

When your kid attacks - by blog

by Linda Matchan | October, 27, 2008



Like a lot of parents of 20-something bloggers, I've been guilty of boring my friends about my son's blog until their eyes start to glaze and they back away at parties. This is because "Have you seen my kid's blog?" is, for baby boomers, the new "have you seen my kid's pictures?" - only you don't bore them with photos, you paraphrase entries and hype the blog address. As if boomers can remember anything anyway.

All this stopped, however, the day he blogged about me.

I wish I could say he was as flattering as John McCain's daughter Meghan, who blogs fawningly at McCainBlogette.com. ("My father nothing short of ROCKED Wednesday night's debate . . .") But he wasn't. He started out trashing "the mainstream media" for being so slow to catch on to cultural trends, quoting an op-ed in The New York Times that said, "It can't be long before [McCain] takes up fist bumps" a la Barack and Michelle Obama.

Then, wham. He slammed "graying" journalists in the mainstream media who are too "out-of-touch" to realize fist bumps are passé anyway. (Never mind that a certain graying journalist in the mainstream media financed his college education.) And then he got personal: "As soon as I knew that the fist bump had been assimilated into the mainstream, I knew that I no longer wanted to bump fists. My first clue? When my parents brought up fist bumps at dinner, having seen Obama's on ABC News, and asked me to explain more. I patiently told them what I knew about fist bumps, [and] informed them that I had been bumping fists for years already. . . . As my parents happily practiced bumping fists, I sat back

and recalled that one time at the dinner table when I taught them the meaning of 'bling.' "

I was tempted to post a comment: "You did not teach me the meaning of 'bling.' (Your sister did.)"

But get this - I didn't want to embarrass him!

In any case, it got me wondering whether other parents are taking it on the chin in the blogosphere, too, and it turns out a lot of them are. A Google Blog Search of "my parents" turned up a rich harvest of parent-bashing: "My parents are forcing us apart." "Our parents had a strange relationship." "My Mom is about as subtle as a Tomahawk missile."

It's so tempting to take potshots or settle scores on a blog - ignoring or in spite of how public it is - and some bloggers are merciless. "As I interacted with my peers at BlogHer Boston this past weekend, I realized that I'm in the very position I grew up in," one blogger wrote a couple of weeks ago. "Growing up I felt I had to prove to everyone I was not the same sort of person my mother was. I would never be that falling down alcoholic loudmouth. I would never be the mom that hated being a mother and resented her kids."

Do they think parents don't read? Designer and writer Christine Koh of West Medford is pretty sure her mother doesn't, so she blogs with impunity at BostonMamas.com. In a recent post she lamented that her mother reneged on babysitting on a busy work day, then informed Koh "a series of PDFs would be landing in my inbox in minutes, and that she needed me to print them for her to pick up." "My work hours were fast evaporating," she wrote. "I felt double blindsided by my mom."

Richard Coyne of Waltham felt blindsided by his son Tim recently when he tuned in to Tim's audio blog, HollywoodPodcast.com, and heard a story about him called "Grabbin' a Slice." "Several years ago, my younger brother and I decided that a 'grab a slice' relationship with Dad was better than the disappointment that came with expectations," his son was saying. "As teenagers, after the divorce, all we ever did with

Dad was grab a slice of pizza and share a laugh about meaningless stuff. We called it 'grabbin' a slice.' "

"It was kind of rough on me," said Richard, a mortgage loan originator. "It was kind of a sinking feeling that he had a phrase for it."

It's not the only time he's been the subject of one of Tim's podcasts, but both father and son say talking about it has brought them closer. "Maybe my son (if and when I have one) will trash me online," Tim said in an e-mail. "It'll be a family tradition."

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