

**From:** "Ben Edelman" <ben@benedelman.org>

**To:** "Lawrence Lessig" <lessig@pobox.com>

**Subject:** RE: with empathy

**Date:** Sun, 31 Dec 2017 11:43:48 +0000

**Importance:** Normal

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Thought you might be interested to know how this played out. In short, this probably cost me tenure at HBS. Not that there weren't other weaknesses in my case -- other things I screwed up. But in reporting the decision of the senior faculty, the HBS dean advised me that 2014 media coverage had created a hole I couldn't dig myself out of. Apparently I had the support of the majority of the senior faculty, but not the supermajority required by convention.

The process was without precedent in several respects. Happy to tell you the full saga, but I don't presume that you'd be interested. You probably know Max Bazerman who has strong thoughts on what happened and what it says about HBS and about me.

Apparently my research was viewed favorably on the merits, which is some comfort. I could yet land on my feet. If not at a business school, I could go to a law school, or CS, or even some kind of public policy school. But I haven't been writing articles designed to appeal to those groups. Would be misleading to confuse a bunch of OK options with one excellent one. So a real disappointment.

But a lot to be thankful for nonetheless. Would be nice to get together sometime.

-----Original Message-----

From: Lawrence Lessig [mailto:lessig@gmail.com] On Behalf Of Lawrence Lessig

Sent: Sunday, December 14, 2014 10:51 AM

To: Ben Edelman <ben@benedelman.org>

Subject: Re: with empathy

I think you need to go meet with your dean as soon as possible, if only to get a clear sense of where the dean is on this. Your colleagues could be supportive, or not, but it is important to know which soon. There shouldn't be any problem, obviously. But you should figure that out sooner rather than later.

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Lessig

Roy L. Furman Professor of Law and Leadership Harvard Law School

1563 Massachusetts Ave

Cambridge, MA 02138

vx:1-617-496-8853

fx:1-617-496-4866

@lessig

On Dec 14, 2014, at 10:25 AM, Ben Edelman <ben@benedelman.org> wrote:

> You're very kind to write. I appreciate your support.

>



> I didn't know you during the MS / Special Master uproar, but somehow I  
 > have the sense that the media firestorm here is worse than what you faced then.  
 > My mother-in-law, in Singapore and no great media guru, somehow knew  
 > about it!  
 >  
 > Should I have anticipated that the restaurant would give the emails to  
 > the press? Corresponding mostly with large companies and their  
 > attorneys, with privacy policies protecting customer privacy, it never  
 > really crossed my mind. I think I would have come out a fair bit  
 > better had the initial coverage given more play to my motives, but  
 > that wouldn't have gotten the page-views that Boston.com wanted.  
 >  
 > Anyway, I'm doing OK. Was feeling pretty glum at the worst of it, but  
 > now considerably better. The over-the-top tactics of Boston.com and  
 > Hilary Sargent (not bothering to check whether racist emails were  
 > authentic, deleting a tweet admitting same, and finally selling humor  
 > t-shirts at my  
 > expense) seem to have some people revisiting her initial one-sided coverage.  
 > I'm keeping my head down and letting that story play its course.  
 >  
 >  
 > On my mind for the next day or so: What to say to my dean and how? So  
 > far he's offered his view of the situation through multiple levels of  
 > assistants and intermediaries. I'm inclined to cut through that with  
 > a personal message. Certainly a tricky one though. Not ideal to have  
 > this uproar after the Blinkx mess I told you about in February.  
 > (Recall: I blogged about their adware tactics; their PR pros had  
 > considerable success questioning my motives.) My tenure case will be evaluated in fall 2015.  
 > Agh!  
 >  
 >  
 > -----Original Message-----  
 > From: Lawrence Lessig [mailto:lessig@gmail.com] On Behalf Of Lawrence  
 > Lessig  
 > Sent: Sunday, December 14, 2014 6:05 AM  
 > To: Ben Edelman  
 > Subject: with empathy  
 >  
 >  
 > Having been in positions similar to yours too many times in my life, I  
 > hope you're doing ok. Let me know if there's any way I can help.  
 >  
 > -----  
 > Lessig  
 > Roy L. Furman Professor of Law and Leadership Harvard Law School  
 > 1563 Massachusetts Ave  
 > Cambridge, MA 02138  
 > vx:1-617-496-8853  
 > fx:1-617-496-4866  
 > @lessig  
 >  
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