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On Guest Blogging

When high traffic bloggers go on vacation, they'll often ask one or several writers to step into the breach, posting in their absence so that the audience doesn't get out of the habit of visiting. If Metablog ever makes it big, we'll have guest bloggers — as it stands, though, our traffic doesn't make it worthwhile for the guest blogger, who gets visibility, the chance to win new readers, and an opportunity to test ideas before a different audience as part of the bargain.

I've guest blogged for Megan McArdle and Andrew Sullivan, both of whom write at *The Atlantic*. Though entertaining another blogger's readers is a lot of work — and inevitably opens one up to criticism among the subset of their readers who don't enjoy reading a writer like you — I've always found the experience gratifying, largely because Andrew and Megan both have large audiences of very smart readers whose e-mails (on Andrew's blog) and comments (on Megan's blog) are as good a crucible for arguments as any I've found.

Even as a mere reader, I enjoy the phenomenon of guest blogging for a few reasons. One is akin to the reason I enjoy hearing bands I like do covers — when Megan McArdle guest blogs for Glenn Reynolds at Instapundit I get to see her try out the Instapundit style of short, pithy sentences. (I'd also really enjoy Glenn Reynolds guest blogging for Megan with long involved posts — maybe it'll happen one day). Another reason I like guest blogging: it introduces me to writers I might like — Tim Lee, for example, who I started reading after he guest-blogged for a blog I read everyday.

Due to the lack of guest bloggers here during my recent hiatus, there will be less of you than I'd like to answer this question in comments: what would you regard as an interesting pairing of blog and guest blogger? I'd personally like to see Cato Institute libertarian Will Wilkinson guest blog for self-proclaimed pickup artist Roissy in DC. I suspect this will never happen.

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Conor Friedersdorf is a writer, a Californian by upbringing, and a nomad at present. Refresh his page often.
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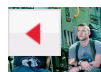
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