2020 Vision and Revisions

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Permanent Change?

In 2020 the three C’s became a way to express CDC cautionary messages — closed spaces, crowded places and close contact. Avoid these to stay safe. The mantra of wash your hands often, wear a mask and maintain six feet distance from others also expressed the changes in behavior that people around the globe needed to make to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

At the same time other changes were taking place. With the round-trip journey of NASA astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley, the U.S. returned to launching shuttles. The Democrat and Republican national conventions were not held in convention centers. Sen. Kamala D. Harris (D-Calif.) was nominated as the Democratic vice presidential nominee.

A convergence of events led to protests and civil rights rallies in American cities and across the globe. When video taken by a student showed a police officer refusing to remove his knee from George Floyd’s neck, resulting in Floyd's death, people cried for justice and reform. The names and lives of others were called out, Black Lives Matter protests gained momentum and a plaza in D.C. was named and painted in bold yellow letters.

Conscience and questions coalesced as school names were challenged. Sports teams, including the Washington Football team, examined their names and mascots. Statues of Civil War and civic leaders were researched, reviled, pulled down during protests and/or removed to safe places.

Would these changes be a fleeting disruption of the norm? Or would they be permanent and lead to more civic and policy changes?

On the cover: An empty base remains at the site where “Silent Sentinel,” a 112-year-old statue of a Confederate soldier, once stood in front of the Loudoun County courthouse in Leesburg, Va. / MARK MILLER/THE WASHINGTON POST
It’s About Change

“Change” is a very useful word. You change outfits. Or change plans. You change tires. You hope for change after a food purchase and ask for change from a $20 bill. Seasons change. Social changes are studied. You can have a change of heart — and even change your mind.

Its etymology can be found in Old French, Latin and Old Irish. In Old French changier meant to “change,” “alter” or “switch.” The Latin word cambire means “to exchange” or “barter.” Celtic kemb (“to bend,” “to change” and “to barter”) and the Old Irish camm meant “crooked” or “curved.” Do you see these ideas in today’s uses of change?

1. The following words indicate change. Define them to distinguish one from the other. Then use each one in a sentence. The ability to describe types of changes through word choice gives you more command of your expression.

Organize on your own paper for each word:
Word:
Definition:
Sentence:

A. About-face
B. Alter
C. Alteration
D. Curtail
E. Exchange
F. Innovation
G. Modify
H. Substitute
I. Transform
J. Tweak

2. Give a noun that indicates change. Use it in two sentences.

3. Give a verb that indicates change. Use it in two sentences.
2020 Images of Change

Photographs capture momentous moments as well as the most mundane of happenings. These images are of first events and changes taking place in 2020.

Identify the place, people and event in each photograph.
2020 Images of Change continued

[Images of people working on a statue and a boat filled with football helmets.]

[Image of a baseball stadium.]

JOHN MCDONNELL/THE WASHINGTON POST  ALEX BRANDON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

JONATHAN NEWTON/THE WASHINGTON POST
Photographs and Captions

Photographs and captions work together with the headline and article to give readers information about people, places and events. Readers often look at the photograph and read the caption before starting to read the article. Captions are present tense to indicate the instant that is captured. Captions name the people, help to put the action into a context, and indicate where and when it is taking place. Captions may tell why the moment is important. Some captions may be longer to give more information. If they are placed with a photograph and no article, they are called story captions.

Look carefully at the photographs to read their visual communication.
Then read the captions. Match the caption and photograph that together tell the story (story caption) or part of the event.

___ A. The Washington Football Team will get new uniforms and helmets once a new name and logo are decided and some legal hurdles are cleared.

___ B. Lawmakers surround the casket of the late congressman John Lewis during the funeral service held in the Capitol Rotunda. Lewis, the first African American to lie in state in the U.S. Capitol, was a champion of civil rights and justice. His coffin rests on the catafalque that first held President Abraham Lincoln’s coffin.

___ C. Workers in Richmond (Va.) remove J.E.B. Stuart’s statue on July 8. It is the last of four Confederate markers on city-owned Monument Avenue property to come down.

___ D. The Nationals and Yankees stand for the national anthem Thursday night at an eerily empty Nationals Park. The July 23 season opener began hours after the MLB and its players’ union reached an agreement on the pandemic-delayed season.

___ E. Sen. Kamala D. Harris (D-Calif.) is introduced by presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden on August 12 at a Delaware high school without the normal cheering crowds because of coronavirus precautions. “America is crying out for leadership.” Harris said.

___ F. The SpaceX capsule splashes down in the calm waters of the Gulf of Mexico, hundreds of miles from Tropical Storm Isaias in the Atlantic. NASA astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley completed a fiery, high-speed journey back from the International Space Station on August 2.
 Prepare a Story Caption

The story caption accompanies one or more photographs and illustrations. It is self contained with no article. It may be boxed or have additional white space around it.

This indepth caption contains the fiveWs and H, often presenting the context (Why) for the action or encounter captured in the image — what happened before and after. It may also provide a quotation.

Read and discuss the example of a story caption from August 28, 2020. Then think about a person, event or situation in your community that you could photograph and write a story caption to accompany the image(s).

A new way forward

Howard Baker changes out the signs at the Manassas school formerly known as Stonewall Jackson High. The institution will now be called Unity Reed High School. The decision to remove the name of the Confederate general, which also affected a middle school, was made this summer. The high school’s name honors Arthur Reed, a longtime school security assistant.
**KIDSPOST**

**Washington’s football team may at long last get a new name**

Owner Daniel Snyder said for years he wouldn’t change it, but he’s reconsidering.

The Score

FRED BOWEN

It looks as if the Washington Redskins are going to change their name. Finally.

Last week, the team announced that it will conduct a “thorough review” of the name. Most observers think this will lead to the team changing it.

I have written several times, first in 2005, that the team should change its name. The term “Redskin,” after all, is a hurtful name for Native Americans. As any kid knows, it’s not nice to call people mean names.

Daniel Snyder, who has owned the team since 1999, opposed changing the name. He claims the name honors Native Americans. In 2013, he said, “We’ll never change the name. It’s that simple. NEVER — you can use all caps.”

The world, however, has changed. Recent events have made people more sensitive about symbols of racism, such as statues honoring Confederate generals who fought against the United States in the Civil War (1861 to 1865) to preserve slavery in their states.

And sensitive to professional sports team names that are thoughtless labels for a group of people.

So, if fans in Washington will soon be rooting for a football team with a new name, what will it be?

I looked at the names for all 32 teams in the National Football League (NFL). Fourteen teams have animal names, such as Bears, Lions or Dolphins. Five of the animal names are bird names, such as Ravens or Eagles.

Seventeen more teams have names that describe a kind of person, such as Patriots, Cowboys or Packers.

My research also revealed that NFL teams do not change their names often. I found only a few times when a team changed its name after it settled in a city.

One of the original 14 NFL teams in 1920 was called the Decatur (Illinois) Staleys. They were named after the sponsor of the team, the Staley starch company. The team moved to Chicago in 1921 and played one season as the Chicago Staleys. They changed their name to the Bears in 1922.

The Pittsburgh team started in 1933 as the Pirates. In 1940, the owner wanted a fresh start for the team, which hadn’t had a winning season. They became the Steelers.

The New York Jets were first called the New York Titans. They changed their name before the 1963 season because their owner thought “Jets” sounded more modern.

The Dallas team was almost called the “Steers” or the “Rangers” before it started playing as the Cowboys in 1960.

We may get a say in naming the Washington team. I found that 11 NFL teams conducted votes among their fans before they selected the team name.

I think Redhawks would be a cool name. It’s shorthand for a red-tailed hawk, a bird found in nearly all parts of North America.

But change the name. Anything is better than Redskins.

— July 9, 2020

Native Americans protest the name and logo of the Washington Redskins in 2014. Daniel Snyder, who has owned the football team since 1999, for many years said he would not change the name, which he says honors Native Americans. Snyder recently announced that the organization would review the name.
Loudoun officials vote to remove ‘Silent Sentinel’

Statue will be returned to the United Daughters of the Confederacy

Loudoun County officials voted this week to remove a statue of a Confederate soldier from its place in front of the county courthouse where it has stood since 1908, returning it to the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

After a majority of the County Board of Supervisors publicly signaled last month they would vote to remove the statue, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, which paid for the statue, wrote to the county requesting it be taken down and returned to them.

The board on Tuesday unanimously agreed — although at least one board member said he only voted to return the statue to the group, but otherwise opposed its removal.

The statue is one of a growing number of Confederate monuments removed by local governments or toppled by protesters amid renewed calls for racial justice sparked by the
May killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody. The Confederate statue “Appomattox,” which stood in Alexandria for 131 years, was removed last month by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, city spokesman Craig Fifer said. Richmond, the former capital of the Confederacy, also has torn down Confederate statues.

For Phyllis J. Randall (D-At Large), the first African American chair of the board of supervisors, Tuesday’s vote was the culmination of years of work to take the statue down.

“This is the end of a very long fight. The statue should never have been put up,” she said. “People say, ‘Don’t you think you’re erasing history?’ The truth is we are correcting history.”

But Supervisor Caleb A. Kershner (R-Catoctin) said he disagreed with the removal, only voting for the measure because the United Daughters of the Confederacy requested its statue back.

“It’s dishonest to say we have to tear this down because it was put up for oppressive reasons,” Kershner said. “We shouldn’t be removing history from our public square. It’s a very dangerous precedent that gets set.”

Last year, both the board and the United Daughters of the Confederacy said they were against the statue’s removal, despite Randall’s efforts as chair. That changed after the November election gave Democrats control of the board, Randall said, and the Virginia legislature voted to allow localities to take down the monuments amid a statewide reckoning with its Confederate past.

The monument in front of the county courthouse in Leesburg, called “Silent Sentinel,” depicts a Confederate soldier holding a musket. A plaque at the base reads: “In memory of the Confederate soldiers of Loudoun County.”

Michelle Thomas, president of the Loudoun chapter of the NAACP, said she has also tried to get the monument removed for years.

“It is overdue for the preservation of justice and for the full truth of the American experience to be told in a way that we no longer glorify the oppressors,” Thomas said. “It is a testament to who we are in Loudoun. While statues are being toppled over in anger, we’re following the rules of justice, to gain justice.”

Stephen Price, a lawyer for the United Daughters of the Confederacy, said he was happy with the county’s decision and saw it as a sign that officials didn’t want the statues being vandalized. The group has not yet set a date for the removal, he said, although the county has said the group must take the statue down by Sept. 7.

Randall said she has gotten some pushback from constituents who disagree with the statue’s removal. But, she said, while Confederate soldiers are a part of history that should be remembered, that history shouldn’t be commemorated with large statues in the town square.

“History sits in books. History sits in museums. History sits in libraries and films,” Randall said. “There is an enormous difference between understanding and recognizing history, versus celebrating history. The idea of removing a statue erasing history — it just falls flat in its face. This is a proud day.”

This story has been updated to note that the United Daughters of the Confederacy removed the “Appomattox” statue in Alexandria last month.

Rachel Chason contributed to this report.
Va. schools quickly lose Confederate names

STUDENTS, ALUMNI, PARENTS PUSH CHANGE

Historians: Wholesale rejection is unprecedented

BY HANNAH NATANSON

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Schools throughout Virginia are shedding Confederate names and mascots, as officials face a burst of advocacy from students, alumni and parents fueled by the ongoing national reckoning over racism and injustice.

Prince William County is renaming Stonewall Middle School, named after Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson, for a local black couple. After hours of debate, Loudoun County voted last month to remove the mascot for Loudoun County High School: the Raiders, named for Confederate Col. John S. Mosby’s troops, guerrilla-style fighters who wrought havoc on Union supply lines.

And Fairfax County is now searching for a new name for one of its most diverse schools, Robert E. Lee High School — long ago informally re-christened “Lee High School” by embarrassed students who hoped peers from other places wouldn’t recognize the reference. Options for new titles, put forth by the superintendent in a recent email to families, include civil rights leader and congressman John Lewis (D-Ga.), former president Barack Obama and civil rights activist Cesar Chavez.

Often, schools’ names have fallen after students or alumni started online petitions, which garnered hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of signatures in the days after the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May. A.J. Jelonek and Deirdre Dillon, white alumni of Loudoun County High School, started just such a petition against the Raiders on Juneteenth, the holiday celebrating African Americans’ emancipation from slavery. They said the coronavirus pandemic, combined with the Floyd demonstrations, created the perfect opportunity for change: People were angry and stuck at home, and this marked one of the only ways they could speak out.

“I think a lot of people, right now, are looking back and examining things in their life that they let slide or just accepted as ‘that’s the way things are,’ ” said Dillon, 29. “That’s how it went for me, anyway, and my mind jumped right to the Loudoun County Raiders.”

Historians said the wholesale rejection of Confederate iconography by Virginia schools is unprecedented. But James Grossman, executive director of the American Historical Association, said, “The rejection of the icons by black students, parents and community leaders has a history that goes back to the renaming of the schools and the mascots themselves.”

That took place mostly in the 1950s and 1960s, Grossman said, as an angry reaction to the Supreme Court’s seminal 1954 decision, Brown v. Board of Education, which mandated the desegregation of public
schools nationwide. In response, angry white Southerners launched a program of “massive resistance,” which included, in addition to more violent measures, renaming schools and their mascots after Confederates.

An analysis by Education Week found that at least 191 schools in 18 states, almost all in the South, still bear the names of men with links to the Confederacy, although historians said that’s almost certainly an underestimate. The Education Week data suggests Virginia has the second-highest count of these in the country at 23, trailing only Texas, with 45.

Adam Domby, assistant professor of history at the College of Charleston and author of “The False Cause,” said white people at the time hoped to send a clear message to black families trying to integrate America’s school systems. “It was trying to make black students feel unwelcome, while white students and white communities were emboldened to resist desegregation,” he said. “And it helped instill a narrative of history that is false and celebrates white supremacy. . . . It helped instill a narrative of history that is false and celebrates white supremacy. . . . ”

“Then I walked to the plaque underneath it and saw it was donated by the Daughters of the Confederacy. And suddenly I felt, ‘This is ridiculous.’ ”

Boateng and her friend Kadija Ismail, also 17 and a senior, knew some students and alumni had begun pushing to change the name back in 2017. They got involved in the effort last year.

After Floyd’s killing, Ismail, who is also black, decided she was fed up with waiting. She launched an online petition on June 6 that earned more than 1,000 signatures in its first 24 hours. And she and Boateng wrote an open letter the next day to Schools Superintendent Scott Brabrand and the Fairfax County School Board.

Robert E. Lee “embodies the very heart of racism,” they wrote. “The next graduating class [shouldn’t] have the misfortune of having his name immortalized on their diploma and remembered as their alma mater.”

Days later, the board voted unanimously to change the name. The girls are far from done, they said: With other young people, they’re discussing ways to add more black history to school curriculums and ensure the school system hires more black teachers and administrators.

“Civil rights didn’t end with Martin Luther King,” Ismail said. “The fight isn’t over, and the fight won’t be over for a long time.”

“We can’t stop at names,” Boateng agreed.

Boateng and Ismail said they faced little opposition throughout, from classmates or alumni. That wasn’t the case in Loudoun, where Jelonek, 28, and Dillon soon noticed backlash from older graduates on Facebook. Another white graduate, Shawn Carver, started a counter-petition calling the mascot a “generic cowboy-like raider” and urging the county School Board to “protect the legacy of thousands of students from being destroyed.”

He also noted the cost of a mascot switch — school officials had estimated a price tag of $1 million — and argued the money could be better spent on boosting online learning during the pandemic, or on purchasing textbooks that do a better job of capturing black history in America. His petition garnered close to 1,000 signatures, and, Carver said, earned the support of students and alumni of all races and ages.

At the heated virtual board meeting on June 29, others gave more sentimental reasons.

“Our children have been stripped of so much this year, between a meaningful education, socialization with their peers and now a possible . . . mascot removal,” said Carolyn Williams, parent to a high school senior, a middle-schooler and a kindergartner. “My senior athlete really cares about the Raiders.”

But, like in Fairfax County, the vote, which took place close to 1 a.m., was unanimous.

Hayley Loftur-Thun is still awaiting the final outcome of her petition in Falls Church, which takes the battle beyond Confederate generals and calls for the renaming of Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, where she attended first through fourth grade.

Through research this summer, Loftur-Thun, a 22-year-old student at Virginia Commonwealth University, learned that Jefferson exploited enslaved black boys — between 10 and 16 years old — to staff his profitable nailery at Monticello. She found records in which Jefferson wrote that he oversaw “all the details of [the boys’] business myself.”

“I’m not saying let’s erase Jefferson,” said Loftur-Thun, who is white. “All I’m saying is that it’s particularly inappropriate to name an elementary school after a man who enslaved young boys.”

She has faced fierce opposition, including a letter to the editor in the local newspaper, often from older white men. But, through phone calls, she has managed to convince some opponents. She got her father, an initially skeptical history buff and Jefferson fan, on board, too.

The Falls Church School Board has taken no definitive action yet, although at its most recent meeting it discussed hiring a consultant who could provide more historical context.

Even if the name never changes, Loftur-Thun said, she will still feel proud she launched the petition. At least she started a conversation.

Hannah Natanson is a reporter covering education and K-12 schools in Virginia.
What Should We Be Called?

Many students and school boards are doing research on the places and people for whom their schools were named. Schools that are named for streets (Elm Street Elementary), parts of communities (Westlake Middle School) or directions (West High School) usually avoid extra attention. Those whose names are associated with historic events and figures are receiving scrutiny.

Do some research about your school name and community attitudes surrounding it.

1. What is the current official name of your school?
   A. In what year was this name officially selected?
   B. Who named the school? (School board, vote of students, other?)
   C. For what or whom was your school named?

2. Did your school have a previous name? If yes, explain its background.
   If no, move on to question 3.

3. In what way(s) does your school mascot reflect your community?
   A. What is the name of the mascot?
   B. What is the uniform or dress of the mascot?
   C. Does your mascot help to instill school pride? Explain your answer.

4. Does the name of a school or its mascot matter to students?
   A. Do most students know what the mascot is? Why it is your mascot?
   B. To what extent are the attitudes and actions taking place within its walls more important than its name?

5. In what way was your school impacted by the coronavirus?
   A. Did your school close early? Were Spring events cancelled or changed?
   B. Are you in school or distance learning? How does this influence school spirit?
   C. Have your school administrators or student body officers found a way to keep the spirit to unite and inspire students?

6. If you were to lead an effort to change the name of your school, what steps would you need to take?
   What factors need to be considered to make a change?

7. If a new school were built in your community, what name would you suggest?
   A. What are your main arguments for this name?
   B. What would the mascot be? Its name?

8. In what ways do students develop loyalty and pride in their school?