

When An Apology Isn't

I wrote a long preamble pointing out all that was wrong with this - morally, ethically and technically, but he's just not worth it. Still, it needs to be recorded for posterity. With that said, I give you, His Holiness, Steven Youell.

An Apology and Some Apologetics

Please read this entire article before you react. It's a bit rambling because I just don't have the gumption to seriously edit it.

I do not expect sympathy and I do expect that some people will vilify and hate me for the rest of their lives. So be it.

Time to play Joaquin Phoenix.

Anyone who knows anything about WordPress and Blogger could pretty much tell I'm Jerry Lukins. I knew that both of those sites log IP Addresses. There were ways to hide that, but frankly I just didn't care if people eventually found out.

For over six years the same people have been hounding me all over the internet. But Andrew Musgrave was the worst. He did not "critique" my work, he disparaged it and was not even able to write a post that mentioned me without calling me names or insulting me. He posted things like this not only on his blog, but on several others as well. At one time, he wrote something like "*The thing about Youell is that he doesn't understand that when I call him a moron, I literally mean he's a moron.*" That's a paraphrase, but you should be able to find the exact quote on the net.

Time and time again, searches on Google brought up these comments, which Roland can confirm because he actually reduced them for me by making a few of the pages private. Now let's say I'm trying to get a gig and someone looks me up on Google. The conclusion they would probably draw is that I suck as a magician. In fact, I actually lost a few prospective clients because of this and that's one of the reasons Roland helped me out. So although I still have some issues with Roland, at least he is willing to consider the consequences of his actions and make some adjustments when he feels he's crossed the line. The Smiling Mule

has no line, but his attacks are much less frequent. I've literally been called a thief, a scam artist, a hack and yes, even a pedophile on a now defunct blog. (NOT Andrew's blog.)

Andrew, though, is different. His behavior towards me was so vicious and so predictable that for the last two years when I made a post that I knew he'd react to, I'd PM someone and predict not only that he'd respond, but how quickly he'd respond. Sometimes I even could tell the person I was sending PM's to how soon he'd post. The closest I got was within 15 minutes. That was fairly easy because I'd just make the post when he was online.

I've never been very good at ignoring bullies. Most other people are. I tried for long periods of time, however I always failed. It's probably not in my genetic makeup. So after six years I just snapped and made a choice: I became a bully in order to combat a bully. And after waiting and dealing with this for six years, I am convinced that it was, in fact, a street fight.

Now I think most would agree that in a street fight there are no rules and I've always believed and acted on that. So I held nothing back. But the post titled "I LOVE Children" was way over the line because I did not consider the possible consequences of my actions. I just saw that picture that was in the post and thought it looked pretty psychotic and funny so I posted what I did.

I was wrong. For that post I apologize.

Here is the official public apology to Andrew:

Andrew, I apologize for making that post. It was way over the line and I did not consider the possible consequences. If for any reason it affects your employment, I will hand write a letter to your employer stating emphatically that it was just a thoughtless post with no factual basis.

For the record, after making the post I did check on the requirements for Andrew's job and found that a background check is required so I assumed they had already made one and found nothing. So I left it up for a week or so. Let me emphasize this: *I should not have made the post and I should not have left it up. I make no excuses for this one post. It was thoughtless.*

My intention was not to get Andrew to leave the internet. I made my intentions

clear to him via email from JL. In fact, I believe I posted a screenshot of that email in order to demonstrate that fact. I believe I (JL) said something like *"All I want is for you to stop acting like an asshole."* And seriously? That's all I wanted.

Regarding the intent of these blogs? Just look at which blogs they link to and then follow the links while taking note of the content of the blogs. It's clear that on every one of these blogs, insults and vitriol are predominant. The pattern will also demonstrate that the blogs have almost the same exact targets. Harry Lorayne is the primary target, but I'm a close second. Hiding under the shield of satire, in my opinion, does not excuse calling people a "cunt" and "fucking moron". Satire is clever and most often subtle. That behavior is not.

I do not regret using brutality to combat brutality. *I deeply regret that one post.* The blog is down and the domain will be removed today.

A friend once told me *"You know what's weird about this thing between you and Musgrave? You both appear to be quite reasonable when you're not around each other."* I know for a fact that I am often abrasive, rude and challenging on the internet. But as many who have met me in person or have Skyped with me have told me, I'm not nearly the bastard I appear to be online. Maybe now I am.

I seriously doubt that Andrew and I will ever mend fences. If I was a better man, I'd let go of the hate I have for him. But unfortunately, I have not yet been able to do that. Fortunately, Roland and I have been trying to work things out and I hope that fence will eventually be mended.

What will the final results be? I'm sure that it will increase the amount of negative hits I take on the internet. I knew that when I started. But after six years of this stuff, I don't see that as having anymore effect than the previous six years.

I expect a huge backlash from this and if anyone wants to send hate mail, I'll read all of it without argument. And, of course, I expect all sorts of vitriol on the blogs in question... some of it probably deserved. Most people who have expressed written opinions of this matter agree that with the exception of that one post, everything else was fair game. I hope they remember that I have admitted how horrible it was and that I apologized profusely for that one post.

Other than that, I regret nothing. I waited for six years and then decided to combat attackers with the very same tactics they use. I'm not sure if I regret

lowering myself to their level, but I'm sure I will eventually regret it.

The innuendo I made in that post was reprehensible and I expect that I will be deservedly crucified for posting it.

But you know what?

As bad as it may sound, right now it brings a smile to my face to know that Andrew Musgrave was beaten into submission by someone he seriously believes is a moron and an idiot. Someone he believes is far below his own level of intelligence. And it's even funnier that he didn't have the smarts to check the IP's before he took action.

And Andrew? For the record, my membership number in Mensa is 1061061, so I don't really qualify as a moron or idiot.

I've posted a link to this on various blogs and the Café but since I'm consistently accused of having posts/threads deleted, there's a link below that will give those who care a PDF of this entire article.

If you want to comment, please do so somewhere other than the Cafe. I'm sure they've had enough of this. I give permission for people to post this message on their blogs as long as it's reprinted entirely and without editing.

P.S. There's supposed to be a signature, but I'm having problems getting it to show up. If that's important to you, check back later.