

A Blogger's Code Of Ethics

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August 5, 2012 was the happiest day of my life. On this date, this blog officially launched and to brag a bit, I think it has been a huge success.

Very early in my blogging adventure, a story came across my desk that I felt was worth telling. To do it properly I bought and read a book by a new author, Rosaura Torres. I talked to Rosa many times. While I knew the book was about a real person, she changed the names and so did I.

I never put out on my blog the real names of those who allegedly abused Rosa. A fellow blogger, however not only put names, but pictures of this man's new family as well. She used Rosa to fulfill a vendetta she has against my entire city, our public officials, and our police department.

This woman does not live in Lancaster, PA, but she has an obsessive hatred for our little town. She devotes every second of her blog to copying and pasting any crime from Lancaster and then blasting the police if the crime is not solved within hours.

When she met Rosa, and heard her book was about people with ties to Lancaster, PA, she jumped on it. She spent a year blogging and supporting the book Rosa wrote.

She devoted every blog she wrote posting pictures of real life people and their wives and children and labeling them wife beaters, even though they were never charged or convicted of any crimes. She called for them to be fired based on a book that told of incidents that allegedly happened over 20 years ago.

I chose to write the same story differently. I did a series on *Violence Against Women*, which was the highest read blogs of my career. I never mentioned names of anyone who was not ever charged or convicted of a crime, yet I still got Rosa's story out there and helped educate and help a lot of abuse victims.

Only last year did it become evident that this other blogger never read the book she was promoting on every blog she wrote and when she did, she started criticizing both the book and anyone who read it and promoted it. This includes me.

I am now the new target of this bloggers obsession with destroying Lancaster City, PA. She says my weight loss series is a joke, she is copying and pasting, which is all she knows how to do, Face Book posts from my page to her blog, thinking she is embarrassing me.

Nothing could be further from the truth. I love the free publicity for my blog which I



hope is one of integrity and ethical responsibility.

My readers use real names when responding to my blogs. Hers post as "*Anonymous*." Sad when a reader is afraid to use their real name when writing on your blog.

My readers will accept some spelling or grammatical errors because they know every word here is written by me from my heart. It is hard to make spelling errors when all you do is copy and paste others work.

I hate sitting here today criticizing a fellow blogger. But I have no choice. She is refusing to allow me to respond to her attacks on me and this blog I am so proud of, on her blog because she can not stand anyone who disagrees with her.



So as she says "What is Good For The Goose." If she wants to attack my blog and my integrity on hers, I get to do the same on mine.

Notice I am not naming her or her blog because I do have ethics and many of you already know who she is and what her blog represents. Why should I give a bad, non factual blog any advertisement? She will be busy answering all the legal documents that are coming her way.

She used my name and a picture. Both are public. I will not fall to her level. Most in Lancaster, PA are already very familiar with her.

Freedom of speech is one thing. However the First Amendment does not allow someone to label another person as a wife beater if he was never arrested or charged with such a crime. It does not give one the right to label someone a stalker if again he was never charged.

It certainly does not give anyone the right to try to ruin a person's career based on allegations that are over 20 years old. It does not give a person the right to put a picture of his new wife and young child's picture on her blog under the heading "Wife Beater."

Social media and blogging has somehow put a stain on real writing. I believe bloggers have the same responsibility as any reporter. Many times, bloggers write our personal opinions on a story, but the story we write on needs to be factual. We can not make up the blame as we go along because someone said, "*twenty years ago that guy did this.*"

In America everyone is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. Those who have not been tried and convicted are innocent and able to live their lives as they choose. People do fall through the cracks and that is unfortunate but it does not give bloggers or anyone else the right to destroy the life of a law abiding citizen with a clean record.

I could say horrible things about a former man I dated who has a very good reputation in this community. I don't say a word. I could write a book about workplace abuse that I experienced. I don't say a word.

Do I wish everyone who ever harmed another person was sitting in jail right now, YES, I do! But again, we have laws in our country mostly to protect the innocent from false

accusations. Unfortunately some of the guilty take advantage of this. But as Alan Dershowitz says, *"better 10 guilty go free than one innocent man be convicted."*

Bloggers take interest in stories and write about them. We are not judge, jury or executioner. We never truly get the whole story either. Usually we determine which side we are on and write accordingly. Rarely does a blogger ever try to get the "other side." Because the blogger's mind is already made up, they probably would be unable to listen to someone they have already convicted and have a hatred for.

I believe and have written that to be a great writer, one must stop being who we are. We have to ignore our personal beliefs, our biases, our preconceived notions. We have to "shut up and listen."

It is then, we learn something, get the best story, and ultimately, get the true story.