

Speculative Realms

THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2010

Prostituting the First Amendment

I apologize sincerely for adopting a policy of moderation for posts. I hate doing it. Folks won't have their thoughts posted immediately. That is going to be a big pain. But I've been left with no choice.

Since I've been forced into an editor's role, here's a few suggested guidelines. Most of you are not going to need this lecture and are not going to require the medicine I'm about to dispense:

Try to say what you want to say without resorting to cursing. It is as easy to be insulting and articulate as it is to be insulting and inarticulate. Check out the essays of [Ambrose Bierce](#) if you don't know what I'm talking about.

Try to stick to the subject matter of the post you are rebutting or commenting on. This blog is about what it says it is about. It is not about third-party Internet humiliation deathmatches. I'm a big, strong guy but I'm not a referee. I want people to feel safe here. If they can't, there is no reason for them to come here. What's more, people will lose any ability to think if all they read is born from spasms of narcissistic rage.

What is the criticism you most often hear about the Net? People don't think. They post their smackdowns and move on to the next ragefest. They don't really do any thinking. Obviously, some folks don't think before they post to comments.

I understand some folks get pleasure from seeing themselves get ripped to shreds. Or hunting down someone they've fought with elsewhere on the Net. There is some sort of sadomasochistic thrill in it. What does that have to do with this blog? If you want to pick fights, just to have people tear into you, please go somewhere else. As I've said before, if you want it to be all about you, well *BLOGGER IS FREE*. It is easy. Go for it. Do your thing. See how many readers you get.

I bet not many. Why go to your blog when they can get the same literary experience in the men's bathroom?

If you want to think and post a reasoned critique, feel free to do so. If you just want to verbally vomit all over the place, this ain't the place for ya. I'm all for the first amendment, but I'm not just going to let people beat up on each other using language Linda Blair might have balked at using in *The Exorcist*.

Somebody will get hurt. So I'm putting a stop to it. Moderation is not banning but it is going to do the job in this case. I think moderation stinks of Dick Cheney. Fat white guy bans open discussion! It smells to heaven. I'd rather eat hot nails. But there is something worse than banning and moderation, folks.

It is the drunken license to abuse. The fact I've had to take this step means people who get off on humiliating themselves and others have another badge of dishonor to add to their collection. They can strut around and say their first amendment rights have once again been violated. And crown of crowns! I was banned by Mr. First Amendment Himself! I'm the boss of the realm!

But this kind of behavior abuses the first amendment in the same way a pimp abuses his lowest-grossing whore.

The first amendment is not a whore. *She is a lady.*

Maybe the people who ban and moderate just have a little bit more respect for her reputation.

Posted by Gary Haden at 8:34 AM 

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Science
 Religion
 It is a tie
 Not a fair question

Votes so far: 45
 Poll closed

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Part I

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