



The Independent Party

Founded 1934 . Hear All Sides

Welcome to Yale!

My name is Roy Lee, and I'm the Chairman of the Independent Party of the Yale Political Union. I'm sure a lot of questions have been running through your mind lately as the start of the school draws near — some about classes, some about furnishing your room. But I propose that the most important questions you have will be more personal: *Who do you want to become during the next four years?*

To be fair, this question is inextricably tied with your academic passions. Between planning dozens of possible course-shopping schedules and thinking about declaring a major, you are sure to make plenty of decisions that will influence the person you are going to become. But that's only part of the picture. I have found that what I have learned from reading books, talking to my professors, and answering questions in class pales in comparison to what I learn from the insights of my classmates themselves. We in the Independent Party believe that exchanges between students and the friendships that result are the foundation of the Yale experience.

The Independent Party is an undergraduate debating society that is as committed to building the bonds of friendship as it is to fostering a rigorous exploration of political, philosophical, and cultural issues. Our weekly debates draw students from across campus into thoughtful and articulate discourse over a variety of issues that cut across the tired lines of liberal and conservative.

We take seriously our motto, "Hear All Sides." Members of the Independent Party favor inquiry over ideology, forming our opinions issue by issue rather than accepting pre-packaged partisan platforms. What unites the IP is a rejection of claustrophobic categories and easy answers that all too often dominate political discourse. We believe that an open mind is the hallmark of a well-educated person.

You may have heard of the Yale Political Union, the oldest and most respected student debating society in the country. Not only is the IP the largest party in the YPU, it is one of the most active and is unique among the parties for its refusal to align with any specific political viewpoint. Just this past year, IPsters took to the floor to argue against John Kerry and Karl Rove with equal fervor.

The people with whom you surround yourself, perhaps more than anything else, will shape your time at Yale. And of the friendships I have made, the ones forged over lively disagreements in the IP are by far the strongest. The IP comes together for lunch every Friday, dinner every Sunday, regular toasting sessions (an old Yale tradition), and fun, low-key social events. We even make a semesterly trek to New York City to meet with leaders in industry, government, art, and journalism. Guests we have seen just in the last year have included former New York City mayor Ed Koch, Obama-administration health care expert Dr. Ezekiel Emmanuel, the editor-in-chief of the *New Atlantis*, Eric Cohen, and the global head of capital markets at Credit Suisse, Tom Mercein.

Whatever you decide to do during your time at Yale, it will be full of your most cherished moments and profound discoveries; I hope you'll share some of them with the IP. The beginning of school will fly by, so please remember to take some time to join us for a debate, mixer, or a meal. Keep an eye out for IP posters and emails in the coming weeks, and in the meantime, you can learn more about us in the enclosed summer edition of our newsletter, *The Spectrum*. If you have any questions about the IP, or Yale in general, don't hesitate to contact me at roy.c.lee@yale.edu or our Chief Whip, Samantha Monge Kaser, at samantha.mongekaser@yale.edu.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Sincerely,

Roy Lee,
Chairman of the Independent Party