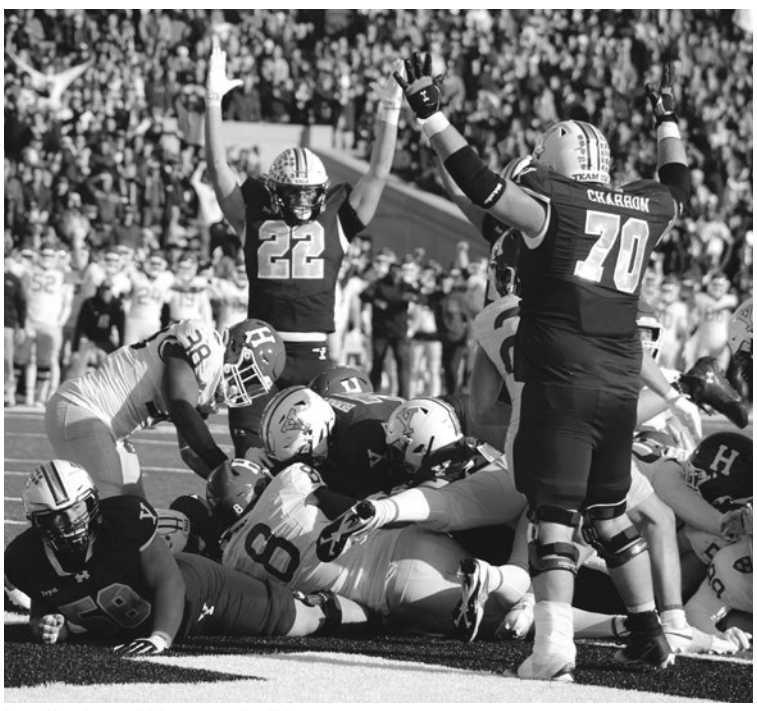

Earl Lee

Yale affiliates and New Haven residents gathered on Sept. 11, 2011 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Then University President Richard Levin spoke at the candlelight vigil on Cross Campus.

Lottery still to decide Harvard game tickets


Liza Kaufman / Photography Editor
Even though this year's game against Harvard will take place at Fenway Park, only a select group of lucky Yale College students will earn a ticket.

TICKETS FROM PAGE 1

tion year, with seniors receiving four, juniors three, sophomores two and freshmen one.

Students can also maximize their chances of earning a ticket by attending various Yale fall sporting events, with the first being the men's soccer game against the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, next Saturday.

The drawing will occur on Oct. 5, and those selected will be able to purchase a ticket for $27. Those not selected will be placed onto a waitlist, which will grant them access to any unpurchased tickets starting Oct. 12.

The class of 2027 is looking to be the second straight senior class to never lose a game against Harvard.

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Yale scolded for protest rules

RANKING FROM PAGE 1

ing Yale, have improved on free speech, and credited this trend to an increased belief among student bodies that university administrations will "protect speech rights" on campus.

The annual rankings are based on student surveys, as well as a review of institutional policies and handling of campus events. For Yale, FIRE's survey sample size this year was 280 students.

Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis and University President Maurie McInnis did not respond to a request for comment.

The release of this year's FIRE rankings comes a week after students and faculty members convened on Cross Campus for a teach-in called "Democratize Yale." One of the demands posted on the organizers' website is that "Yale must adopt a new free expression policy presuming noninterference with non-violent direct action, including rallies, sit-ins, teach-ins, protests, and demonstrations."

The teach-in intentionally flouted campus free assembly regulations by not registering the event with Yale, a requirement that organizers criticized on their website.

FIRE's report cites one specific incident from April 2026 that hurt Yale's overall score. The report explains that administrators told student organizers that they were not permitted to hold a protest on Cross Campus because they were not a part of a registered student group.

Sophia Stone '28, a member of the Yale Student/Farmworker Alliance, the group that held the event, spoke about the incident at the teach-in on Sept. 1.

"As we've learned, throughout social justice movements across history, including in the fight for fair food, there is no time, place or manner in which speaking up for human rights and for justice is wrong," she said at the teach-in. "And a university worthy of these principles cannot make meaningful dissent contingent upon suppressive and arbitrarily enforced guidelines."

FIRE rates the university speech codes that impact students on a red, yellow and green light scale. Murnane said a school would earn a green light if its policies fell in line with what would be required from a public university under the First Amendment.

Yale earned a yellow light.

Joe Cohn, a former policy director at FIRE who now runs the Center for Academic Freedom and Free Speech at Yale, said in a phone interview that yellow light policies "might not infringe on student rights on their face, but they're written broadly to empower enforcement to make that call."

Yale jumped to third in the nation for political tolerance, from 70th last year.

Yale continued to earn points for a policy on University leadership's public commentary that the FIRE organization describes as "institutional neutrality." While Yale has not officially adopted neutrality, McInnis accepted in 2024 a report that recommended administrators refrain from commenting on issues of public importance unless they directly impact Yale.

Cohn said that he thought the Yale administration has been "introspective" and that it "wants to improve." He described institutional practices as a "relatively easy" fix, but addressing campus culture as a more difficult task.

In the survey of 280 Yale students, 24 percent said they thought violence was acceptable in at least rare cases to prevent someone from speaking. One respondent said it is "always acceptable" to use violence to stop a campus speaker.

"There were an alarming number of students that still thought that disrupting other events was acceptable, at least sometimes, or using violence to do so was acceptable sometimes," Cohn said, adding that a policy change would not resolve such a cultural issue.

Cohn added that regardless of whether student perceptions of the administration's free speech policies were inaccurate, "if students perceive that the administration doesn't have their back on these matters, then that in and of itself is important."

Nearly half of respondents in the survey said they self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month. There are around 4.8 liberal students for each conservative student at Yale, according to the report.

Dartmouth leads the Ivy League, sitting in sixth place while Harvard finished in 71st, one spot ahead of Yale. Columbia ranked 246 out of 261 colleges ranked.

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