

# Re: Why I've returned

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*Source:* <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/General/comp.programming/2008-01/msg00037.html>

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- *From:* spinoza1111 <[spinoza1111@xxxxxxxx](mailto:spinoza1111@xxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Tue, 1 Jan 2008 03:22:46 -0800 (PST)
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On Jan 1, 6:30 pm, William Pursell <[bill.pursell@xxxxxxxx](mailto:bill.pursell@xxxxxxxx)> wrote:

On Jan 1, 8:04 am, spinoza1111 <[spinoza1111@xxxxxxxx](mailto:spinoza1111@xxxxxxxx)> wrote:

I've returned because the treatment of Herb Schildt's books in this thread in 2000,

<snip>

I ask Heathfield, as the self-appointed leader and enabler of so much bullying here, bullying which makes this newsgroup useless as an Open University style learning tool to people all over the world excluded from higher education, and which may be intended to make it so, to apologize for his conduct. I ask Howard to apologize for his conduct. If they cannot do so, I ask them to leave.

Richard Heathfield, to my knowledge, has never appointed himself leader of any newsgroup, nor is he viewed as a leader in any way. His posts may often be interpreted as "bullying", but I believe that is an incorrect interpretation and your characterization of him is inaccurate. This newsgroup and others in which he participates are hardly useless.

I retained the context in which you mention Schildt's book to point out that I for one am very glad for RH's critiques of that book. It is not a complete pile of rubbish, but it is pretty close. One of the most difficult tasks in learning to design software is determining who to pay attention to and who to ignore. One valuable tool to do that job is to see other people's criticisms of books, articles, etc. Schildt's book may be slightly useful for a complete beginner to programming, but it is NOT a good text, and will probably do more harm than good. A newbie, learning from Schildt's text will undoubtedly learn just enough to be extremely dangerous, but will develop many bad habits.

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If you are incapable of recognizing the poor quality of that text, then you are clearly not someone to whom much time should be devoted.

(Apologies to the group at large. It is fairly clear that spinoza is a troll, but I thought

"Troll" is racism and classism. "Trolling" is posting bad-faith opinions strictly to anger people, and my opinions are in good faith.

"Trolling" is assuredly not the posting of good-faith opinions with literacy and a sentence structure adequate to the meaning. I realize that in what Kingsley Amis called "The Moronic Inferno" (the USA) half-literates have spread the urban legend that "intelligence marginalises", and this is why I have a holiday in my heart every day, when I wake up in a foreign country.

As the author of Build Your Own .Net Language and Compiler (Apress 2004) I now regard Richard's attack on Herb Schildt in 2000 not as a good faith technical critique, with the charity that is needed as regards a language which is non-deterministic owing to aliasing, but as a personal and professional hit-man's job intended to destroy sales of Herb's book, so that Richard and his team could rake in the big bucks for a book, which disregards real praxis in favor of a standard that is mostly a dead letter.

It prefigured and it enabled the very serious attacks on Java expert Kathy Sierra ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kathy\\_Sierra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kathy_Sierra)) which included death threats and pornography in 2007.

As of today, Richard's basic honesty is seriously in question. He claimed yesterday to have taken a test on C++ and to have gotten 80%, but later in the thread "Brian Kernighan, maybe I'm not worthy, maybe I'm scum" he says that he answered "a tenth" of the 50 questions of the C++ test and disregarded the rest. This means that he has lied about receiving a score of "80%".

But even if this lie (which may be a very serious matter under UK law insofar as he uses an employer's facilities to commit mail fraud, which can exist even when no money changes hands) is cleared up, as frankly I hope it is, Heathfield has repeatedly bullied people in this newsgroup, and the time has come to see that he voluntarily desists.

someone should present a rebuttal to this attempted character assassination.)

The character assassin is Heathfield. If I have to take this to a court, it will be proven. However, I think that the community here can

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ask him to leave, and avoid a lawsuit.