

## The valuation of campus built heritage from the student perspective

Jen Snowball, Rhodes University  
&  
P. Joan Poor, St Mary's College,  
Maryland (USA)

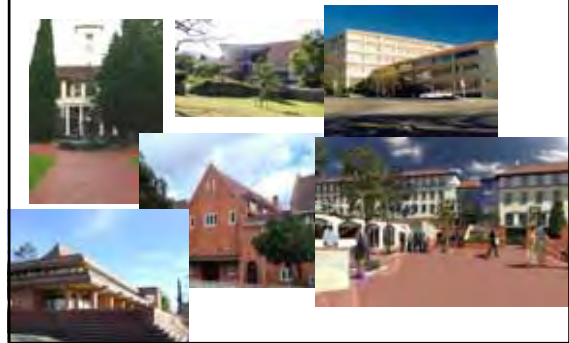
## Research Context

- Significant number of non-market valuation studies on built heritage
- Lack of studies on campus built heritage, although commonly used in marketing and recent grants from Getty Foundation for campus built heritage inventory in US
- Conflict between:
  - “expert” and user/democratic valuations
  - conservation versus adaptation and addition
  - “colonial” architecture and diversifying student population.

## Why conserve campus heritage?

- Visually demonstrates character and history of university (used in branding & fund raising)
- May help build a sense of common identity & community (students & alumni)
- Open discussions on university & local history
- Attracts tourists
- Research questions:
  - > What do students know about campus built heritage?
  - > What does it mean to them?
  - > What value do students at RU or SMCM place on conservation of their campus' built heritage?

## Rhodes University Campus Heritage



## St Mary's College, Maryland



## Research method: WTP study

- Self-completion questionnaire with 5 sections:
  - > 1. Intro & definition
  - > 2. student knowledge test
  - > 3. Opinions & WTP as a % of student fees
  - > 4. Substitutes (other funding categories)
  - > 5. Demographic data
- Data collection:
  - > Randomly selected classes at RU & SMCM (diverse faculties & years of study)
  - > RU= 297; SMCM=339

## Student knowledge & attitudes

| Knowledge/Opinion            | Rhodes           | St. Mary's       |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Correct founding date        | 35%              | 15%              |
| Oldest – newest list         | 75%              | 16%              |
| Taken campus tour            | 64%              | 78%              |
| Feel proud                   | 55%              | 70%              |
| Feel Neutral                 | 43%              | 28%              |
| Feel Negative                | 1.3%             | 0.3%             |
| Isolated from own heritage   | 10%              | 7%               |
| Influenced university choice | 37%              | 46%              |
| Importance in choice         | 6.2 (1-10 scale) | 5.7 (1-10 scale) |

## Willingness to pay

- What is the maximum increase in yearly fees/tuition you would be willing to pay to help preserve your campus' built heritage (circle one)

| R0 (zero)                       | R55 (0.25% increase in average tuition fees) | R110 (0.5% increase in average tuition fees) | R220 (1% increase in average tuition fees) | More than R220 (> 1% increase in tuition fees) | Don't Know |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|------------|
|                                 |  |  |  |  |            |
| WTP amount as % of student fees | Rhodes                                       | St Mary's                                    |  |  |            |
| Zero/Don't know                 | 49%  | 38%  |  |  |            |
| 0.25%                           | 22%  | 27%  |  |  |            |
| 0.5%                            | 13%  | 20%  |  |  |            |
| 1%                              | 12%  | 12%  |  |  |            |
| >1%                             | 5%   | 4%   |  |  |            |

## Determinants of WTP (Ordered Probit)

| Variable                     | Direction and Significance |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Old/New                      | - *                        |
| Dif. Found                   | - *                        |
| Feelpos                      | + ***                      |
| Feelneg                      | - ***                      |
| Isolated                     | - **                       |
| Visual identity              | + **                       |
| Fund conservation            | + *                        |
| Fund library                 | + **                       |
| Influenced university choice | + ***                      |

## Conclusions

- Visual identity of universities is a fairly important determinant of student choice of university, despite lack of historical knowledge.
- Ethnicity/cultural background had no significant effect on WTP, but more black students had negative/neutral feelings towards built heritage & felt isolated by it— implications for marketing & institutional development.