

information about Quillette

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Dear editors,

I am hoping you can forward my email to the author and/or editor who handled your recent story about Claire Lehmann, the editor-in-chief of Quillette:

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/11/11/intellectual-dark-web-quillette-claire-lehmann-221917>

In this story, Lehmann is specifically asked about a recent article Quillette published, written by U.S. mathematician Ted Hill:

<https://quillette.com/2018/09/07/academic-activists-send-a-published-paper-down-the-memory-hole/>

As quoted in your interview, Lehmann says that Hill's article "underwent two weeks of fact-checking by one of her editors." I think it's important for Politico, and others, to know what exactly this "fact-checking" consisted of.

I am a professor at Penn State who was a part of this story (I am even quoted there, though my name does not appear). I have first-hand knowledge that the piece and follow-up podcast by Quillette have many factual inaccuracies, particularly in the description of events at Penn State.

I have reached out both to Ted Hill and editors at Quillette, numerous times, to point out these inaccuracies and request a correction. Claire Lehmann initially wrote back to me saying:

"We did vet the article and did invite the relevant players to respond."

and later indicated she was open to making a correction. But when I provided a detailed list of inaccuracies, I stopped getting any replies from her.

Claire's initial response also prompted me to check for myself if indeed Quillette had invited the "relevant players" in Hill's article to respond. In particular, I have now checked directly with Sergei Tabachnikov, Amie Wilkinson, Igor Rivin, Marjorie Senechal, Diane Henderson, and Nate Brown, all mathematicians who were named in the piece and were key players in Ted's story. They all reported exactly the same thing: no one from Quillette ever contacted them. Not before the article was published, and not after, either. Never. Quillette seems to have relied 100% on Ted Hill, the author himself, in their vetting and fact-checking process.

When I wrote to Claire and other senior editors at Quillette about this, and asked if they had contacted anyone other than the author himself in connection to the article, one editor (Jonathan Kay) replied and asked me to list the inaccuracies. I happily provided such details, and then asked again about whether they had contacted anyone other

than Ted Hill in their fact-checking process. His reply at this point was this:

"Please take me off this distribution list. I already have spoken to Ted Hill about what you call 'inaccuracies.'"

So, again, they checked only with Hill. And now they don't want to hear from me again.

I don't know what else I can do. I am an ordinary math professor, with no experience on how to deal with such things. But it really bothers me that misinformation about me, my colleagues, and my department has been published and propagated in such an irresponsible manner. This is why I felt compelled to reach out to Hill and Quillette in the first place, but unfortunately they were not at all receptive.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best wishes,
Carina

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