



Skiology Matt

January 13 · 🌐

ADDRESSING FALSE CLAIMS, HARASSMENT, AND THREATS

Last Thursday I was awoken to a slew of messages from friends telling me about a post to a particular group they were a member of where someone was making allegations about me and referencing an article in Vermont Ski + Ride Magazine by their editor. I have annotated the photo being passed around of the article in question that referenced who I assume to be me, and others have positively claimed was about me. I have also included a screen capture of one of multiple posts in various groups, and in this particular one I have also highlighted the comments of the administrator in one such group where he, among other things, called for me to be "confronted personally".

I have repeatedly shared with the editor of Vermont Ski + Ride that that the claim is false and that I feel threatened as a result of this, both physically and in relation to my entire well being, and I have asked for a retraction. They have not only refused, but the editor has also threatened me with liable if I am to discuss this matter publicly. I am addressing this here in order to set the record straight and share some information about the harassment and other things that I have experienced in the proceeding 10 months.

Before I discuss the issues at hand, let me make clear that I not only do not condone personal insults, bullying, cyberstalking, harassment, and beyond, I find such behavior to be wholly repugnant. I ask that everyone who reads this not engage in such behaviors and specifically for no one to contact those involved in the matters that I discuss.

MY QUARANTINE PROTOCOLS

Only once in the previous 10 months have I been within 6 feet of another individual without a mask, and that was Thanksgiving with a friend who has very serious asthma where I was the only person she trusted to be safe and needed someone to share the holiday with. Personally I'm fine with restricting my activities, primarily because this virus is a threat to me and more so than my desire not to pass this on to other people, I strongly do not wish to get it myself.

Since the start of the season I have gone contactless for groceries, which legitimately was my only necessary change to satisfy quarantine requirements of all states. I have also tested multiple times despite my lack of exposure. My only actual exposure to people now is at the resorts that I visit, something I have only done 4 times to date, in large part because I am visible, and I wanted to avoid periods of sensitivity despite being legally allowed to visit Vermont and other states. I realize that I am recognizable and under the spotlight, and I have attempted to be fully transparent in my travels.

VERMONT DOES IN FACT HAVE EXCEPTIONS

Vermont allows their own residents and those nearby in other states to travel for work without any quarantine or testing requirements (<https://bit.ly/2XCLbHX>). Going all the way back to March when Vermont issued stay at home orders, media was also given a specific exemption in Governor Scott's Executive order (<https://bit.ly/3qgWK3H>). Ski resorts were also granted specific exceptions from employees needing to quarantine and test in the industry guidelines.

I do call myself a "blogger" out of respect for professionally trained journalists, just like I call myself a "weather dude" out of respect for professionally trained meteorologists. Going back to 2011 however, the Supreme Court of the United States has established in *Obsidian Finance Group v. Crystal Cox* that bloggers have the full protections of the Constitution as defined by the First Amendment regarding protections for journalists. At least the vast majority of states with travel restrictions have special policies regarding journalists.

While I live very close to Vermont, I do business in Vermont, and I cover Vermont as a member of the news media which is also my work, I maintain my quarantine perfectly outside of the time I spend visiting resorts, and this applies to the rules for every single state that I may visit. If I was not covering the industry, I could easily choose to only visit Vermont this winter with my quarantine, and before Skiology that's what I did on 90% of my days out, but I feel that due to my coverage it is inappropriate for me on several levels to either only visit Vermont, or otherwise never visit Vermont because I cover the entire Northeast ski industry. While there may be an occasion where I do not qualify for travel on quarantine alone, I am trying to keep even the slightest exception beyond the quarantine requirements at a minimum in every single state, and that exception would be me either standing in a short lift line or riding a chairlift in another state.

Take note that things were different in the Fall with very low rates of infection in my area, and even Vermont was starting to take action to loosen the spigot as their governor described. In the Summer they instituted a mask mandate described in part to help prepare them for the ski season, and just before leaf-peeping started they opened lodging capacity to 100% and earmarked money to be used to promote their tourism industry. Things obviously started to reverse course when this wave started building, and now 8 out of the 9 Northeast states have rather strict travel restrictions with quarantine and testing requirements. I had always encouraged personal responsibility, but widespread travel restrictions being enacted near the start of the season resulted in a change of my messaging as well as the messaging of the entire ski industry.

I respect not just Vermonter's desires to protect themselves from this virus, but all people in every single state. Trust me, the people who live in Lake Placid are also terrified about what the ski season could bring. I also support the ski industry operating, but with strong protocols as the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people rely on it. This is a balance for sure, and it's imperfect, but socialization is the cause of most spread, not skiing and riding. I am most definitely uncomfortable with some of what I see, and I think it is important to cover what is going on. My season would be far more enjoyable if I was not doing it as part of my work. Honestly, the last 10 months has not been enjoyable for me at all, but I try to put a positive spin on things because I believe that is an important message for me to send.

I HAVE BEEN CRIMINALLY HARRASSED

On March 20th of this year, two days after the last ski resort closing in the Northeast, a senior ski patroller at Waterville Valley by the name of [REDACTED] along with two of his friends started a Facebook group targeting me. Aside from behavior that others have described to me as pathetic and appalling, false claims have been continually made by [REDACTED] and others about me violating many different laws, and repeated calls have been made for people to take action against me in one way or another.

One of [REDACTED]'s methods has been to scan this group and others for people who are upset with me and then invite them to his group to join the pile on. This last summer one person in the Ski The East group claimed that I molested children. Someone alerted me and the administrators for that group, and that comment was removed. The next day [REDACTED] introduced that person to his own group and gave him a platform. This person then claimed that I drugged and molested children there. Subsequent to this others in the group started referring to me as a child molester. I have been advised by the police that this is in fact criminal.

The person who first made the child molestation claims also stalked and harassed a friend of mine in ski media for several years with the same claims as well as others. I have been advised by both council and law enforcement that while this was surely Aggravated Harassment, due to the nature of this individual it may be best to simply try to see if it would go away. I do believe that [REDACTED] intended for this person to repeat these claims, and would then potentially be party to the crime (among other actions).

I have reached out to Waterville Valley multiple times concerning this issue with one of their employees. The one manager who was in that group expressed his sincere dismay and forwarded it to upper management, but no action was taken except those posts disappeared. When things heated up again in December I reached out again and had a conversation with another manager there who said he would consider action, however none has been taken in 3 weeks now. In that conversation there was frequent condemnation of me for talking about Waterville Valley's failure to close, and he suggested that maybe I brought this upon myself. I also contacted the head of the Eastern Division of the National Ski Patrol about the harassment, and I feel confident that this was taken very seriously, however I am unaware of the result as yet. National Ski Patrol has a code of conduct, and in my opinion at least, this conduct violates their policies.

The author of the article shared in this post is presently in that group as well, and has been since September for all except about 2 weeks following the publication of the article. Members of that group had previously encouraged her to expose me. When someone in that group spotted the story, they conspired to spread it across social media and attach my name to it. This was then posted in at least 4 other groups with over 5,000 members, one of which is shown above. The result of that has been more hate directed my way, and even a call for me to be "personally confronted". More than a dozen people have contacted me about this. Many here are aware of this.

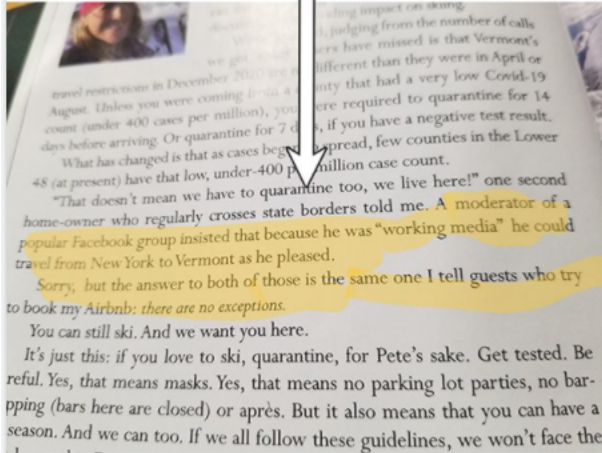
I don't believe this group is just about complaining or ridicule, rather people there seem to want to do me harm, and they have. I feel that my safety and my ability to earn money have been affected by their actions. I have no idea why Facebook hasn't taken action on it to date as it is clearly against their policy on bullying and harassment among other things. I changed my name in 2019 to Skiology Matt in order to protect myself after picking up my first stalker. This was the same guy who first claimed I was a child molester, and I already knew his history and what might come since he had done this before. Since this article came out I also changed the name on my personal account in order to protect myself since my full name, age, and general location is being shared among those in the group responsible for the harassment. Many in that group have never been a member of Northeast Skiology, and those that have I have had primarily little interaction if any with them. Some people just like to troll. Some people are out to do harm to others.

I BELIEVE A RETRACTION BY VERMONT SKI + RIDE IS WARRANTED

What has transpired has been dangerous. Clearly this is an extremely torturous time with a pandemic, economic strife, racial issues, political concerns, and even threats to our democracy. Along with those things there have been issues with xenophobia in some areas of the Northeast due to the pandemic, and most notably within Vermont. People have been harassed, accosted, and property has been damaged. Singling someone out in this context is very dangerous, especially someone that is recognizable.

The retraction should be straight forward and not seek to tarnish me through more careful means. Journalists enjoy certain protections in their work, but I do not believe it is protected to state things as fact when they are not and refuse to correct their errors, especially given what has transpired. I also do not believe it is ethical to target someone in this manner. Harassment and threats should be strongly condemned. I do feel very much threatened as a result of this. I am most certainly not part of the problem, and I share the concerns of many people in this regard.

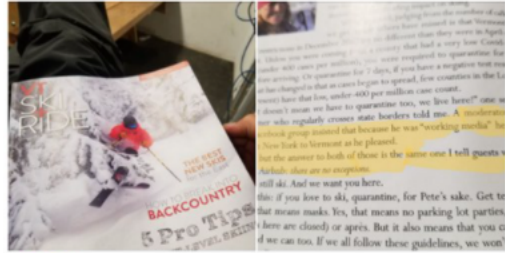
A moderator of a popular Facebook group insisted that because he was "working media" he could travel from New York to Vermont as he pleased.
Sorry, but the answer to both of those is the same one I tell guests who try to book my Airbnb: *there are no exceptions.*



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Nycolas Torunski
21h · 🌐

I've been blocked on two pages already for posting this, will this be 3? Here we can see "skiology matt" being called out in VT Ski and Ride Magazine for flaunting false information saying he is exempt from the rules while simultaneously talking down on anyone who dares disagree with him. I am blocked from his page simply because I belong to another page, this guy is pretty narcissistic and does not deserve any donations for what he does. Honestly slightly jealous I didn't think of it first, rewriting other weather reports and putting my logo on their maps and calling it my own. 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄



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38 Comments

Like Comment



Chris Step

Oh no, you're fine here! Skiology Matt needs to be exposed and better yet confronted personally when you see him and shunned by all....

Like · Reply · 12h

172 Comments