
From: Alan White <alan.white@buzzfeed.com>
To: Tom Phillips <tom.phillips@buzzfeed.com>
Sent: 4/1/2015 7:21:00 PM
Subject: Re: CEN stuff

Yeah, I mean she's nailed it. Tbh makes me feel slightly less bad about this. Also the fucker's so going to ruin my Easter by making me fly out to talk with him.

Ros is going to be mortified to learn she also used them once. Green puppies = amazing.

On Thu, Apr 2, 2015 at 12:18 AM, Tom Phillips wrote:

Meeting her for lunch on Friday. Tbh I'd be happy with her giving us permission to just quote anonymously from that email because it's basically perfect, but I'll see if I can get her to say anything more...

On 2 Apr 2015 00:16, "Alan White" wrote:

yup, that happened.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2891281/Horrific-moment-bullied-teenager-suffocates-collapsing-classroom-floor-tormentors-stand-LAUGHING.html>

On Wed, Apr 1, 2015 at 8:12 PM, Tom Phillips wrote:

From my [REDACTED]:

"Am happy to talk anon - bosses would kill me if they knew I'd spoken about this to someone though... they fucking love CEN crap.

I am quite well acquainted with CEN. I get flooded with their emails daily. They are utter fucking shit (you might want to paraphrase this ha). I do not trust a single bit of what they send us - but unfortunately for me, their crazy stories bring in clicks so no one seems to care that much.

I have previously raised the issue, several times but sadly just get slapped down because their content does well online.

I don't think I've ever read a full story from them, but once in a while I'll glance at the whole caption (they're like 10 pars long) and... well it's just crazy. I don't believe half of their stories are real - and the rest if real is probably stolen and old.

I can only judge their content from pictures, but two things that are massive red flags for me are: they don't have a single staff photographer. All of their pictures are "collects" - and I use the term loosely because every time I have enquired with them where the pictures are from, I have got quite vague answers. Secondly all of their collects are of really bad quality. Obviously that makes sense when it's CCTV grabs and pictures that were obviously taken on a phone. But it doesn't make sense when it so clearly was a professionally taken picture.

You can tell from the composition - and generally from working with pro pictures - when a picture has been taken by a photographer. They generally will shoot good quality, yet CEN pix don't usually exceed 1000px wide. It's ridiculous. And makes me think their stuff is just grabbed from other websites/taken a really long time ago.

I've always been really wary of them, but there was one incident that kind of pushed me over the edge. They filed a story about a teen being bullied in class and pushed against a desk, which ended up killing him. The pictures - god knows how they got them - were of the teen dying. Literally, his last minutes, as he was choking to death. I raised it with the desk, told them there was no way we could run this, but they were so adamant they wanted to run it. I remember really clearly, too, because it was my first time actually yelling at a news editor and it makes quite an impression on you ha. The Mail ran that story - with the pictures and the video. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Since then, I usually moan really loudly when asked to do CEN pix. And I have no issue saying bullshit when I am sure it's fake.

Hope this is good for you. They are one of those 'agencies' that drive me insane. And I hate that their stuff does so well cause it makes the newsdesk unwilling to pull the plug. Which is ridiculous, but then seems more newsdesks operate under ridiculous standards these days."

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