



Written by [Walter E. Williams](#) on August 5, 2020

Leftist Effort to Revise American History

There is very little new under the sun. The monument and statue destruction that we are witnessing has been witnessed in other times and other places. A tyrant's first battlefield is to rewrite history. Most notable were the political purges of Joseph Stalin. The Soviet government erased figures from Soviet history by renaming cities — such as the Imperial capital of St. Petersburg to Petrograd and Leningrad and Stalingrad — and eradicating memories of czarist rule. Stalin's historical revisions also included changing photographs and history books, thereby distorting children's learning within educational establishments.



Leaders of ISIS and the Taliban have called the recent U.S. trend of angry mobs destroying statues “inspiring but a bit amateur,” and agreed to send advisers to Antifa and other far-left groups on how to erase historical artifacts. “Destroying all art, culture and history from previous eras is obviously constructive,” said ISIS leader Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi. “But they’ve got to do it in a more dramatic way. We beheaded statues with a sword. The Taliban blew up ancient Buddhas with dynamite. Tying a statue to a truck and dragging it down just doesn’t have the same dramatic effect.”

Most of the effort to rewrite American history has its roots among the intellectual elite on our college campuses whose message has been sold to predominantly white college students who have little understanding of how they are being used. Much of their current focus is on tearing down statues and changing names that they deem offensive. They have denounced George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. Without much understanding of history, they have demanded that Princeton University remove the name of Woodrow Wilson, who was a progressive, from its public policy school and residential college. Some are urging Yale University to change its name because its benefactor Elihu Yale was a slave trader.

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To purge our society of names associated with evil is going to be quite a task. I suggest that we set up a formal commission to deal with this formidable challenge. Maybe we can name it the Commission to Eliminate Bad Memories. There are some challenging issues. What should be done about our nation's capital, Washington and District of Columbia? After all, George Washington owned slaves, and Columbia is the feminine form of Columbus. Speaking of Washington, its football team, the Washington Redskins, has finally agreed to temporarily call themselves Washington Football Team until they can find a snazzier name.

Renaming things is a big job. Our military has several fighting aircraft named with what today's tyrants might consider racial slights, such as the Apache, Iroquois, Kiowa, Lakota and Mescalero. Perhaps offensive to PETA, we also have military hardware named after animals, such as the Eagle, Falcon, Raptor, Cobra and Dolphin.



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Clarence Page of the Chicago Tribune wrote, “Now that Washington’s NFL team has announced its ‘retirement’ of the racial slur that has been its brand name since 1933, I am tempted to gloat a little.” In response to Page’s article, there is an email making the internet rounds that raises naming issues. What about the Kansas City Chiefs, the Atlanta Braves and the Cleveland Indians?

The New York Yankees might offend Southerners because there is no team named for the Confederacy. Some people, particularly Catholics, might be offended by or deem it sacrilegious to have sports teams named the New Orleans Saints, the Los Angeles Angels or the San Diego Padres. Then what about team names that glorify savage barbarians and criminals who raped and pillaged such as Oakland Raiders, Minnesota Vikings, Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Pittsburgh Pirates? The New York Giants and the San Francisco Giants might be promoting obesity and the Milwaukee Brewers promoting alcoholism.

There is another naming issue that needs resolution. I have been working 40 years at George Mason University. Despite his monumental contributions, such as our Bill of Rights, George Mason was a slave owner. Therefore, in keeping with the times, George Mason University is due for a name change. How about Al Sharpton University, Jesse Jackson University or Black Lives Matter University? Does objection to these names make one a racist?

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