NEWS

"When your children are teenagers, it's important to have a dog so that someone in the house is happy to see you."
NORA EPHRON JOURNALIST AND WRITER

Admissions may fact check more after first-year removal

BY OLIVIA CYRUS
STAFF REPORTER

Yale College may alter its fact-checking processes for applicants during the 2025-26 admissions cycle, administrators said, in light of the recent removal of a first-year student who a Yale College spokesperson said included false information on her Yale application.

Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis said in a Sept. 22 interview with the News that the admissions office may strengthen its processes for verifying extracurricular activities and activity positions.

"We have a vetting process, and we may be ramping it up a little bit next year," Lewis said. "We'll probably do more of those calls next year."

On Monday, Mark Dunn '07, the director of outreach and recruitment for undergraduate admissions, and Jeremiah Quinlan '03, the dean of undergraduate admissions at Yale, confirmed Lewis' statement in an email to the News.

Earlier this month, Yale rescinded the admission of a Davenport College first-year after determining that she submitted falsified information on her application. In a move that sent shockwaves across campus, the student was escorted from her Old Campus dorm on Sept. 19 by Head of College Anjelica Gonzalez and an armed police officer.

Jordan Sahly '24, an undergraduate admissions officer covering North Dakota, where the removed student's profile on the Yale Face Book said she was from, declined to comment on the student's admission or Yale's undergraduate admission process, instead directing the News' questions to Quinlan.

Quinlan did not answer the News' questions about what information the student falsified on her application, how the fabrication was discovered or how the admissions office will strengthen its verification processes for applications.

Davenport first years live in Lanman-Wright Hall.

Olivia Woo contributed reporting.

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Epstein's birthday album signed by three former professors

BY ASHER BOISKIN
STAFF REPORTER

Three former Yale faculty members and other Yale affiliates left personal notes in a 50th birthday book for Jeffrey Epstein that a congressional committee released last month.

The House Oversight Committee on Sept. 8 published scans of the 238-page album, which was assembled in 2003 by Epstein's longtime associate Ghislaine Maxwell and later obtained through a subpoena of his estate. The outcry over the financier's sexual abuse of women and girls intensified over the summer after the Justice Department released a memorandum saying it would not release extensive evidence related to him.

The album's table of contents identifies Mortimer Zuckerman, who once lectured on city and regional planning at Yale, physicist Lee Smolin, a former assistant professor in the 1980s, and psychiatrist Henry Jarecki, an adjunct who retired from the School of Medicine last year, as contributors.

None of the three former faculty members responded to the News' requests for comment.

The album also features notes or images from Nobel laureate Murray Gell-Mann '48, Epstein's longtime attorney Alan Dershowitz LAW '62 and former President Bill Clinton LAW '73.

Yale is not the only university with affiliates who appear in the 2003 album.

The Daily Pennsylvanian reported that University of Pennsylvania alumni such as President Donald Trump, Zuckerman, 1972 Nobel Prize winner Gerald Edelman and Philadelphia 76ers owner Josh Harris signed the album. And the Harvard Crimson reported that two-time acting Harvard President Henry Rosovsky, among several other university affiliates, also contributed.

Lee Smolin, who taught physics at Yale from 1984 to 1988 as an assistant professor and has made major contributions to the field of theoretical physics, appears in Epstein's birthday book under the category "Scientists."

In 2019, Smolin told The Verge, a technology news outlet, that he saw Epstein at a scientific conference in 2007 and had "had no contact with him since 2008."

"I was one of his first students," Viqar Husain GRD '85 '89, who took a course on general relativity with Smolin at Yale and later had him as his doctoral advisor, wrote to the News. He noted that it was "difficult at first" working with Smolin as he "approached research like an artist, loved crazy ideas, did not encourage regular meetings and let students explore freely."

Husain added that Smolin's inclusion in the album came as "a bit of a surprise, but on the other hand, Epstein was known to 'collect people,' including prominent academics, by organizing fully funded conferences in exotic locations."

Henry Jarecki, identified as a "Friend," praised Epstein in his note for teaching him "more than I expected to at this time of my life."

He included a message from his "house astrologer" describing Epstein as a "fiercely intelligent, highly complex individual" who favored "working in private, or better yet, utter secrecy."

Jarecki was sued last year in federal court in New York by a woman claiming to be a victim of sexual abuse by Jeffrey Epstein. In the complaint, which refers to the woman as "Jane Doe 11," Jarecki is accused of raping her on multiple occasions between 2011 and 2014, after Epstein referred her to the psychiatrist for mental health treatment following his own alleged sexual abuses.

In April 2025, the unnamed woman voluntarily dropped her lawsuit against Jarecki, according to court filings.

In November 2023, Jarecki was celebrated in a medical school press release for having been awarded the Pardes Humanitarian Prize in Mental Health by the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation.

Jarecki retired from the School of Medicine in 2024, according to a University spokesperson.

Zuckerman, also listed as a "Friend," was the editor in chief of U.S. News and World Report and owner of the New York Daily News. He pledged $200 million to Columbia University in 2012 to establish the Mind Brain Behavior Institute, though he paused millions in funding in 2024, citing the university's "failure to address rising antisemitism" on campus.

Zuckerman was invited to speak at a Yale Political Union event in 1993.

Gell-Mann, a Yale alumnus who won the 1969 Nobel Prize in physics and taught at Caltech, signed a page with a photo of himself yawning.

Dershowitz, who edited the Yale Law Journal and graduated first in his class, also wrote an entry in the birthday book. Dershowitz, a longtime Harvard law professor, served on Epstein's legal defense team and helped Epstein secure the 2008 plea deal in which Epstein pleaded guilty in Florida to two state charges of soliciting a minor for prostitution.

Dershowitz has said that he did not recall contributing an entry to the birthday book.

An entry attributed to Clinton is included in the birthday album. Clinton flew on Epstein's private plane on four separate occasions for trips on behalf of the Clinton Foundation.

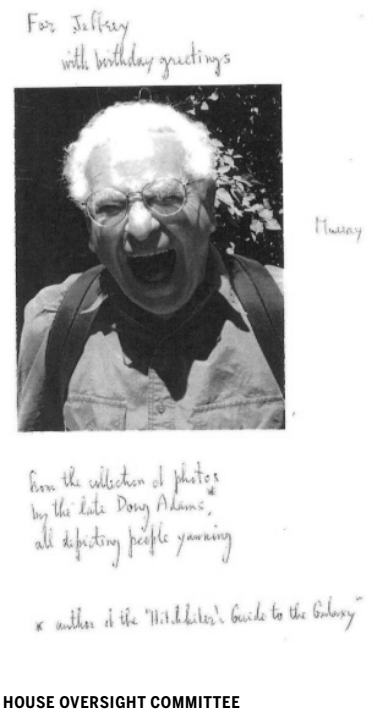
In the album, Clinton notes Epstein's "childlike curiosity" and a "drive to make a difference."

"President Clinton knows nothing about the terrible crimes Jeffrey Epstein pleaded guilty to," Angel Urena, a spokesperson for Bill Clinton, said in a statement posted online by a spokesperson in 2019.

Epstein was a visiting fellow in Harvard's psychology department during the 2005-06 school year, according to a 2020 Harvard report on his ties to the university.

Baala Shakya contributed reporting.

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U.S. HOUSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE



RANA ROOSEVELT, CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATOR

Records released by the House Oversight Committee showed that three former faculty members and several other Yale affiliates are named in Jeffrey Epstein's 50th birthday scrapbook.

College Dems focused on voter advocacy to counter Trump

BY CORINNE COWAN
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Yale College may alter its fact- The room in Linsly-Chittenden Hall buzzed with activity as dozens of members of the Yale College Democrats convened for their fifth meeting of the year on Monday, following a weekend of advocacy in the nation's capital.

After former Vice President Kamala Harris' loss in the 2024 presidential election sent Democrats reeling, Yale Dems leaders noted that this year's group has renewed energy.

Over the weekend, Dems sent students to Washington, D.C. where members advocated for three immigration-focused bills, and Virginia, where they canvassed for former Rep. Abigail Spanberger's gubernatorial campaign.

"I think it's really important — I think particularly this year, to be honest — for us to be going on these trips, to be talking to people, to not be sitting here and just like complaining and commiserating about how horrible everything is," Julia Murphy '27, a Dems member, said.

The organization is looking ahead to more canvassing trips, including one with the group Swing Left in New York's 17th District, currently represented by Rep. Mike Lawler, a Republican.

The student advocacy on the immigration bills came as the Trump administration has undertaken a mass deportation campaign, which has included heightened Immigrant and Customs Enforcement activity in New Haven.

Yale Dems President Christian Thomas '26 highlighted the importance of supporting the three bills. The first would prevent ICE from entering certain spaces such as churches, the second advocates for extended visas for immigrants and the third increases health care access for immigrants.

Alexandra Martinez-Garcia '26, the vice president of the Yale Dems, said attendance and interest took a hit in the spring due to the apathy, disappointment and "commiseration" after Trump's election victory last year.

"It was really hard to reckon with the fact that we had put so much work into the federal election in November," Martinez-Garcia said. "It was really hard to see that culminate in Harris not winning."

However, both Martinez-Garcia and Thomas underscored recent shifts in the organization's culture and direction.

Martinez-Garcia described members as "really excited" about the D.C. trip and said the weekly meetings have "great energy."

Dems at Monday's meeting had to grab more chairs from another room in Linsly-Chittenden to have enough seats for all attendees.

Last weekend's canvassing was a jumping off point for more opportunities in the semester. Monday's meeting also included letter writing for California voters concerning CA Proposition 50 – an effort to redraw the state's congressional districts for Democrats' advantage to counter a Republican redistricting push in Texas.

"I think we're having more canvasses this semester than potentially last semester, and definitely any other semester before," Martinez-Garcia '26 said.

Many members stressed the importance of communicating with individual voters on canvassing trips.

Other initiatives this semester include partnering with Yale organizations and public schools in New Haven. Thomas also cited the new plans within the Dems' election branch as an important way that members can be engaged with the national Democratic party.

Thomas said students are partnering with campaigns ranging from the Virginia governor's race to others in Colorado and Maine.

One first-year student appreciated the emphasis on action and recent efforts the Dems have offered for students to join.

"I was honestly very interested in all the action that they've been doing," Lizeth Ortiz-Calleja '29 said when asked about why she joined the Dems. She mentioned immigration policy as one of her top interests.

Thomas called on the Dems to stand strong against the federal government's actions.

"We're not going to back down. We're not going to be silent," he said.

During fall break last year, Dems members canvassed for Harris in Philadelphia.

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COURTESY OF ZACHARY PAN

Yale Dems traveled to D.C. and Virginia over the weekend, part of renewed advocacy and canvassing efforts.