



The Makers of Magic Mop Infomercials and a Sh*t-Flinging Monkey are Insulted by Comparison to Darrell Fusaro

Darrell Fusaro (May 09, 2010)



Freedom, is it worth the risk?

My Italian Immigrant grandparents would be proud to know that today I am living the American dream. Not only have I enjoyed the freedom of expression as granted in our First Amendment right, but I have been on the receiving end of it as well. Recently, I have received some "anonymous" Internet comments regarding my first documentary film, "The Basement." They praise my ability to have made the "worst piece of filmmaking" ever. Here are some excerpts.



“Life is full of surprises. Some times you get genital herpes...”

“The camera work seems as if the cameraman was drunk and this so-called movie was being shot from the inside of a liquor store paper bag.”

“...the nausea from this pile of dung made it really hard to focus.”

“I'd ... compare it to a Magic Mop infomercial and whatever movie a sh*t-flinging monkey would do, had he a \$7 budget.”

The last one is my all time favorite, even if the makers of the Magic Mop infomercial and a sh*t-flinging monkey are insulted by being compared to me. Unfortunately when criticism is this outrageously over-the-top it is hard to take it seriously. I also believe the ability to remain anonymous when being critical amplifies the cruelty, as pointed out in the New York Times, April 21, 2010, article by writer Taffy Brodesser-Akner, “E-Playgrounds Can Get Vicious.” In it she writes,

“Why is the Internet such a cruel playground? Kathleen Taylor, the author of ‘Cruelty: Human Evil and the Human Brain,’ has a theory. ‘We’re evolved to be face-to-face creatures,’ she said in a recent interview. ‘We developed to have constant feedback from others, telling us if it was O.K. to be saying what we’re saying. On the Internet, you get nothing, no body language, no gesture. So you get this feeling of unlimited power because there is nothing stopping you, no instant feedback.’”

This by no means diminishes the sting of such criticism, but then again, nobody kicks a dead dog. And if I worry about what people may or may not like about every new endeavor I embark on, I'd never have the courage to start at all. I believe in the old adage, “it is better to try and fail, than to have never tried at all.”



One childhood experience stands out. While I was in elementary school my third grade teacher asked the class, "What year did Christopher Columbus discover America?" Instantly the rhyme rang out in my head, "In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." I knew the answer! But as I was about to raise my hand my enthusiasm was replaced with terror. "What if that's not the right answer? Everyone will make fun of me!" So, I didn't raise my hand, but John Gerbino did.

He answered, "1492!"

From that moment on, I despised John Gerbino. Anytime anyone anywhere mentioned John Gerbino, I would comment, "He's a brown-noser! A real apple polisher, a goody two shoes, a weasel." I never had anything nice to say about John Gerbino. My contempt for John was with me right up until I graduated from High School. Why did I hate John Gerbino? Was it because he knew the answer? Not at all, I hated Gerbino because he had the courage to do what I could not, take the risk and raise his hand, in spite of potential ridicule.

That being said, whenever I do endeavor to step up to the plate, I have to be mature enough to learn from all the constructive criticism that is offered. If I refuse to consider the constructive criticism from those with more experience than I, I would never improve at all. The key word here is, "constructive." Matter of fact, when I was serving in the Military, a U.S. Marine Corp Gunnery Sergeant seared this into my thick skull by asking me the following question.

"Fusaro, Do you know what the biggest room in YOUR house is?"

'The living room?' I answered.

'No you idiot, the room for improvement.'

So today I see these critiques and comments as a compliment to my ability to finally have the courage of John Gerbino. They also reinforce my gratitude to be living in America where we have the freedom of expression, the right to be wrong, the ability to try and fail, as well as, the courage to



learn from or ignore the criticism of others.

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