

FAKE NEWS IN THE WAR ON CONFEDERATE HISTORY AND HERITAGE

by *Connie Chastain*

The snippet to the right appeared in a column by Sue Carlton, titled *One more chance to do the right thing and move the Confederate monument*, in the *Tampa Bay Times* on July 19. The quote wasn't sourced, beyond what you see here. At least two people, one of them myself, emailed Carlton to point out that there was no source cited, and to ask for her source. She wasn't pleased and sent the same basic reply to both of us.

"But the South detests and despises all, it matters not from whence they came, who, in any manner, encourages social equality with an ignorant and inferior race."

the words used more than a century ago in Tampa to dedicate a Confederate monument.

"How incredibly sad. If the quote proves racist intent, which is clearly counter to that wide-eyed oh-no-it's-just-about-history argument, it must be false. How sad you can't work within the facts. But then, the facts are clearly not on the side of that argument, and therefore of no use to you. Please don't bother to reply as I won't read it. I don't have time for people who do not even have the intellectual honesty to begin with truth to make a case." -- *Sue Carlton*

In one of her replies, Carlton refers an earlier *Tampa Bay Times* article by Steve Contorne dated June 16, 2017. He attributes that statement to state attorney Herbert S. Phillips at the dedication of the monument Feb 8, 1911. The problem with Contorne's column is that he doesn't say where his information about the dedication and Phillips' speech came from, beyond a vague reference to "news accounts of the day." For all we know, it could have come to him in a dream.

While it is dismaying, but not really surprising, to see the lack of respect for adequate sourcing by today's young "journalists" -- what's worse is their contempt for their readers and their apparent willingness to swallow what's "in" today. If they had been alive and writing on Feb 8, 1911, would they have waxed enthusiastic about the monument and its dedication?

Stuff like this is why Boomers have such a dim view of Millennials.

But what's worse than the lack of discernment is Carlton's arrogant and judgmental statement, "*I don't have time for people who do not even have the intellectual honesty to begin with truth to make a case.*"

How is it intellectual dishonest to want to know her the **primary source of the information** in her article? We're supposed to just take her word for it? Because she wrote it, it's a fact?

Moreover, my email to her said absolutely nothing about the quote being false. However, if I suspected it was false, who can blame me? We live in the era of fake news ... where CNN and other major news outlets have been caught in lies about those with political leanings they disapprove of. One has to wonder if Ms. Carlton and Mr. Contorne have been off-planet for the past few years.

One reason primary sources need to be cited is that secondary sources can be altered, blatantly or subtly, and thus are not a reliable and accurate rendition of events.

But the main reason is to see what the "journalist" left out of his or her report -- which can be just as misleading of the public as what "journalists" choose to include. A lot of the hatred motivating the Take 'Em Down war on history prompts cherry-picking and incomplete renditions of historical accounts, or complete disregard for them.

Ms. Carlton, a lie doesn't become a fact just because you write about it.

Links to columns mentioned in this flyer --

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/politics/carlton-one-more-chance-to-do-the-right-thing-and-move-confederate-monument/2330781>

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/for-tampas-confederate-monument-racist-history-clouds-claims-of-heritage/2327512>