

**Subject:** Re: Nerd & Tie article  
**From:** Cress Holmes <press@kitchenercomiccon.com>  
**Date:** 2/10/20, 3:35 PM  
**To:** "Nerd & Tie" <tips@nerdandtie.com>

Thanks for reaching out, Trae.

The issue I have is that you quoted the reddit thread at all, before reaching out to us to verify the claims of what all happened.

To give some background, there have been a group of individuals (not naming names) that have been coordinating attacks on our conventions for several years. A handful of these people (who had previously been hiding in internet anonymity) joined a volunteer meeting, and attempted to start up a controversy between the volunteers and event organizers.

This circled around a complaint that we had no anti-harassment policy, which is a flat out lie – it is listed plainly here: <https://www.kitchenercomic-con.com/policies> and HAD been since we began. We copied Anime North's policy, changing out their name for ours and we followed that as many staff/volunteers have volunteered at both events and are familiar with the policy.

After a heated discussion, the person who wrote the reddit thread was demanding several unreasonable things of our event:

- pre-screen attendees, to ensure they weren't a "risk"
- direct convention volunteers (many of whom are minors and teens) to get DIRECTLY INVOLVED in any active situations of abuse or harassment
- direct our staff/volunteers to monitor every attendee for potential harassment and intervene if they THINK someone is going to harass someone else

This is lunacy. There is no way we are going to direct minors to put themselves in HARMS WAY for the sake of appeasing anyone. The claim that the convention owner said that we're not doing anything is a blatant misrepresentation of what was said.

The con owner stated we're NOT putting our volunteers in harms way, and he was cut off several times as he was attempting to explain that we direct our volunteers to ESCORT any person to SECURITY STAFF to help them report incidents if they come up.

Security staff is NOT ABLE to take 3rd party accounts, so we can't report ON BEHALF of someone, that is hearsay. They need the person's first hand accounts in order to action a response. Which is why we ensure that people know they need to seek out assistance, and not employ some "minority report" system of discriminating attendees.

We have to abide by City Hall's standards as well as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We can't prevent any person from entering the convention based on any of the protected categories – NOR DO WE WANT TO. That includes if they are "creepy" or "weird". If they haven't committed an infraction at our event, we aren't able to have security action against them, that is the bottom line for this venue.

I would also suggest watching this video covered by Come Geek Some, as it includes candid DMs from between a terrified cosplayer who was threatened and our convention staff, and we CLEARLY outline what to do – <https://youtu.be/1DSADKbOfV4>

As for the claims about "That Joker Guy" being advertised and photos used against his will...

That Joker Guy was a guest at one of our previous conventions, so the claim that he wasn't a guest at any time is flatly false. The photo that I used for the promotion was taken from OUR OWN social media library. Cosplayers are also informed with signage all over the event floor that they should be expected to be photographed. Photos that get posted to OUR social media page freely and willingly, we use in light promotion work.

The photo in question was used in LESS THAN half a second portion of the promo video. On top of this, it was used in a "TEASER TRAILER" version of the video, to which NOBODY requested we remove it – at all. This teaser was released WEEKS before the announcement video.

Had That Joker Guy took issue with "unauthorized" use of his image, he had literally WEEKS to contact us, and no effort was made. I will ALSO say, NO effort was made AFTER the Vic announcement to request a removal either. To this date, he STILL has not contacted us to ask us to remove it.

Not that we would be required to, however we would do it out COURTESY if he asked, as we respect people's wishes.

All of this nonsense spills out from a chase for clout, and these people's STALWART REFUSAL to take the steps needed to resolve any issues they have. They complain to each other, but never bring any concerns to us to be fixed. It's a story as old as our convention and these people use these stories to attack us annually.

I would also suggest watching THIS video, to get some insight about the insidious nature of the reddit thread as well: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzR3RDyUMQM>

We have done SO much for these individuals. We give them FREE table space to sell their wares, we give them FREE advertising in all of our promotional work, we give them FREE hotel rooms, FREE meals and THIS is how they choose to react. By refusing to tell us what perceived slights they have, and instead running to social media to collect their attention.

Again, wish you would have spoken to us prior so we could give you all of this insight, but we would appreciate if you could correct the errors in your article. This isn't about if you or we like or hate Vic Mignogna. This is a deep-rooted issue in the Ontario cosplay community that needs to be addressed.

These same people who attack us and our convention are threatening physical abuse and blacklisting to INNOCENT BYSTANDERS. That needs to end. We hope the cosplay community is strong enough to find the courage to do so.

Cress Holmes

Director of Communications  
Kitchener Comic Con

On Mon, Feb 10, 2020 at 3:51 PM Nerd & Tie <[tips@nerdandtie.com](mailto:tips@nerdandtie.com)> wrote:

Hi! I'm Trae Dorn from Nerd & Tie -- though since you've already commented on our article on your con, you already know that.

I didn't reach out because your convention already made official statements regarding the Reddit post last year (which we referred to and are included in the link in the article). If you have any additional comments, we'd be happy to hear them -- however as the issue many take with your event are in regards to two of your guests of honor, I'm not sure what you'd have to add.

-Trae Dorn  
Nerd & Tie