

Andrew Breitbart's legacy

 www.americanthinker.com/blog/2016/03/andrew_breitbarts_broad_legacy.html

Andrew Breitbart loved our Constitution and he loved his country. He had seen the United States through the lens of liberal thought when he was a young college graduate; leftism was at odds with his natural buoyancy, optimism and intellect. His search for truth led him, inevitably, to conservatism. He once [said](#), "It's almost embarrassing to go back into my liberal background because it was about as shallow a belief system as humanly possible."

Four years ago Andrew was taken from us at the age of 43. He was really just getting started. His death was a catastrophic blow to family, friends, colleagues, and admirers, and a punch in the gut to the Tea Party movement in which he was heavily invested. Those close to him who were privy to his vision, however, can see a horizon filled with the affirmation and promise of his brief life's work, and it is not only the Breitbart News Network.

Upheaval at Breitbart News Network and the recent resignation of several editors and staff including Ben Shapiro, former Editor-at-Large, has caused [some](#) to call Andrew's legacy into question. Shapiro, Editor-in-Chief of [The Daily Wire](#), says after Andrew's death Breitbart News was understandably, "a chaotic mess." His loss at such an early age was something no one could have anticipated, and provisions had not been made for that eventuality. Ben cited a small group of leaders in the organization, the brain trust, had held things together as best they could in the aftermath, and it's been trudging along that way since.

Recently Ben Shapiro spoke with me about his mentor and dear friend: "Anyone who took him for some rabid right winger didn't understand Andrew at all...he was significantly more Libertarian [than I] on social policy...but he wasn't very political, almost not political at all." His focus, Ben said: "You don't get to be a bully."

Asked to speculate on what Andrew would think of the current turmoil in conservative circles, he was hesitant to suggest any predictions. "He'd be very upset. He wanted to see the right unify in opposition to the bullies on the American left. I think what Andrew would say is, 'Think as individuals, stop following the herd. Don't just follow the one you see as the strong man, stand up for what you believe. If you believe in decent behavior, stand up for decent behavior.'" Andrew's intolerance for bullying may lead one to believe he would have significant issues with Donald Trump's campaign antics. Without guessing his choice of candidate, remember he [said](#) of Trump in 2011: "Of course he's not a conservative. He was for [Nancy Pelosi](#) before he was against Nancy Pelosi."

After Andrew's death, Ben explained, people would say, "Who's going to pick up his torch?" He answered, "No one is going to pick up Andrew's torch. The good news is that he gave us all lighters. In the spirit of the guy that liked British alt-rock, that's who he was."

Knowing Andrew Breitbart only through his television appearances, writing, and the recollections of his colleagues and friends, it's clear that he had an infectious spirit, a grand sense of humor, and steadfast loyalty to his principles. Breitbart inspired his detractors to ever new levels of contempt, and no wonder: He drew them in, got them to agree with a premise, and then sprung the trap exposing their lies or agenda.

He didn't hesitate to go into the enemy's lair and to hit hard with the truth, or to belabor a point with liberal hosts to the point of distraction. He stayed focused and on point, becoming a prominent voice in the culture wars. Andrew lived unapologetically, standing always on the side of truth.

Walk toward the fire. Don't worry about what they call you. All those things are said against you because they want to stop you in your tracks. But if you keep going, you're sending a message to people who are rooting for you, who are agreeing with you. The message is that they can do it, too. --

[Andrew Breitbart](#)

He encouraged his followers to be unafraid, take the bullies on, and never to apologize for being conservative. He [said](#), "I like being liked, who doesn't? But I love being hated."

Andrew Breitbart's legacy goes far beyond his namesake, Breitbart News Network. Ben Shapiro states, "Andrew's legacy is all the people he touched, and all of those people are still out there fighting." I concur. His legacy is in everyone who dares to bring up politics with friends and neighbors because he no longer fears being labeled a racist and a bigot, or because the current election cycle is so important he's been moved to speak out. His spirit is in the millennials who have embraced conservative principles and values, and show up to work at a campaign phone bank or to hand out literature door to door. Andrew Breitbart was the proverbial pebble tossed in a lake, and we are the outward flowing ripples, keeping his philosophy and memory alive in the American political realm. Conservatives are no longer willing to allow the left to define us. Thank you Andrew Breitbart; we owe a debt of gratitude for your courage, your mirth, and your indomitable fire.

Julie Custer has written for The Philadelphia Inquirer and The Blaze. She can be contacted at her website: www.southernwrites.com.