

The Shaping of Modern American History

By Kevin Flynn Aug 20, 2020

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are constantly under attack from those on the left and the mainstream historical establishment for leading the charge of promoting the “lost cause myth” of the Civil war. Defenders of popular history and the “righteous cause” narrative disparage any attempt to justify the Confederate Cause with the pejorative “Lost Cause Myth.” Their mantra is every motive was slavery and any other claim is nothing more than a post war fabricated smoke screen. But is this true, or is the “Lost Cause Myth” a myth in itself?

The writings of prominent women particularly Mildred Lewis Rutherford of the UDC prove that their actions were reactionary. The Southern student has been attacked since the end of the civil war with history designed for them to hate their fathers and the place of their birth. Miss Rutherford’s book Truth’s of History specifically highlighted the bias that permeated Southern classrooms and she led the way for textbook reform in the early twentieth century. She and the ladies of the UDC are relentlessly attacked for speaking out against unfair history when in fact it was the Northern historical establishment that was responsible for sharing myths. Miss Rutherford’s book completely absolves the UDC against any and all slanders from the past, present and future. The ladies were reactionary against what she called the Lincoln Cult which we know today as Pious causers or Righteous causers (Phil Leigh wrote a great piece on this subject). Almost all of today’s popular historians fall in that category. Look at the below examples she provided and ask yourself, if your child brought a textbook home like this would you have acted any differently than Miss Rutherford? The following is from her book entitled Truth’s of History written in 1920:

The South is not given credit for the part she deserves in the making of the nation. The text books that are now being used are most unjust to her; the reference books now in the libraries are most unjust to her;

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the omissions in history as now written are most unjust to her; the history as now written, if accepted, will consign her to infamy.

They are careful to tell of the great men of New England, which they should do, but they should not make one believe that they alone were responsible for making the Nation great.

While stressing the prominent part taken by their great men, they fail to tell you that many of them stood for State Sovereignty and the right of Secession as strongly as the South did.

They will tell you of the nineteen patriots at Lexington, but overlook entirely the one hundred patriots at Alamance.

They will tell you of the Boston Tea Party but ignore the tea parties at Charleston, Annapolis and other Southern ports, and omit the Edenton, (N. C.) tea party where fifty-one patriotic women organized the first patriotic organization for women in the world, The Daughters of Liberty.

They will tell you of Otis, Samuel Adams, John Adams and other men of New England, but make no mention of Edmund Pendleton, of Virginia, who first suggested that we should be free of English rule, nor of Thomas Nelson, of Virginia, who read Pendleton's Resolutions in the Virginia Assembly, nor of Richard Henry Lee who was sent to the Continental Congress to present these Resolutions, yet these were the Resolutions that were adopted and resulted in the Declaration of Independence that made us a Nation.

They will tell of the great abolition movement, and extol William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, John G. Whittier, Walt Whitman, the Beechers and others, but omit to tell you that Washington, George Mason, Thomas Jefferson, John Randolph, James Madison, John Monroe, the Lees and others planned to free their slaves and advocated the colonization or the gradual emancipation of all slaves.

They will tell you that Abraham Lincoln broke the shackles that bound the poor slaves, but will not tell you that Abraham Lincoln left the poor slaves in non-seceding states still wearing the shackles, and a Southern man, John Brooks Henderson of Missouri, by the Thirteenth

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Amendment freed them after Lincoln's death.

They will tell you that Liberia was bought by a Benevolent Society to colonize the poor slaves, but will not tell you that a Southern man was the president of that society, and that the capital of Liberia was named Monrovia after James Monroe of Virginia, and protected by the Monroe Doctrine.

They will tell you of the horrible assassination of Abraham Lincoln, and it was, but say nothing of the far more horrible hanging of Mrs. Surratt, an innocent woman, without judge or jury, upon a false accusation, nor of Dalgren's plan to assassinate Jefferson Davis and his entire Cabinet, and no condemnation followed.

They tell of the falsehood of history, that Jefferson Davis tried to escape in woman's clothes, and say little of the cowardly disguise of Lincoln in entering Washington.

WHY THE SOUTH DEMANDS CORRECTED TEXT BOOKS:

FIRST: Because history as now written will condemn the South to infamy.

SECOND: Because the reference* books now in the public libraries will condemn the South to infamy.

THIRD: As long as these falsehoods remain within reach of the student all teaching to the contrary will be in vain.

FOURTH: Because the omissions now in history do the South greater injustice than the commissions of history.

THE SOUTH AS INCORRECTLY REPRESENTED IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE TODAY.

DAVIDSON'S History incorrectly states:

The Jamestown Colonists were vicious idlers and jail birds picked up on the streets of London. Side by side the two civilizations had grown up in America the one dedicated to progress had kept up with the spirit of the age the other a landed aristocracy with slavery as the

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chief excuse for its existence.

MONTGOMERY' S History incorrectly states:

Georgia was settled by filthy, ragged, dirty prisoners taken from the Debtors Prison by Oglethorpe.

THE BRITISH ENCYCLOPEDIA incorrectly states:

North Carolina was a refuge for the lawless and adventurous. The immigration to Virginia consisted of boys and girls seized in the streets of London and shipped as felons.

New Twentieth Century Edition of ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITAN-NICA, page 360, American Literature incorrectly states:

Like the Spartan marshaling his helots, the Southern planter lounging among his slaves was made dead to art by a paralyzing sense known as his own superiority. In the world of letters, at least, the Southern States shone by reflected light.

Since the Revolution the few thinkers born South of Mason and Dixon line outnumbered by those belonging to the single state of Massachusetts have migrated to New York or Boston for a university training.

LODGE'S History of the Early Colonies incorrectly states:

they had few advantages, and were unequal to any refined conversation. They were fond of dancing but showed great want of taste or elegance and seldom appeared with grace. – At the close of the evening it was their custom to dance jigs which custom they borrowed from the negroes.

Family Life in Virginia/ p. 344 incorrectly states:

A girl of good fortune or of good reputation is a thing scarce in these parts for they have no established laws and very little of the Gospel.

HENRY CABOT LODGE'S History of the Early Colonies/ p. 154 incorrectly states: The negroes in South Carolina were helplessly degraded, rarely baptized or married, lived like animals, their condition of complete barbarism the slaves were grievously overworked."

HENRY CABOT LODGE's History of the Early Colonies incorrectly

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states :

The Southern man on his plantation drinks a julep made of rum, water and sugar, very strong; rides over his plantation, returns and takes his toddy, lies down to sleep with two negroes to fan him, one at his head and one at

his feet; rises for dinner, takes his toddy again and continues to take his toddy all afternoon, then eats his supper and retires for the night.

RICHARD HILDRETH incorrectly states:

The typical Southern planter is a tall, raw-boned individual, clad in a black frock coat, with his trousers tucked into high-top boots. On his head is a wide brim med slouch hat, and his heels are adorned with large rowelled spurs. He wears a turn-down collar and a flowing black tie. His hair is long and his beard is worn as a goatee. He carries a whip in his right hand accompanied by a dog supposed to be fresh from the chase of a runaway slave.

Read in striking contrast Bill Arp' s description of a Southern gentleman, The Southern people know nothing of music or the drama, and view a public library merely as something to be vigorously censored. Lynching is the only public amusement that they never denounce.

OTHER OMISSIONS OF HISTORY:

The South claims that her best writers are ruled out of a compendium of American Literature and those not literary given prominence.

A time has come when every teacher, whether Northern born or Southern born, disloyal to the South shall be ruled out of Southern colleges and schools.

This Lincoln cult is entering and has already entered into books on our library tables—on our library shelves, and even in books recommended by our U. D. C.; in encyclopedias and reference books of all kind—yes, even on the moving picture screen, for Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln" is one of the greatest historical falsehoods of today and all so subtle that we are unconscious of its pernicious effect. Something must be done and done quickly.

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Lincoln's biographers pose him as a highly educated literary personage, and the Gettysburg speech which Seward wrote afterwards is put into every collection of great speeches and attributed to Lincoln, not Seward.

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Lincoln deserved credit for the education he received in the way he received it—but do not be deceived by attributing to him things he never wrote. Mr. Judd and other friends revised all of his speeches before they appeared in print. (See New York Express, 20, 1861 page 20)

Already instances have come to notice where textbooks making false statements about the North have been rejected in Southern schools.

Will not the North be as magnanimous?

The South should be as quick to resent an injustice to the North in history as she now resents an injustice to the South in history.

Dr .J.L. M.Curry, in his "Southern States of the American Nation," says:

"History, poetry, romance, art, and public opinion have been most unjust to the South. If the true record be given, the South is rich in patriotism, in intellectual force, in civic and military achievements, in heroism, in honorable and sagacious statesmanship—but if history as now written is accepted it will consign the South to infamy." *

The South should not be afraid to speak the truth and call injustice by its proper name.. In failing to do this we have been unjust to the South.

For fear of offending some personal friends of the North, we have assumed an apologetic tone too long; and for fear of failing to secure an office or some honor we have allowed politics to make us unjust, and we have not dared to criticize Abraham Lincoln, and many are now falling down to worship him.

There is no need for any animus to be shown, for no facts must be

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stated which cannot be substantiated by reliable authority, but we must not be afraid to speak boldly. By inheritance we of the South are not cowards.

All I ask is that you read what is stated here. Disprove it, if you can, for I will be glad to know wherein I am wrong. If you cannot disprove it then accept it gracefully. Acknowledge your mistakes and be just. HELP TO RIGHT THE WRONGS AGAINST THE SOUTH and cease criticizing those who are trying to do it.

About Kevin Flynn

Kevin Flynn is a Retired US. Marine and Iraq and Afghanistan war Veteran. He is a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and writes articles biweekly for the Civil War Buff Facebook page.