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Subject: Re: might have offended someone

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 08 May 2005 22:05:31 GMT

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Refusing to give a person access to a microphone is not the same as silencing them. They are always free to get their own microphone. That's not censorship, and it isn't silencing anyone. At least five people felt strongly enough to voice their opinion about the dregs of the internet on this thread. Two of them have done literally thousands of hours of work, provided freely for DIY enthusiasts and hobbyists to use. They stated basically that if those kinds of people are allowed to post their rantings on a discussion site, they will not participate there. It made them uncomfortable. I know each of these people and none of them are mal-adjusted or thin skinned. They just don't like being around emotional sickness, and are smart enough to remove themselves from environments where it exists. These people have said, "it's either them or us." So, given this choice, who do we want here? Remember how these guys have acted in the past. We're talking about the most offensive insults, stuff that would be censored from radio and television. And even if you don't agree with those sets of standards, and I would probably stand with you there, the guys we're talking about have attacked some of your friends most viciously. So who do we stand with? Fully 100% of the posts made on ART from either of the offenders have been completely against the rules. Nothing but ad hominem attacks, and bad ones too, stuff like calling a man's wife an anal sex whore. Those kinds of posts have no value, except to start fights. And even on other messageboards where I've seen them make occasional posts that weren't attacking someone, they do not have any technical merits. They make suggestions that are no more useful than telling someone to try anti-freeze coolant in their oil pan. You can defend their ability to have a voice, but you cannot make a case that their arguments have any technical value. One of these two guys was banned from a trade show, with the police on guard watching for them. That's how bad a tone they had set with their antics. No, not antics, their sickness. When it goes that far, we're talking about more than inappropriate E-Mail's or posts - We're talking about a volatile situation spilling over. If this guy had come to the trade show, someone might have gotten hurt and probably gone to jail. So this isn't about the appropriateness of a post or two, it isn't about censorship, and it isn't about finding some sort of value hidden in the ramblings of an eccentric person. This is about enforcing a set of standards of decency. This is the Round Table, not the Asylum. It's about safety for the participants here, both emotionally and in some cases, even physically. If a person can't be decent, can't respect a set of ethical standards and abide by basic rules, then they cannot participate here. If a person cannot exist in society without stealing, raping and killing, they can't be free either. They are incarcerated, banned from society. If an offensive person changes, then that's something to look at. I would personally embrace them with open arms. I've known a lot of people that have changed their lives completely. Occasionally, you'll see a complete alcoholic rise up and become a useful member of society. After a couple of years, I've seen people change so much you literally don't recognize them anymore. A drunken addicted thief becomes more pure hearted than a priest. I've seen it. You just can't imagine them being as dark as they once were. So that can happen, and I'd embrace anyone that turned this way, perhaps even more so than someone who had never been ugly and turned good. The change is so amazing, it is just great to see. But until and unless this complete change occurs, and I choose not to allow unacceptable behavior to be around me, online or otherwise. I think that is what others have said on his thread too. It isn't about censorship at all.

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