

Twitter Removed My Blue Checkmark After I Took My Husband's Last Name. Here's How I Got It Back.

After getting married, the decision to take on my husband's last name was a difficult one.

In addition to the financial cost and social awkwardness of changing your identity, the process is so labor-intensive that there's an app for that.

Seriously.

For \$99, you can "change your name in minutes" on [HitchSwitch](#), a concierge service that promises to "take the mystery, confusion, and stress out of changing your name."

Sounds like a deal.

As a public writer, producer, and commentator who spent years building name recognition, the decision to change my last name felt even more complicated. Not only would I have to deal with the legal and social repercussions, but I'd have to worry about losing readers and followers, and confusing the TV hosts that I was just getting to know.

In sum, I feared I'd have to "start over."

Plus, keeping my maiden name would afford me a level of legal protection should any stalkers arise.

But ultimately, I wanted nothing more than to be unified with my husband and future children under the same last name, and for me, that pro outweighed all the cons.

(Interestingly enough, feminists are now questioning why any woman would do this—as if keeping your father’s last name will bring down the patriarchy.)

Why are women still taking their husband’s name?

– Rebecca Serle (@RebeccaASerle) [March 15, 2019](#)

In February, my husband and I took a belated two week honeymoon. Upon my return, I was ready. “This is it,” I thought. “Short-term pain for long-term gain.”

The one thing I thought I had going for me was that blue checkmark on Twitter. In the most superficial way, I thought, “This will show people that with my new last name, I’m still legit.”

With a bevy of social media accounts, bios, and more, I acted fast. Consistency, I thought, was key to avoiding confusion. I notified my IT department, all the organizations I work with, and swiftly changed my Twitter username. I was ecstatic to learn I could get [@KelseyBolar](#) without any weird characters. Things were going great.

Back from an amazing, Twitter-free honeymoon!

I’m also excited to share that I’m taking on my hubby’s last name...Kelsey Bolar! (Pronounced like “Polar” but with a “B”??)

So what’d I miss? pic.twitter.com/z0zvYVTpxD

– Kelsey Bolar (Harkness) (@kelseybolar) [February 25, 2019](#)

Until shortly after making the announcement—there was no longer a blue checkmark next to my Twitter handle.

Caught up in a rush of fire and fury, my thumbs were ready to take to Twitter and accuse them of discriminating against me. How could a company that claims to be committed to “[equality](#)” punish women for taking on their husbands’ last names?

Given Twitter’s reputation among conservatives, I was confident I’d gin up enough outrage to publicly shame them into giving me the blue checkmark back. And, I’d be fighting for a greater good. “No one deserves to be punished for getting married!” I thought.

But as Ben Shapiro likes to say, “Facts don’t care about your feelings.” And the fact is, Twitter had a policy for changing your last name that I was completely unaware of.

I put my accusations on hold and decided to reach out to a contact at Twitter to explain the situation. In addition to detailing the mechanics, I shared the personal toll I feared my name change could have on my career, and how losing my (silly, superficial) status as a “public figure” on their platform was making it worse. In short, I took responsibility for failing to follow their policies, but explained it was unintentional.

My contact responded in kind, and assured me someone would look into it.

Out of the blue, less than two weeks later, my blue checkmark was back.

If Twitter had refused to reinstate it, the social media giant would have deserved every ounce of outrage I was prepared to launch. But instead, I resisted the temptation and thereby avoided making false, salacious accusations. Because of that,

the situation was handled in a respectful manner.

This little scenario reminded me of a basic truth: Civil engagement must come before outrage. To be sure, some situations demand a fiery response, and not all situations get resolved like mine. But as a rule, we ought to engage with others in good faith rather than assuming the worst. You—and the culture we live in—will be better for it.

As for my new last name, it's been weird getting used to being "Kelsey Bolar." But already, it's worth it. Why? Because there's nothing like taking that final step to formally unite as husband and wife.

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