

'A Legacy of Treason and Blood'

Mapping the segregation of black children in Virginia's Confederate-named schools

Introduction: 1865:1955:2015

In December 2016, a year-and-a-half after teenaged white supremacist Dylann Roof opened fire from a pew in Charleston's oldest black church, his taped confession became public record during his trial for murder. The tape shows that after being served Burger King and a "nice and cold" water, Roof talked openly about his act of terror. The specifics made him bashful. He said he would never want to look his victims' families in the eye.

Roof's intent was clear. His call to arms was inspired in part by the central tenant of the Confederacy at its founding: The "natural order" of a white minority controlling a black, enslaved majority.

A century prior, in Richmond, Virginia, black newspaper owner and city councilman John Mitchell Jr. attempted to reason with "Lost Cause" sympathizers working to erect statues of Confederate leaders amid increasing black political power. In his words, for generations unborn, statues dedicated to Confederate leaders, would "hand down a legacy of treason and blood."

Roof's horrific contribution to that legacy rekindled conversations about the Confederacy in public memory. The Confederate flag came down at the capitol in Montgomery, Alabama through order of its white governor. The flag came down at the State House in South Carolina only when

Bree Newsome, a black woman, scaled the flagpole and removed it.

Mitchell lived long enough to see the first public school in Richmond named for one of the generals memorialized on what is now called Monument Avenue. What he did not see was the segregation patterns of Virginia shift in the wake of the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1955. White students fled city schools that had worked desperately to keep black students out. In some areas of Virginia, newly built schools took on Confederate names as a warning shot to those who would seek to integrate them.

Today schools in Virginia bearing the names of those who fought to enslave black Americans are often populated by a majority of black students.

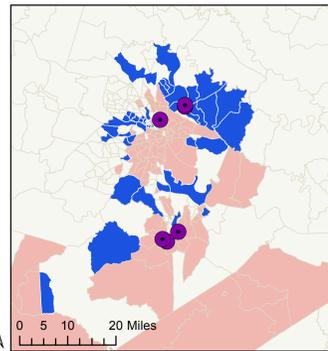
At a ceremony held two weeks before Roof's massacre, a group of white and black Richmonders buried a Confederate flag. They called the continued Confederate presence in Richmond a "psychological terror." As seen throughout Virginia, local governments continue to force black children to attend Confederate-named schools. After mapping where these schools are, spatial statistical analysis was used to determine whether this lingering "psychological terror" of the Confederacy falls disproportionately on black children.

Confederate School

- A.P. Hill Elementary
- J.E.B. Stuart Elementary (2)
- Lee-Davis High School
- Robert E. Lee Elementary
- Stonewall Jackson Middle

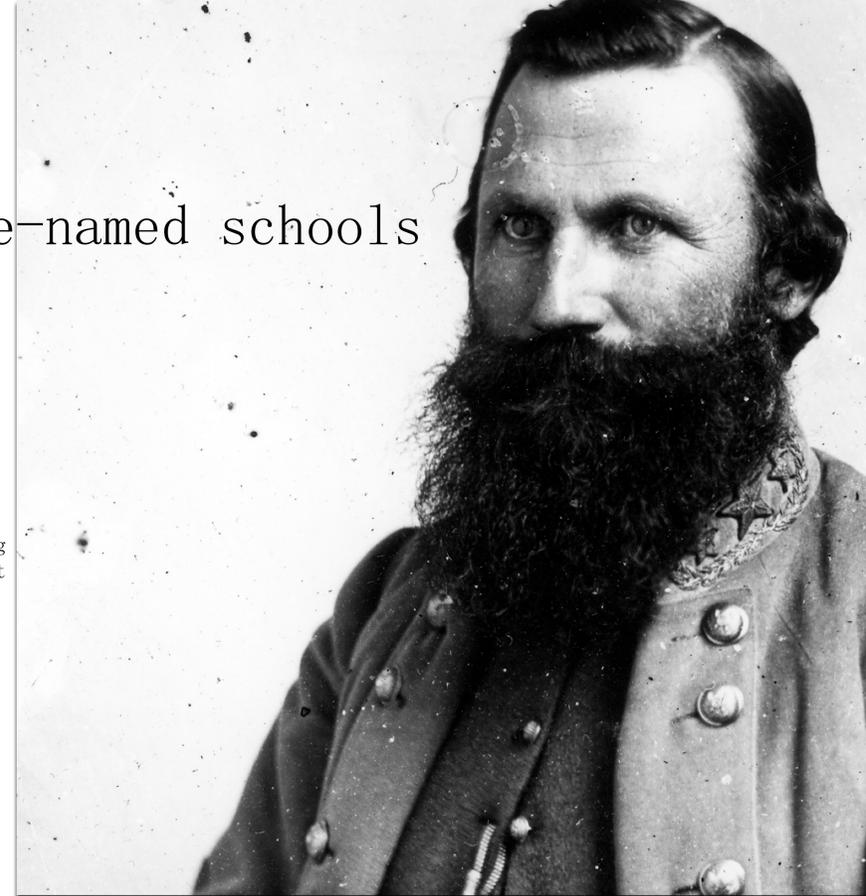
Black Population Clustering

- Not Significant
- High-High Cluster
- High-Low Outlier
- Low-High Outlier
- Low-Low Cluster



Conclusion

The pattern of black-white segregation in Richmond-Petersburg is revealed as a ring around the highest concentration of Virginia's Confederate-named schools (left), whose districts serve the highest populations of black students in the state.



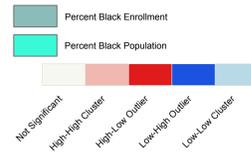
Methods

Pulling names of Confederate leaders from all Virginia's schools, available from the Virginia Department of Education, the locations were geocoded and placed onto Virginia U.S. Census tracts.

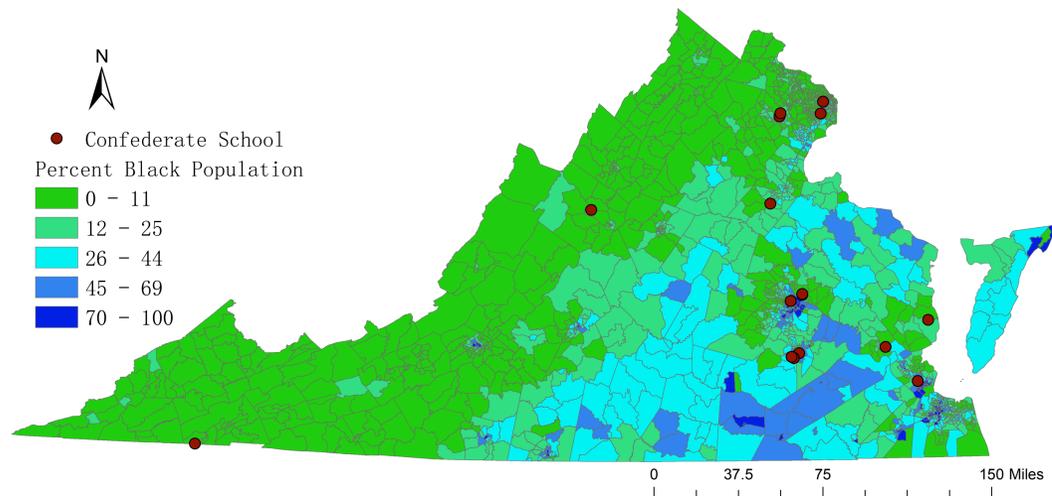
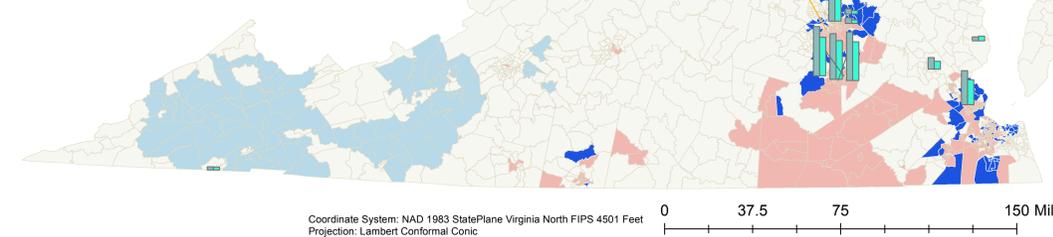
After joining information about school enrollment from VDOE and demographics from the 2015 U.S. American Community Survey (bottom left), a Moran's I spatial analysis test was performed to seek clusters of high black populations that are adjacent to low populations (below and left).

The percentage of black students at each of the 16 schools was then symbolized, indicating an extremely high percentage among six schools within a 34 mile span in the Richmond-Petersburg area (below and top inset). The percentage of black students was compared against the total black population as an indicator of possible segregation (left).

Black Population Compared Against Black Enrollment



Black Population Clusters



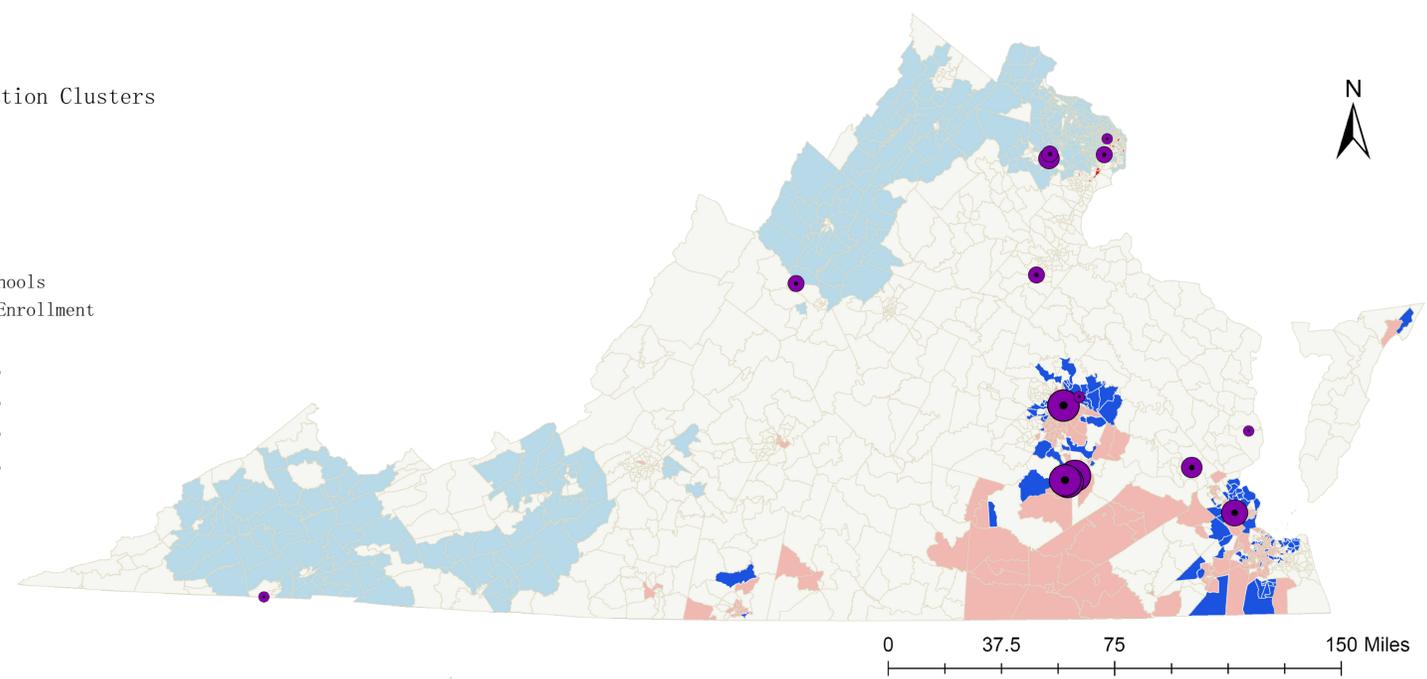
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Confederate Schools

Percent Black Enrollment

- 6% - 11%
- 12% - 17%
- 18% - 23%
- 24% - 68%
- 69% - 98%



Sources

- Southern Poverty Law Center, "Whose History?" 2015.
- UCLA Civil Rights Project, "Miles to Go: A Report on School Segregation in Virginia, 1989-2010." 2013.
- U.S. Census, 2015 American Community Survey
- U.S. Census, Tigerline Virginia Census Tracts Shapefile
- Virginia Department of Education 2015 enrollment data
- Photo: J.E.B. Stuart, Encyclopedia Virginia