

July 5th, 2018

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of Eiko Fried, who is just the latest person subjected to an attempt at intimidation and bullying by James Coyne. Jim is well known in the US as someone who is quarrelsome and litigious so that I am not surprised that he is suing Eiko Fried. Coyne is not without talent (his original work on the interpersonal costs of depression was really quite strong) but he was denied tenure at Berkeley largely because his colleagues did not like him and were frightened by some of his behaviors (Enrico Jones now deceased was my informant in that regard) and my understanding is that he lost a civil suit involving domestic violence after he moved to Michigan. My former colleague Neil Jacobson (also now deceased) used to make him the center point of his workshops on domestic violence and it was through him that I heard these tales.

I know of many other people that he has tried to bully in the course of his professional activities. Several years ago he was banned from the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology (SSCP) listserv for uncivil postings. He subsequently tried to coerce an apology from SSCP on the premise that he was banned because of his critiques of the role of the American Psychological Association (APA) in facilitating torture under the Bush Administration. Good that Jim was on the right side of that issue, but the electronic record was clear; he was banned for being uncivil in his communications. He threatened to "go public" on his blog (18,000 followers). The conversation ended when we asked if he really wanted to get into "he said she said" with the former head of SSCP (a minister's daughter with an impeccable reputation). We have heard nothing further from him. Jim moved from Berkeley to the University of Michigan (where he lost the domestic violence case) to the University of Pennsylvania again under less than auspicious circumstances.

When I learned from my colleagues that he had moved to the Netherlands I made a point of alerting them to the rumors regarding his past behaviors. Sure enough he went after one of those colleagues so warned (Ioana Cristea) with a patently false charge of plagiarism. He tends to go after junior people (especially women) and I stand fully behind Eiko Fried (a fine young scientist with a sterling reputation) in this dispute. Coyne is a talented scientist who could make a real contribution to the field, but for whatever reason he repeatedly picks fights with those least able to fight back. This is a case without merit filed by someone roundly despised within the profession due to his malicious behaviors when he could be respected for his intellectual gifts.

Yours truly,



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