

The following questions and statements are some you might hear while doing a program for the public or talking to the media. Of course there can be more in depth and complete answers, but, you may not have time for that. So along with the statements, these are some suggested answers that you can use in these types of situations.

Answer Back When You Hear Lies About Confederate History!
Speak up to Honor Your Veteran Ancestors!

1. **The South started the war.** WRONG. According to historian Richard N. Currents in *Lincoln and the First Shot*, Lincoln maneuvered the South into a showdown. Lincoln's short list included Fort Pickens and Fort Pensacola, and the war could just as easily "have started" in one of the other places. The South had peacefully taken, and offered to pay for, about 65 other federal facilities, prior to capturing Fort Sumter.
2. **The War started when the South fired on Fort Sumter.** WRONG. Had the North not conquered the South with victors writing the history books today we would be reading a different version of what actually occurred. President Davis held that the War started two weeks before the firing on Fort Sumter when United States supply ships set sail to reinforce Fort Sumter.
3. **The War started because South left union.** WRONG. The Confederacy and the United states were at peace for several months and could have continued at peace. Secession did not start the war.
4. **Secession is against the U.S. Constitution.** WRONG. It is not in the Constitution. The first states to propose to secede were the New England states during the War of 1812. Jefferson Davis was released from prison after the War because the U.S. finally admitted it had no case against him.
5. **The American Civil War was a time when the country fought within itself...** This is the version taught by the winners who write the history. The Southern position is that the War Between the States, also called the War for Southern Independence, involved one country invading another sovereign nation which then defended its territory while fighting for independence, essentially the Second American Revolution.
6. **The war was fought to free the slaves.** WRONG. U.S. War aims were to preserve the Union and to put down 'the "rebellion"'. There was no campaign against slavery until nearly halfway through the war, and U.S. General Offices typically protected slavery in the territories they occupied.
7. **The war's main cause was slavery.** WRONG. Slavery was an issue in the War but not the sole cause. There were many issue that led to the war including-1) Control of Congress; whoever controlled the votes made the laws. 2) Money-Lincoln said that he could not let the South secede because 2/3rds of the treasury revenues came from the South, 3) The question of who would control the vote in the new territories. 4) The tariff issue- punitive taxes, primarily on tobacco and cotton, imposed unfairly on the South because the North had more votes in the Congress and the Senate.
8. **The Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves.** WRONG. It did not free any slaves in the northern United States, and the Southern States were controlled by the CSA; thus, none were freed there.
9. **The Confederacy was based on Racism.** WRONG: Jews served in the highest CSA government positions, answering to the President while at the same time General U.S. Grant was expelling Jews from union occupied areas using General Order 11, which reads very similarly to later orders from the Nazis. Many Native Americans supported the Confederacy, and the highest ranking Native American on either side, Brigadier General Stand Watie was the last CSA general officer to surrender. Hispanics fought primarily for the South, and the highest ranking Hispanic in either Army was Colonel Santos Benavides of the 37th Texas Cavalry.

8. **No blacks forgot for the South, only for the north in segregated units.** WRONG. Stonewall Jackson had 3,200 black southerners integrated in his ranks. They served as teamsters, cooks, personal servants and, many times picked up weapon and saw action. The first all black unit on either side was Confederate, the Louisiana Native Guards. In an 1862 letter to Lincoln, the abolitionist Frederick Douglas wrote:
"real soldiers having muskets on their shoulders and bullets in their pockets, ready to shoot down and do all that soldiers may do to destroy the Federal government."
9. **The war was fought in the east and ended at Appomattox in April 1865.** WRONG. There was extensive fighting in the Western theater, including Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia and Alabama. There were also significant battles fought in the Trans-Mississippi theater, the states west of the Mississippi River, and the fighting there did not cease until June of 1865.
10. **Sherman's war in Georgia and South Carolina may have been excessive in some ways, but his tactics were justified to end the war more quickly.** WRONG: Sherman's Nazi-like scorched earth policies of imposing a war of terror on civilians were completely contrary to the norms and rules of war at the time. Sherman, Halleck, and Lincoln knew it.
11. **The U.S. Army may have been responsible for excesses, but, War Crimes were committed by both Armies** MISLEADING at best: Except for the burning of Chambersburg and some raids in the North by Mosby and others, the North was far guiltier of the use of excessive force. Lee, for example, handed out cash or gave receipts for property taken for his Army during his Northern campaigns. How did U.S. generals Wilson and Croxton justify burning the University of Alabama which included the library the president's home, and the observatory in May of 1865 which came a full month after Lee had surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia? These vile actions had no effect on ending the war sooner.
12. **A great war crime occurred at Andersonville.** Wrong: Confederate guards at Camp Sumter (Andersonville) received the same rations as the U.S. prisoners, but, Confederate soldiers, imprisoned in Northern POW camps, starved to death amidst plenty of food while the guards and the commandants sold it to their friends on the black market. Elmira in New York and Camp Douglass in Chicago IL were particularly notorious; but these same practices existed throughout Northern POW sites. Major Henry Wirz's trial and subsequent execution were a fraud as there were no credible witnesses for the prosecution.
13. **Freed Blacks were in the North, all blacks in the South were all enslaved.** WRONG: There were more Free Men of Color in the Southern states then in the northern states according to the 1860 United States Census. In fact many northern states forbid any Blacks, slave or free, from residing in their states.
14. **The war was needed to end slavery.** WRONG: Slavery ended everywhere else in the world without a war. Slavery was dying out and would likely have ended in another 20 years just like it did in other slave countries for example in Brazil.
15. **The war was needed to keep the country from breaking up. Had the secession of the CSA states been allowed, other states would have seceded, and each state would have become an independent nation.** This statement has no credibility. For example, Norway and Sweden were one country until 1905, and they have not broken up any more in the last 116 years. The Czech Republic and Slovakia separated more recently, and there has been no further breakup. Should Quebec gain its independence from the rest of Canada why would it separate further?
16. **The slave states were all in the South.** WRONG: The United States had five slave holding states during the war, and one of them became a state in 1863 on the condition that it could retain slavery!
17. **The only Union slave states were the border states** WRONG: There were two countries in the war, the United States and the Confederate States. There was no country composed of the border states

18. **The war ended slavery.** WRONG. Slavery was legal the United States during, and even after, the War. It was not until December 1865 that slavery ended in the United States which was more than half a year after the defeat of the Confederacy.

19. **If blacks did fight for the South, they were forced to fight.** WRONG: Tennessee Pension records provide black Southerner accounts of fighting for their country which was the CSA . Blacks received Confederate Pensions in many states and were often buried in Confederate Cemeteries. These black Confederate Veterans attended army reunions with their white comrades. Certainly there were many men on both sides, both white and black, who were forced to fight due to conscription which means they were drafted. Honorable military service stands on its own merit irrespective of whether a man volunteered or was conscripted.

20. **But why would a black man fight for the South?** Blacks fought for their country, the CSA, for the same reasons white southerners fought to protect their homes and families from a foreign invader. It is important to get away from this racist and separatist ideology that assumes there are different motivations for men to serve in the military. Black Americans have always fought for their country since nation began. Many blacks fought in the Revolutionary War; many of them were slaves and were offered immediate emancipation by the British if they changed sides. Most did not join the British and remained loyal to their country.

21. **The South was racist.** WRONG. There has always been rampant racism in the North, and often it has been worse than what happened in the South. For example in Illinois, the Land of Lincoln, a free Black could be whipped for the crime of being in the state for more than 3 days. Kansas not only prohibited importing slaves, but the state would not allow any free Blacks to reside there as well. By modern standards even Kansas abolitionists would be considered racist.

22. **The Confederacy copied the US Constitution.** WRONG: It was the other way around because it was Southerners who wrote the original United States Constitution. There were few changes made in the Confederate Constitution, such as requiring a balanced budget, which were a dramatic improvement to the original.

23. **Confederates were traitors-** WRONG: Citizenship was held by an individual's state from the beginning of the American Republic. There was no concept of national citizenship. Confederates fought in units organized and equipped in their home states. They were first citizens of their own state not a national government. The concept of U. S. Citizenship did not come into being until after the war.

24. **The Confederate flag is like waving a Swastika or Nazi flag.** This is completely WRONG and insulting. Hitler actually wrote extensively about his disdain for States Rights, for example the state of Bavaria within Germany. In Mien Kamp he wrote of his plan to stamp out States Rights or state sovereignty in order to build a unified national government. Comparing Confederates to Nazis is particularly insulting when one understands that the majority of America's Jewish population was in the South in the middle 1800s, especially in Charleston SC and New Orleans LA. Many thousands of brave Jewish soldiers fought and died for the Confederacy, and the first Cabinet level officer in American history who was Jewish was Confederate Secretary of State, Judah P. Benjamin. The Confederate Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery was designed and sculpted by a Jewish Confederate veteran, Moses Ezekiel. Contrast these facts with General Grant's infamous Order No. 11 that forbade Jewish merchants from doing business with the Union Army.