

Counterpoint

✖ Back in March I wrote a review of the Winter Carnival of Magic and I was very critical of a young man that performed and competed as a blind magician.

Chris Baldwin, the magician in question, has taken the time to respond and I think it is only fair that he be given the appropriate forum to do so, so I am posting it as a feature, rather than burying it as a comment to an old article.

So here, without comment, is Chris' response to my criticism of his act:

Hello. I am the magician in question and I would like to take this chance to explain my actions so that everybody will know why I did what I did; whether you find it ethically correct or not.

I did this for three reasons so please hear me out.

Reason one: To better relate with people that are really blind.

One of my close friends is blind in one eye and his dad is completely blind in both. My friend attend a school for the blind until going to college. I had many talks with him about whether this was indeed ethical or not. He told me to do it because he has never met anybody else that made themselves blind for any period of time to see what it was like and to be able to understand him a little better. When I was at the convention the contacts that I wore completely took away my vision, I was blind at the convention the whole time except during the last day when I finally decided to tell a group of people the truth; until that time the only thing I saw was the inside of my hotel room. I have a new great respect for people that are blind because of what I did. I had to learn how to use the cane and I will never forget the first time I opened my eyes and could not see. My body took a long time to adapt because my mind knew my eyes were opened but yet I saw nothing. I will never forget that feeling.

Reason two: To see if I could pick a persona and play it to the "T" so that when people saw me they saw a blind magician and not a magician that

had a character that was only evident on the stage. I wanted to pick a character and never break from that character the entire weekend.

Reason three: There are too many people that call themselves a magician and never try to step outside of the box and do something that takes more work than just mere practice. This was indeed something that took more than mere practice. This was something that involved me stepping out of my comfort zone in order to accomplish what I wanted to do.

Let me also take this time to shine some light on some other questions that people are asking themselves. I entered the close up contest and stage contest for the sole purpose of getting myself on the stage so that I knew that every magician had a chance to see me at one time. If I were to win any of the competitions I would have declined the award because winning would not be ethical: I do not accept sympathy votes. Let me repeat that: I DO NOT ACCEPT SYMPATHY VOTES.

Now everybody knows the reason behind my actions. If anyone has any questions then please feel free to ask.