

**Pedro L. Gonzalez** ✓ @emeriticus

43m

A response to the controversy about me:

The golden rule for surviving controversy is don't apologize. But I am faced with a Gordian problem, a knot connecting the future to the oxcart of the past. The dilemma is this: you are never supposed to apologize; the people sticking their necks out to defend me deserve an explanation.

On Tuesday, allies of Donald Trump—many of whom have made a habit of leaking private texts to the public in hopes of blackmailing people into silence—coordinated with Breitbart News to publish an article based on private messages I exchanged with former friends—messages presumably leaked by people who are unhappy with me for defecting from the Trump Train for good. In them, I said nasty things about race and Jews that do not reflect who I am today. Though it wasn't all so long ago, revisiting that period of life feels like remembering a fever dream.

My messages with individuals who are still aligned with Trump and have relationships with his media network are not being used against me because they found my comments particularly offensive. They have said the same or worse. Instead, it happened because, since growing up and leaving the circus, I've emerged as one of Trump's most outspoken critics. It's funny because Andrew Breitbart once said, "Telling the truth is fun." That's true—but it also comes at a cost in the age of the politics of personal destruction. Still, I owe my defenders an explanation. I don't blame people for wondering how I could have changed so much and so quickly. So I will try to cut the knot by telling the truth about who I am.

I got into politics largely because of Trump. My early political writings were in defense of him. Before that, I had spent most of my life enmeshed in generic liberalism, someone who imbibed the atmospheric opinions of California, where I was raised, as plain facts

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choice, pro-death penalty (that hasn't changed), ambivalent toward immigration, and pro-interventionism. I also liked the way Bernie Sanders talked about the ruling class.

"You know, I think many people have the mistaken impression that Congress regulates Wall Street," Bernie once said. "In truth that's not the case. The real truth is that Wall Street regulates the Congress."

Bernie was right, and Trump said similar things about the elites. Those similarities made eventually supporting Trump fairly easy.

I have done a political speedrun. Though I jumped into the discourse by reading about the paleoconservatives and Old Right, I still cycled through the course of conservatism, from a confused orthodoxy to where I am today. I went to war with libertarianism but also defended Trump's economic policies initially, which had essentially just sprung from the brain of Paul Ryan. I took Israel's side in its dispute with the Palestinians and rationalized the invasion of Iraq as disastrous but well-intentioned and defended Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and was not initially affected by his veering into more hawkish foreign policy vis-à-vis Russia. In time, however, I became essentially an isolationist and economic populist, no longer able to defend foreign conflicts at all and utterly unconcerned with affairs abroad that do not directly affect Americans.

I do not know what exactly triggered the descent that happened next. Part of it, I think, stems from a desire to transgress the boundaries of politically acceptable discourse. There is a human impulse to stalk and break taboos, and anger with the status quo leads some of us to seek answers outside the mainstream at a time when trust in traditional sources of information has collapsed. Everything is in the swirl. That which is declared off-limits, that which cannot be said, does not disappear from the discourse; it is merely driven underground,

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demonstrating supposedly esoteric knowledge indicates that one has ascended from the cave of “normie” conservatism. You’ve escaped the Matrix.

But the truth is that all this is just different parts of the same cave, subterranean chambers that merely feel like freedom from constraints when they are, in fact, limiting and self-destructive. Monomaniacal malding over Jews or any group as the collective source of your frustration is a trap and an acidic mind virus. It is a mind virus, like the 1619 Project is a mind virus, and like any such disease, it will envelope your mind in midnight and consume your life and destroy your relationships if you let it. There is no need to conduct substantive analysis or engage in anything constructive if your enemies are everywhere and nowhere. You do not have to think about things seriously when you can just engage in performative bigotry at collectives. Vulgarity becomes a substitute for actual thinking. You either see that and grow up and move on or stay tilting at a different set of shadows, losing your mind in the seething darkness.

The true exit to the cave, if there is one, is finding meaning in those small spaces untouched by the shadows of politics where light breaks through. For me, that was growing into fatherhood and learning to live for my kids. It is a long work in progress. But I am trying, which is also why I could no longer countenance Trump and decided to quit his party for good.

My articles were once printed and distributed within the Trump White House as required reading. I had even been invited by his team to Mar-a-Lago to attend his announcement for 2024. I went back and forth on abandoning Trumpism over the last few years, by turns disillusioned and hopeful, critical and praising. But I have dropped it permanently. I could not stand the lies any longer. So I spoke out by telling the truth about Trump from the perspective of someone who believes in the promises he cynically holds forth. The consequences of that decision are why I am writing this now.

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me. I am deeply thankful for them taking that risk on my behalf. It can hurt.

Crossing Trump's political machine puts you in a state of nature—a state of war without rules of engagement or codes of conduct. There are no limits to how much harm can be inflicted.

My views and attitude have rapidly and dramatically changed in a short period of time, but I have always been very stubborn, and I generally do not respond well to anyone trying to silence me—certainly not by people who are guilty of much worse than I am and feel no remorse. When Trump is gone, they will have nowhere to go and will end up like Crassus, into whose mouth the Parthians poured molten gold in mockery of his hubris and avarice.

I am glad this happened. I also don't expect Trump's people to stop trying to tie my future to who I was yesterday when I was, ironically, closer to them. I expect them to continue using any means necessary to silence me like they try to do to anyone with a sense of shame, against those with something to lose and families to feed because it can cost them everything. It's the reason others don't defect or stay silent. It is excruciating, but the only way out is to let them hurt you and consign yourself to the flames of public judgment until nothing is left to burn. In "Dune," Frank Herbert called this the "attitude of the knife"—"chopping off what's incomplete and saying: 'Now, it's complete because it's ended here.'"

I hope others see all this for the dead-end it is and cut away, too, and I can do nothing more than ask people to judge me based on who I am now. I am deeply grateful to everyone who has already.

Jun 29, 2023 · 8:01 PM UTC

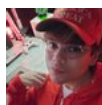
333 47 111 449
Jack @Jack289238471

Replying to @emeriticus

TLDR

41m

C

**Adiel "Lucky" Beneviento** ✓ @QtPossiblyLucky

41m

Replying to @emeriticus

I ain't about to read all this. All I know is that you're a joke, but not because of what you said in some chat groups, but because of the constant Twitter crying you do. 😂

💬 8 ↩️ 2 🗨️ ❤️ 46

*** Xellçai *** ✓ @2AWoman

27m

Girl plz LOL sit down 😂😂

💬 1 ↩️ 🗨️ ❤️ 8

**Dr. Carol X Lunz PhD She/Him, GED Alumni, POC-Ally** ✓ @marinasmigielsk 40m

Replying to @emeriticus

You had nothing to apologize about for recognizing that a group acts in a manner that seems hostile. Anyways good luck but never apologize for something so trivial

💬 5 ↩️ 2 🗨️ 1 ❤️ 39



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**Southern Gatorz** 🇺🇸 ✓ @SouthernGatorz

34m

Replying to @emeriticus

Did you really read all that!

25% Yes

75% No

803 votes • 1 hour

💬 3 ↩️ 2 🗨️ ❤️ 6

*** Xellçai *** ✓ @2AWoman

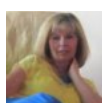
30m

Yep

💬 2 ↩️ 🗨️ ❤️ 8



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**Robbi Fahey** ✓ @robbi_fahey

34m

Replying to @emeriticus @davereaboi

It will all be forgotten after the book that's about to be released about Trump on July 8th 'Blowback: A Warning to Save Democracy from the Next Trump'

💬 7 ↩️ 🗨️ ❤️ 1

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💬 ↻ 🗨️ ❤️ 4



Dr.Carol X Lunz PhD She/Him,GED Alumni,POC-Ally ✓ @marinasmigielsk 33m

Replying to @emeriticus

This is politics you shld have said nothing. You give people too much power

💬 ↻ 🗨️ ❤️ 14



europids ✓ @Europids 33m

Replying to @emeriticus

Blood in the water, don't apologize.

💬 1 ↻ 🗨️ ❤️ 14



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Caged_Bird_Sings - #BeYourOwnBank ✓ @CagedSings 33m

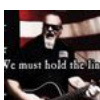
Replying to @emeriticus

You are a racist clown pretending to be an influencer! #Negress

💬 1 ↻ 1 🗨️ ❤️ 20



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miguelifornia ✓ @miguelifornia 32m

Replying to @emeriticus

You are a mess... 🤔👉

A liability to meatball

💬 1 ↻ 3 🗨️ ❤️ 52



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Dr.Carol X Lunz PhD She/Him,GED Alumni,POC-Ally ✓ @marinasmigielsk 32m

Replying to @emeriticus

Jc this is so woke

"Mind virus" huh to say what we think!

💬 ↻ 🗨️ ❤️ 6



Gregory House MD ✓ @GregHouseDM 31m

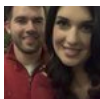
Replying to @emeriticus

That's what happens when you work for DJT and then try to leave the cult.

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2 1 15



Jessica O'Donnell ✓ @heckyessica

30m

Replying to @emeriticus

Well said.

1 1 15

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Pericles 'Perry' Abbasi ✓ @ElectionLegal

29m

Replying to @emeriticus

You come to me, on the day of Trump's Supreme Court Justices overturning affirmative action and ask me to read all that?

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miguelifornia ✓ @miguelifornia

29m



1 22



Javier Manjarres ✓ @JavManjarres

26m

Replying to @emeriticus

Pathetic. You sound like some moron that has a lot of issues that need unpacking. Just say you screwed up, so everyone can move on. No need to post some long winded bullshit explanation. If you care, just own up to it and move on.

Example: "For those who have taken issue and have been offended by the insensitive and homophobic remarks that I made several years ago, I am sorry. I have decided to change the way I see the world and have become a better person for it"

No need to explain. When you are explaining, you are losing. You lost. Get over it. Man up, apologize for what you said, and move on.

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