

Welcome! As a College of Charleston student, one of your first activities will be **New Student Convocation on Monday, August 19th from 10:00-11:30 am**. The College Reads book, *Rising Out of Hatred: The Awakening of a Former White Nationalist*, by Eli Saslow, will form the basis of your small group discussion with a faculty member at Convocation. You will also discuss the book in your First Year Experience course and in other places so it is important that you read and think carefully about the book. The book's author, Eli Saslow, will be on campus October 29-30, 2019. He will meet with classes, with small groups of students and faculty, and he will give a public lecture on Tuesday, October 29 @ 7pm. This talk is free and open to all.

Preparing for Convocation After reading *Rising Out of Hatred*, **choose one** of the options below. Consider each prompt carefully and select the one that most appeals to you. Produce a typed response of about 750 words that speaks directly to the prompt and draws directly from the book. You will want to quote passages from the book to provide examples or to clarify your ideas. This essay will provide you with a basis to join the Convocation discussion and relieve some of the stress of wondering if you are prepared. Make use of the Reading Companion and additional resources found on The College Reads website (collegereads.cofc.edu).

1. Visible and Invisible Infrastructures of Hate and Tolerance Derek's transformation powerfully suggests how acts of hate, tolerance, and advocacy are made possible by a range of things beyond one's personal relationships with others. These include the geographical spaces of West Palm Beach and rural Tennessee; the New College campus and its communication networks such as the email Forum; the media landscape in which Derek grows up and in which his father still resides; the study abroad programs available to Derek and how they created opportunities for Derek to both strengthen and challenge his beliefs at various points; academic experiences like the student thesis research that outed Derek and the course Allison took to give her more ammunition against his arguments. Focus your essay on one of these elements that is not a personal relationship between Derek and another person and analyze how it enables acts of hate, protest, advocacy, or tolerance in the book.

After addressing the first part of the question, conclude by drawing on your own experience. In what ways have your beliefs been shaped by things beyond your immediate relationship with others—by television media, for example, or by technologies that facilitate communication, or by specific physical and geographical spaces, or by programs and organizations in which you have participated?

2. Responding to Hatred When Derek's identity as a white supremacist was revealed, those in his community responded very differently. Some students actively protested Derek's presence on campus; others chose to ignore him. Some pressed for curricular changes to include courses that more actively support diversity; others were moved to physical confrontation. Some withdrew from classes when they discovered Derek was enrolled; others invited him to dinner, tried to engage him in conversation, and formed meaningful relationships with him. What do you think the author suggests is the most successful response to those who hold views and actions we might find abhorrent, hateful, and misinformed? Did you find yourself similarly drawn to this strategy, or did you find it questionable? Citing specific examples from the book, which responses did you find most compelling, creative, interesting, or flawed?

After addressing the first part of the question, conclude by drawing on your own experience. What kinds of strategies have you witnessed for dealing with the presence of racism and hatred in your life or in your community? In what ways did they succeed or fail?