

ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY REMEMBRANCE PROJECT NEWSLETTER



June 2022 Edition

The Consequences of Truth's Corruption

When a lone white teenager drove several hours to the Blackest zip code near him with the intent to kill as many African Americans as he could at a Tops Supermarket in a Buffalo N.Y. neighborhood he was not actually alone. A community of hate and fear urged him to prevent Black people and immigrants from taking his place in the world through mainstream social media sites including Youtube, Twitter, Reddit and Facebook, according to a *New York Times* investigation.

The 18-year-old gunman may have pulled the trigger, but he represented a crowd of amplified voices shouting through multiple easily accessed media channels, as well as, entertainment "newscasts" on network television.

In April, the teen wrote on the chat app discord, "How does one prevent a shooter like me you ask? The only way is to prevent them from learning the truth."

For more than 150 years, America's racial truths have been subjective thanks to southern mythologists who intentionally changed the historical narrative two decades after the war.

Much like some of today's voters and elected leaders who wish to influence the history taught in public schools, Alexandria's United Daughters of the Confederacy forced a revisionist narrative of the institution of slavery and the civil war into the classrooms of this city's schools.

The Alexandria chapter was instrumental in establishing the Grand Division of Virginia, as well as the Children of the Confederacy, an organization of kids and teens who were taught to take pride - not in their unifying american roots - but in their rebel confederate heritage.

The ladies of the Grand Division were dedicated to writing "a true unbiased and impartial school history of the United States in southern schools where our Southern Cause and Southern people shall be truly vindicated and set forth," according to a resolution passed on April 18, 1896.

The Lost Cause history is buried so deep in this country's dominant white culture that as late as the 1980s southern high schools taught students that the War Between The States was fought over states rights and the clash of two economies, the agrarian South versus the industrialized North. Slavery was only brought into the fray when Lincoln freed the slaves in a bid to turn the war around and reverse southern battlefield successes.

Karen Cox, University of North Carolina scholar and author of *Dixie's Daughters*, adds that Black children received cast off text books from white schools "thus, young african americans were also exposed to a lost cause narrative, which included accusations about the inferiority of their race."

Mythology turned mainstream is happening again. The ideology that gripped the Buffalo shooter after researching the Great Replacement inspired him to terrorize an African American community.

Southern Poverty Law Center Senior Fellow Eric K. Ward told the *New York Times* the origins of the "great replacement" are not known by many and because the concept has been given credence by elected officials and television personalities "people are beginning to just understand it as if they might understand conventional wisdom. And that's what is frightening."

In the 19th Century, every state, city and hamlet had multiple newspapers owned by printers who held a variety of strong opinions that they published not just in their editorials, but that also bled into many of the "news" stories. With this kind of reporting people living in the same community were often working from different sets of facts. This set the stage for the Civil War and in the aftermath justified racial terror campaigns, as well as, justice and governing systems controlled by white men regardless of their political affiliation.

The similarity to today's opinion and influencer based social media landscape where so many people gather their news is eerie. The mainstreaming of once fringe ideas such as the great replacement on accessible and popular internet and television channels does not bode well for truth telling and racial justice.

End Notes:"Racist and Violent Ideas Jump from Web's Fringes to Mainstream Sites, by Steven Lee Myers and Stuart A. Thompson, June 1, 2022, *New York Times*.

Dixie's Daughters, Cox, Karen L. 2003, p.161.

In The News

The Freedom House Museum at 1315 Duke Street is open!

The Office of Historic Alexandria opened the Freedom House Museum at 1315 Duke Street on Friday, May 27, 2022 with three exhibitions that showcase Alexandria's Black history and the Black experience in America. [Read Vernon Miles](#) description of the transformation of the Franklin and Armfield Office that once trafficked thousands of Black men, women and children between 1828 and 1861 into a three floor exhibit space dedicated to the lives and legacies of the enslaved who passed through this city.

View Susannah Moore's photographic essay in [Alexandria Living Magazine](#) depicting the new space dedicated to "honoring the memory of the enslaved people who created our nation." At the opening, Mayor Justin Wilson said entering the museum brought you face-to-face with the named and the unnamed, the enslaved and the free Black men, women and children who were trafficked through this site. [Washington Informer writer Sarafina Wright](#) captured the Mayor's words, "Freedom House will inform visitors while challenging them to critically examine our history." Read the *Alexandria Times* [Out of the Attic announcement here](#). [Laura Scudder of Northern Virginia Magazine](#) also covered the opening of Freedom House.

News Blast From the Past

A section from the 1904 United Daughters of the Confederacy's *Catechism For Children* first published for a Texas Chapter of the UDC:

"How were the slaves treated?"

With great kindness and care in nearly all cases, a cruel master being rare and lost the respect of his neighbors if he treated his slaves badly. Self-interest would have prompted good treatment if a higher feeling of humanity had not.

What was the feeling of the slaves towards their masters?

They were faithful and devoted and were always ready and willing to serve them.

How did they behave during the war?

They nobly protected and cared for the wives of soldiers in the field, and widows without protectors; though often prompted by the enemies of the South to burn and plunder the homes of their masters, they were always true and loyal.

What were the principles of the Southern people?

They believed that each State should regulate her own affairs, according to its best interests, with no meddling with the management of other States and that each State should loyally support the Constitution of the United States.

Today, 19 states, including Virginia, have active [Divisions of the United Daughters of the Confederacy](#), while another 15 states have UDC chapters.

This primary document can be read at [Encyclopedia Virginia](#) and was taken transcribed from: Amy L. Heyse, Teachers of the Lost Cause: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Rhetoric of Their Catechisms. PhD Diss., University of Maryland, 2006, 262–269.

Upcoming Events

The Grand Opening of Freedom House Monday, June 20, for the observance of the Juneteenth Holiday. Details on this grand opening event will be announced in the coming weeks.

Historic Alexandria Celebrates Juneteenth

Historic Alexandria is pleased to announce two events to celebrate the Juneteenth Holiday. On June 19th, we celebrate Juneteenth (June + 19th), commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. Celebrated first as a state holiday in Virginia in 2020 by executive order, legislation was passed unanimously in October 2020 to officially declare it a permanent statewide holiday.

Storytime With the Black History Museum June 18, 11-11:30 a.m. Beatley Central Library

The Alexandria Black History Museum and the Alexandria Library invite you to a collaborative event, featuring Lillian Patterson. All are welcome, but the event is geared toward children ages 3-6.

Juneteenth Jubilee, featuring Culture Queen June 18, 12-1 p.m. Beatley Central Library

Join Grammy-nominated performer Culture Queen for an interactive musical storytelling show and learn the meaning of the Juneteenth holiday. All ages.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project Outreach Committee, *Wednesday, June 15, 6-7:30 p.m. in person at the Lee Center.*

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project Pilgrimage Committee, *Monday, June 27, 7-8p.m. [Virtual meeting register here.](#)*

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project Steering Committee, *Tuesday, June 28, 4-5:30p.m. in person meeting at the Lloyd House.*

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project Soil and Marker Committee, *Thursday, June 30, 7 p.m. [Virtual meeting register here.](#)*

Committee Reports

The Pilgrimage Committee [met virtually on Monday May 23](#), 2022 to discuss various contracts we are setting up for the trip bus to Montgomery, Alabama on October 6-10.

The Soil and Marker Committee [met in person Thursday, May 26](#), 2022 to get an update on concepts for

the soil vessels for the soil collection ceremony and to draft plans for the ceremony.

The Steering Committee [met in person on Tuesday, May 24](#) and discussed plans to activate the outreach and fundraising committees, to get an update on the work of the soil and marker committee for the upcoming soil collection ceremony and on the descendant research for Benjamin Thomas and Joseph McCoy.

[Joseph McCoy](#) [Benjamin Thomas](#).

[For more information](#)

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The Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP) is a city-wide initiative dedicated to helping Alexandria understand its history of racial terror hate crimes and to work toward creating a welcoming community bound by equity and inclusion.

**Office of Historic Alexandria
City of Alexandria, Virginia**



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