

IS MALIA IN A DORM NAMED AFTER A SLAVEOWNER?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue wants to know if Malia Obama is living in a dorm named after a slaveowner:

On August 22, former President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle helped their daughter, Malia, move into a dorm at Harvard University. One of the twelve undergraduate dorms is Mather House, named after Increase Mather. He was president of Harvard between 1692 and 1701.

[Mather](#) was a slaveowner *while he was president of Harvard*. In fact, he used his slave to help run the business of Harvard, running errands for the trustees. Mather wrote in his diary that he sent his “Negro” to do various jobs for the institution.

Is Malia living in Mather House?

Whether Malia is living in Mather House or not, it is not fair to pressure her—she is not an activist—to lobby Harvard administrators to change the name of the slaveowner’s dorm. But it would be instructive to learn if Barack Obama wants to take up this campaign.