



Politico Slanders Ed Crane, A Great Man

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Politico, an online and print source of news and commentary read mostly by beltway insiders, ran a story last week demeaning and staining the reputation of one of the great libertarian thinkers and actors of the 20th and early 21st centuries.

Politico's target was Edward Crane, cofounder and long-time leader of the Cato Institute, now retired. The accusation: sexual harassment in the distant past of three former employees, two alleging they were subjected to language they now find to be offensive, and one reporting a bizarre brief moment at a party.

Former employees sometimes want to get even with former employers or colleagues by making up stories of grievances that went unrecognized and unreported at the time. In the case of the Cato Institute, hundreds of people, perhaps even a thousand or more, worked at the think tank since its founding in 1977. It would not be difficult for reporters seeking to disparage a great man to find at least a few willing to tell tales.

The surprise in this story isn't that the reporters found three alleged victims, but that they found only three. If Crane were guilty of anything worse than sometimes being rude, scores of "victims" with much more serious allegations of wrong-doing would have come forward.

This thinly sourced story should not have run. It appeared in *Politico* with the only apparent purpose being to soil the reputation of a distinguished libertarian thinker and leader, after he left the organization that would have defended him only a few years ago, and after suffering a stroke.

As if on cue, the liberal trolls at Wikipedia "updated" Crane's profile to include: "In 2018, several former Cato employees alleged longtime sexual harassment by Crane, and Politico reported that he settled one such claim in 2012. Crane denied the allegations."

That these allegations should appear in the bio of one of the men most responsible for the fall of communism, for the rise of libertarianism as an influential political philosophy and movement, and for unselfishly supporting three generations of scholars devoted to developing and applying the freedom philosophy is scandalous and disgusting.

Ed Crane deserves better. I'll never read *Politico* the same way again.