

# FRANKLY SPEAKING

Olin's unofficial,  
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source.

VOLUME 15, ISSUE IV

OCTOBER 2022

FREE, AS IN BEER

## It's Olin's Turn to Divest

**Olivia Chang** (*she/her*),  
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Writers

*“Olin is a community striving to change the world and positively impact people's lives [...]. What change do you hope to be a part of?”*

Remember this?

You might recall this question from Olin's common app. Even if you're not a student, you've probably had this question rattling around in your head for some time.

Well, here's a change for you: we are calling on Olin to eliminate its investments in fossil fuels, or divest. Our new strategic plan states a commitment to sustainability, equity, and justice, bringing into question our endowment's investments in fossil fuel companies.

Over 1,500 institutions have already committed to divestment, totaling over \$40 trillion in divested funds, including Harvard, Princeton, Wellesley, Boston University, Brandeis, Brown, Dartmouth, Cornell, Columbia, the University of

California system, U Mass, and 200 other colleges with all sizes of endowments.

\$40 trillion is not inconsequential. Fossil fuel companies are stating on record that divestment poses a material risk to their business. Peabody Coal, the largest coal producer in the world, declared bankruptcy in 2016, citing divestment as one of the main reasons; divestment was also the key reason for the coal sector's credit de-rating between 2013 and 2018.

The writing is on the wall: fossil fuels are a sunset industry. The global effort to prevent climate catastrophe will require an enormous, unprecedented decrease in fossil fuel usage, guaranteeing that fossil fuels will be poor long-term investments. If Olin hopes to “protect and sustain our natural, built, and financial resources so that they might equitably benefit future generations”, as stated in our strategic plan, divestment is the smart choice economically, too.

So how much do we have invested in fossil fuels? According to past conversa-

tions with Olin's board of trustees, we have between 1-2% of our \$450 million endowment, or \$4-9 million, invested in fossil fuel companies.

“Only \$9 million?” we hear you ask. The fossil fuel industry has trillions of dollars, what difference will that make?

While our student body may be tiny, Olin is influentially huge. Our model of impact-centered education is emulated by many institutions around the world. As leaders in engineering education, we set an example.

Olin is in an unusual position: we are an engineering school without petroleum engineering programs, that doesn't receive fossil fuel research funding, or send alumni to fossil fuel companies. While we've fallen behind so many of our liberal arts peers, we can be one of the first engineering schools to commit to divestment. Morally, we can send a clear message that if it's wrong to wreck the planet, it's wrong to profit from that wreckage.

As Gilda has stated, “the climate crisis is one of the

biggest, most complex challenges that we're facing". It's already here. As you read this, people in Pakistan are mourning loved ones lost to floods, Californians are fleeing ever-worsening wildfires, and Florida's residents are just beginning to assess the damage from Hurricane Ian. Let's show that we're committed to sustainability, equity, and justice.

**So what are we doing about it?** We have started a new group, Olin Climate Justice, to work towards divestment and broader institutional change to combat the climate crisis. We spent the summer talking to over 30 faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, as well as divestment activists at other schools, and we've compiled our research into a 50-page proposal outlining the importance of divestment, the history of divestment efforts at Olin, and how we can make it happen here.

We'll be doing a lot this semester—you'll hear from us very soon!

### What can you do?

- **If you're a current student**, know that this is your college and you have the power to create change. We plan to hold one of Olin's first-ever formal full student body social referendums. Keep an eye out for this in late November—your participation will be essential. Want to get involved? Show up to our meetings happening every Thursday at 6 PM in the MAC 3rd floor endcap!
- **If you're a faculty or staff member**, your opinion matters. If you're interested in getting involved or just learning more, we ask you to reach out to us or show up at our meetings! Your support and experience are invaluable, and we are working on ways to involve you.
- **If you're an alum**, we ask for your support. You have an outsized influence on the direction

and future of Olin. Many successful divestment campaigns at other colleges involved the critical backing of passionate alumni. Contact us if you want to get involved!

- **If you're an Olin parent**, we haven't forgotten about you! Climate activism isn't only for college campuses. We invite you to engage in this process with us—we'd love to hear from you.
- **If you're an Olin board of trustee member**, you are the final decision-makers on divestment, and we ask you to raise this issue. We are here to work with you. We understand that this decision takes fortitude and consensus, and we want to find out the best way to make this happen for all of us.

Questions, concerns, or comments? Join the [climate-justice@lists.olin.edu](mailto:climate-justice@lists.olin.edu) mailing list, and/or reach out to Olivia at [ochang@olin.edu](mailto:ochang@olin.edu) and Vedaant at [# Some Decision-Making Strategies](mailto:vkuchhal@</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Ian Eykamp (Any)  
Writer

As college students, most of us have pretty big decisions we are responsible for, sometimes for the first time. (How should I prioritize

my time? What kind of job aligns with my ethics? Do I drop this class?) Additionally, some of us recently made one of the biggest decisions of our lives: whether or not to attend Olin.

I want to share a couple

of strategies I have used to make big decisions where I felt good about the outcomes. Hopefully these will be useful to you to gain traction on decisions where you don't know where to start.

## Before you begin

These things are pre-requisites for being able to think through a decision—if you don't have them in place, you won't be able to put any strategy to good use.

### 1. Give yourself enough time to think.

In the best case, this can be 2-3 weeks or more, so you can reflect on your decision prior to committing. If you don't have weeks, give yourself a solid chunk of several hours to decide. Late night hours work well for me, because I can stay up and ponder without a definite deadline.

### 2. Ask for advice.

Not a requirement, but other people's analysis can help give you context for your options. Try to talk to enough people (more than one) until you find at least one person recommending each option you're considering. Another good rule of thumb is if you know what someone is going to say before you ask them, then they're probably not a good person to ask if you want an honest opinion.

### 3. Narrow down the list.

Decision-making works best with two or at most three different options to choose from. If you have a large set of options, you can usually cross most of them off for easy reasons (too expensive, bad vibes, etc.). Make a list (physi-

cal or mental) of criteria that you care about, and use this to cross off options that are objectively worse. If there are still a lot of options that are equally good, you may need to spend more time thinking about what you really want—this is one of the steps that can take weeks. You can also use the strategies below to compare sets of options or one option against the rest.

## What is decision-making?

When you make a decision, you are weighing variables. Even if you know the facts about every option, it's often difficult for you to know how much to care about each factor (ask yourself—how much of a pay cut am I willing to take for a job that aligns with my values? It's hard to put a number on it, no matter how specifically you define the job). The strategies below are helpful for making value judgments: determining what aspects of each option are really the most important to you, knowing how to weigh each of them, and ultimately comparing one combination of variables against another.

### Strategy #1: Debate against yourself

Pick one option—it might be the option you are leaning more towards, if one exists—and convince yourself to choose that option. Pretend you know it is the right

option, and you just need to tell the rest of your brain why it's obviously the best choice. Give yourself time to lay out all the reasons for it in exhaustive detail. Talk to yourself until you're out of arguments, and you don't know what to say next. Take a deep breath.

Then take the opposite position and tear your first argument to shreds. Your job now is to convince yourself that the second option is really the best, and the first argument got everything wrong. Again, give yourself the time to build out your argument for the second option and to poke all the holes you can find into the first.

Now go back to the first option, and repeat the process. Talk yourself down; don't hold back. Emphasize the good points of the option you are advocating for.

Go back and forth as many times as you need to. As someone who overthinks things, I often go three to six times on each side. Later rounds tend to go faster, because you've exhausted all the new arguments, and you're just repeating things you've said earlier. This is how you're making value judgments. Your arguments are coalescing around the points that matter most, and other details are falling out of the debate. At some point it will become clear which argument convinces you the most—congratulations, you have made a decision.

## **Strategy #2: Imagine you've already decided**

Again, pick an option to try out first. Imagine that the deadline for your decision has already passed, and you have committed to choosing this option. It's too late to go back. How do you feel?

Do you feel regret? Disappointed? Do you feel like you're missing an opportunity you kind of wish you had?

On the other hand, do you feel excited? Relieved? If you're lucky, you might realize that you always knew this was the right decision,

you just never let yourself believe in it.

It can be subtle, so pay attention to yourself to judge your reaction. Give yourself time to sit with your imagined decision, and try hard to pretend it's real. A few minutes may be enough time, but feel free to try out your decision for a couple of days or more. When you're ready, pretend you chose the other option instead.

I have had good results with this method. I used it to decide whether to come to Olin or go to a traditional engineering school. I was ly-

ing in bed a week before decisions were due. I imagined going to OSU and convinced myself that I would be happy there. Then I imagined accepting my admission to Olin.

"Shoot, am I really doing this? I mean, is this even a real school?" I remember thinking. "Shoot. Oh shoot. Oh... oh yeah." I think I did an involuntary fist pump as I drifted off to sleep. The next day I committed to Olin. It was one of the best decisions of my life.

# Hear Me Out

**Phillip Post**  
*Contributor*

I've come to realize that every opinion has importance. We live in a country where having an opinion is a fundamental right, but I think we take this right for granted. Whether intentionally or not, we are inclined to block out opinions that fundamentally misalign with our values or worldview. This is human nature. Am I saying all other opinions are correct and we should welcome them with open arms? Of course not. But, they are opinions nonetheless, and even if we disagree with the substance of what someone says, I would like to give the person the benefit of the doubt that they are coming from a good place.

When someone shares an opinion with me, I see it as a form of respect. They did not have to say anything to me

and it takes far more effort to convey a point of view than to not say anything at all. I could have gone on living my life without ever encountering what they thought at that moment, but they chose to share an intimate part of themselves. Shouldn't I at least hear them out?

It matters not their creed, upbringing, or experience. None of those are prerequisites for having an opinion. But they do absolutely matter. Whereas they do not dictate whether someone can have an opinion, they do allow us to weigh how compelling an opinion is. Even if you believe you know a person, we are walking enigmas that hide large parts of ourselves, and an opinion often comes out long before we know enough about the person to properly weigh their

opinion against our own understanding.

At this point, you may be thinking I am beating around the bush, but I want to make this point painfully clear: please hear people out. When you preemptively tell someone they are not entitled to an opinion because you believe you know their entire creed, upbringing, or experience, you are making an assumption and doing something incredibly hurtful. I know opinions can be wrong and painful, but please at least hear them out. They respected you enough to convey them in the first place.

P.S. If anyone wishes to discuss any of this or anything else with me. I welcome you and I value your opinion. Thank you!

# The Two Planets

Ian Eykamp (any)  
Writer

## Chapter 1

The sun shone weakly before it dipped behind the silhouette of the White Planet, but the heat still pounded up from the ground, sending mirages flickering through the night sky like the thought of clouds in a wetter world. Night fell, stars shone brightly through the haze of heat, and a startled Acuña woke from the hammock inside his house to the sound of sand crickets chirping the start of the day.

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*For day was night on Venus, the yellow planet; or rather, night was day, for the true "day" when the sun was shining was too hot for work, and the bulbous fireflies that blanketed the sky for their nighttime mating rituals provided plenty of light to see by.*

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Acuña dressed in the deep navy garb of the Venus Ferry Commission, breakfasted, kissed his sleeping wife goodbye, and stepped outside into the still-blazing heat. His home was one of many expertly constructed mud-brick houses near

the center of town, and it could be recognized from the breath of cold air that left with him that its owner was a well-salaried man. He strolled through streets waking up for the day shift, merchants drawing up carts of chickpeas on horseback, hawking fresh pita breads and olives and little trays of ice to the growing numbers of passers-by. Next to each display of goods was an insulated tank of cool gas about the size of a stout man's leg. Acuña entered the short queue at the water station and filled a bottle with lukewarm water from the cart. He pulled a small cylinder from his purse and connected it to the water lady's large tank. She turned a knob until the dial read out the price of the water in Kelvins, smiled, and handed the cylinder back to Acuña. He left an ice cube as a tip, which she melted and fed its coldness into her tank to add to the cold air he had already paid.

When he reached the station, he stepped aboard a slow trolley which took him to the outskirts of town, the site of his work and that of a thousand of the most talented men and women from the far reaches of the Yellow Planet. Acuña looked up past the fireflies at the sky dominated by the shining face of the White Planet,

dark now because the sun was behind it, and taking up half the sky. He was in radio contact with his counterparts on that planet, at a site he could not see without a telescope but which he knew he could point at by sticking his finger straight up in the air. The place he stood now and the place he could point to were the spots on the respective planets that were closest together. The Yellow and White Planets were geosynchronously locked—they orbited each other with exactly the same speed so that they stayed in fixed positions relative to each other as they spun.

Acuña Deliari entered the complex of low adobe structures to a welcome blast of government-minted cool air that greeted him from inside the main building. Today was the first test run of the Interplanetary Ferry Commission's work of nearly five decades: the first shuttle rocket to travel from the Yellow to the White Planet and back.

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*Today would mark the first day since ancient times that the White and Yellow people had met face to face, and the first time when both prospered under peaceful, capitalist democracies.*

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Today would mark the first day since ancient times that the White and Yellow people had met face to face, and the first time when both prospered under peaceful democracies.

The launch site was prepared; the diplomatic procession filed somberly toward the rocket on horses draped with navy and gold coats of arms; and a speech was read out by a young woman in scarlet whose excited inflections barely matched the trembling palpitations felt by Acuña and the rest of the Ferry Commission as they awaited the culmination of their life's work. Two hours later, an ultrasonic loud-speaker that no human could hear sent the fireflies scattering as a dark hole appeared in the sky through which the magnificent face of Cyro the White Planet glinted in the peeking sunlight, and the rocket lifted off with a rumble like an earthquake and disappeared into the sky. Applause erupted from all sides.

The view from the shuttle was spectacular as it passed through the thick atmosphere of Venus and the port-holes opened up on the wide slice of space sandwiched between the two worlds, one yellow and familiar, pulsating with constellations of fireflies, growing more sphere-like and smaller by the minute, and the other snow-white and ominous, looming ever larger. Delray,

the lead diplomat among the crew of five, clutched her seat tightly as the rocket spun around at the midpoint between the planets and began preparing for the descent. It struck her suddenly how small her own planet was, and how utterly real the one she was approaching seemed in contrast. She had learned everything there was to know about Cyro through conversations over radio, but there is only so much you can learn from talking about a place, and photographs could do little to aid in communication because the camera had not yet been invented.

When they touched down on the icy ground in the middle of the Cyro Ferry landing site, the Venusian diplomats looked around themselves in awe. They looked first at the earth, blanketed in a thick frost though recently cleared, then at their reflection in the blinding white horizon, then up at the dawn sky and the streaks of pink in the clouds—"Clouds!" they exclaimed with astonished glee—then up at the burning yellow sands of their home planet Venus. Then they turned slightly and gazed up and down again two or three more times, shivering with what could be mistaken for amazement, until one of them tried to speak, and by the time the Cyroans had realized something was wrong, their hearts had nearly stopped and they had to

be treated for second-degree frostbite under a lamp of the kind they used for hatching chickens.

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*For through all their many years of detailed accounts of life on their respective planets, no one had bothered to mention that Cyro's ambient temperature was minus thirty-five Celsius, while the Venusians had never experienced anything below a sweltering thirty degrees!*

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Once recovered, Delray and her delegation were given parkas and shawls and kept under close watch by a bemused doctor with a thermometer, with which he prodded them occasionally without warning. They were led by a man named Akunai Delar on a brief official tour of the launching facility, which was comparable in technological sophistication with its Venusian counterpart. They learned that the buildings were heated by immense boiler systems underground in much the same way expensive buildings were cooled on Venus. When Delray asked how they paid for the heat, their guide replied:

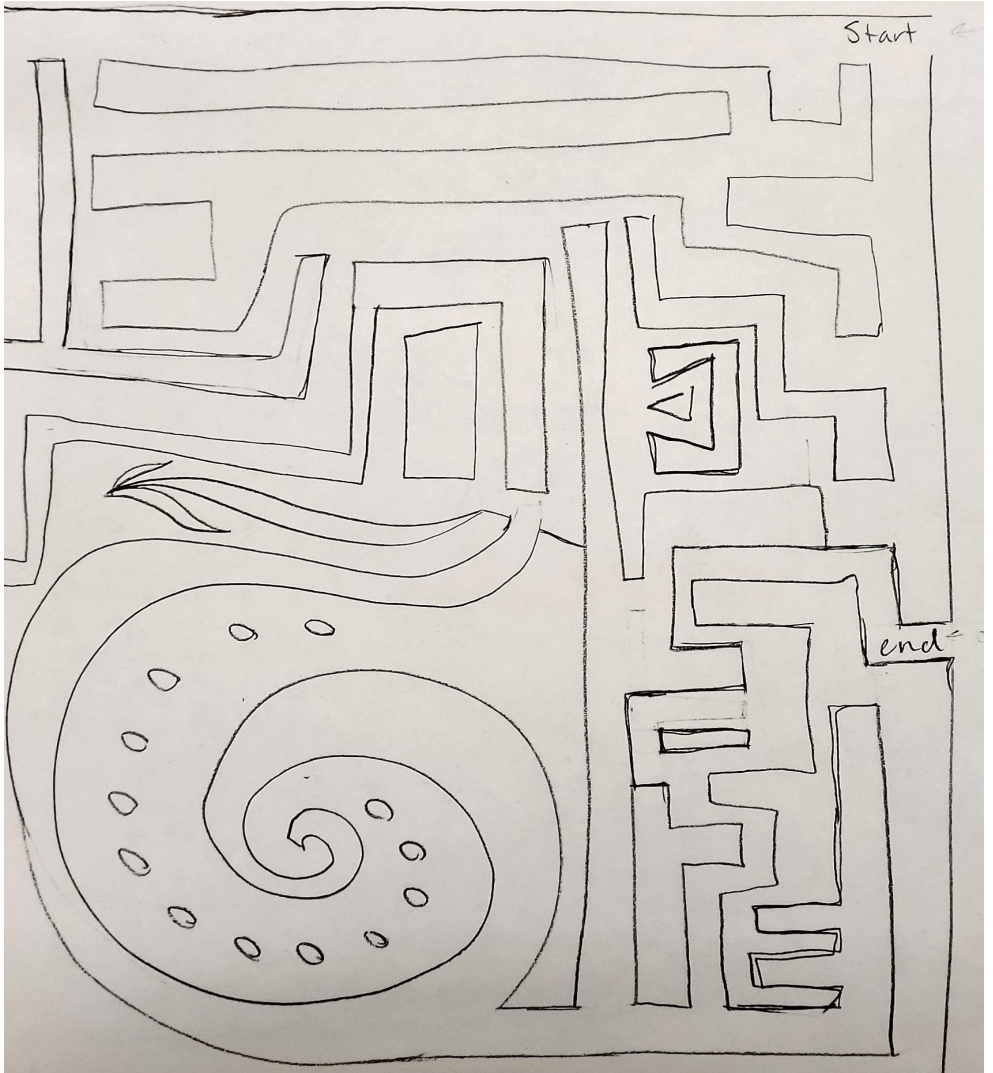
“It’s government funded. All the heat sources on Cyro are regulated by the government, you know. We use it as a currency, just the way you pay for things with the cold.”

“But heat is so abundant—” Delray began, before she realized that on Cyro, things worked quite the opposite way than on Venus. The thought sent a shiver down her spine, and

the doctor poked her again in the ribs with the thermometer.

“Imagine,” Delray whispered to herself as she was herded back onto the shuttle along with the first Cyroan delegation for the return journey, “just imagine if we could move some of that cold air back to Venus! There would be not a poorhouse that went uncooled in summer, not a crop that

would fail from drought, not one more death from heat stroke in any city south of Saōlo!” And the Cyroans nodded gravely, no doubt thinking of the benefits of Venus’s prolific temperature to their freezing planet where the generators could barely keep the cities warm in the winter and where heat was a commodity to be hoarded like gold.



# Drunk Horoscopes

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**Taurus (Apr. 20 – May 20):** Don't take the elevator from the ground floor. You will get stuck.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22 – Dec. 21):** Take a nap. Go the fuck to sleep. Just, take a break you Oliner.

**Gemini (May 21 – Jun. 20):** Your professor knows you didn't do the homework. They see through your request for an extension.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22 – Jan. 19):** If you have blonde hair, you look like an inverted candy corn. Prove me wrong. If you don't have blonde hair, you're a Reese's Pieces.

**Cancer (Jun. 21 – Jul. 22):** You're going to get hand foot mouth. Sorry. At least now you know.

**Leo (Jul. 23 – Aug. 22):** Yes! Sexy good hair days for you. Enjoy.

**Virgo (Aug. 23 – Sep. 22):** We know you took a bite out of the toilet. Maybe eat breakfast instead. It's the most important meal of the day.

**Libra (Sep. 23 – Oct. 22):** You will fall down the library stairs.

**Scorpio (Oct. 23 – Nov. 21):** Get that tattoo. The one you've been thinking about. It's a good idea. You won't regret it.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20 – Feb. 18):** Every time you try to get tea from the dining hall soda machine it will be water. No tea for you. Try again next month. Sorry.

**Pisces (Feb. 19 – Mar. 20):** Cry during office hours. You'll get the extension. Girl-boss moment.

**Aries (Mar. 21 – Apr. 19):** You're going to choke on spicy dining hall food. You might think the dining hall food isn't spicy, but you're going to choke on the bland beef.

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**Kill the president.**

**Win a prize!**

*November 11th-13th*

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