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## Morally bankrupt

Posted by Jimmy Bignutz - 01-07-2008 19:33

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Man who tried to sue Jerry Springer: the Opera for blasphemy faces financial ruin:

You will remember the BBC2 transmission of Jerry Springer the Opera in January 2005 with all the protests and its failure of a theatre tour in 2006, over which I tried to bring a private prosecution for blasphemy.

Yesterday I was due to pay £55,000 to the BBC and £35,000 to Avalon in respect of the costs of my Jerry Springer the Opera action against Mark Thompson and Jonathan Thoday. It follows a High Court ruling in December that they were immune from prosecution. See: <http://www.christianvoice.org.uk/Press/press090.html>

£90,000 is money I don't have. Mark Thompson earns more than 20 times in a year what I am worth, and Jonathan Thoday has wealth in excess of £12 million. We have a petition calling for the Thompson and Thoday to waive their costs: [http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/bbc\\_springer/](http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/bbc_springer/)

When you have signed it, click on 'signatures' and be amazed at the anti-Christian hatred in the comments left by Thompson and Thoday's supporters on page 1. It would help enormously if you were also to email the major players and take copies of this email to church so others might sign the epetition, and email or write: Write/email simply to ask that the BBC and Avalon respectively would waive their costs. If you are writing to the BBC, you might say that you are happy for your license fee to be spent on these costs - rather than on Jonathan Ross, for example.

Addresses: Mark Thompson, [thompson@bbc.co.uk](mailto:thompson@bbc.co.uk)">mark.thompson@bbc.co.uk BBC Television Centre, Wood Lane, London, W12 7RJ. Tel: 020 8743 8000 (Interesting point: Mark Thompson made much of his claim to be a Christian when Jerry Springer the Opera was screened.) Chairman of the BBC Trustees: Sir Michael Lyons, [enquiries@bbc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bbc.co.uk)">trust.enquiries@bbc.co.uk 48 Hartopp Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, B74 2QR (Letter begins 'Dear Sir Michael,') Jonathan Thoday, [JonT@avalonuk.com](mailto:JonT@avalonuk.com) Avalon, 4a Exmoor Street, London, W10 6BD Tel: 020 7598 8000

The comedian Frank Skinner is represented by Avalon. He may be sympathetic to us: Contact him at PO Box 168, London, W10 8WH Please pray that the Lord would over-rule and remove the threat of these costs. READ: 1Sam 24:15; 2Sam 12:1-6; Job 22:25 (!); Psalm 7:1, 10:12-18, 59:16, 61:3, 62:1-12; Prov 13:7, 18:10,23, 28:6; Eccl 5:12; Mic 2:2, 6:12; Matt 7:16, 15:19; Mark 10:25; Luke 1:51-53; 2Thess 3:1-3; Jas 5:1-6; Rev 2:9, 6:1 Stephen Green. National Director, Christian Voice.

PLEASE FORWARD this email to your Christian friends in the following manner: Click 'Cc', highlight your Christian contacts, click 'Bcc', click 'OK' - NEVER send using 'To' or 'Cc' - only put yourself in the 'To' box.) \* If you are forwarded this E-Alert, Email me to receive a free copy of the latest newsletter and for details of how to join Christian Voice and get E-Alerts direct: email your name, land address, and church attended. Send to: [stephen@christianvoice.org.uk](mailto:stephen@christianvoice.org.uk) \* If you do not wish to receive material from us, please email with subject 'Please take us off'. \* Please note that owing to ridiculous levels of spam, all Christian Voice email addresses are now covered by SpamArrest. Email addresses already known to this office will come through without challenge, but in all other cases you will simply have to type a word into a box. It's easy, and you only have to do it once. Land Address for Stephen Green and the Christian Voice office: Wernlwyd, Pen-y-bont, CARMARTHEN, SA33 6QN 01994 484544 / 07931 490050 [www.christianvoice.org.uk](http://www.christianvoice.org.uk)

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by G.Man as Trotaconventos - 01-07-2008 19:39

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Are you suggesting OTF support that guy, Bignutz?

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Jimmy Bignutz - 01-07-2008 19:40

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Nah

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Bombanersson - 01-07-2008 19:50

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Surely there's a counter petition?

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Purves Grundy - 01-07-2008 20:14

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The lord will provide.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Cavalry Trouser Tips - 01-07-2008 20:33

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All this was going on while Stewart Lee was pretty ill with diverticulitis.

Eat shit Stephen Green.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Just Say No To Vorderman - 01-07-2008 22:29

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Bombanersson wrote:

Surely there's a counter petition?#

I'm eager to sign that:-)

fair cheered me up reading that :-)

I do hope the bailiffs have already been informed

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Lord Mauleverer - 01-07-2008 22:54

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Please pray that the Lord would over-rule and remove the threat of these costs.

Has this nutter misunderstood the concept of the "House of Lords"?

The comedian Frank Skinner is represented by Avalon. He may be sympathetic to us:

What's that about then? Skinner is an irritatingly unfunny man, but I'd never have suspected him as a sympathiser with the Mary Whitehouse "impose our religious agenda on the general public" brigade. Wildly wishful thinking on Green's part I assume?

Just a thought about perspective here. Green is clearly an obnoxious opinionated twat who needs all the ridicule, scorn and schadenfreude that rightly goes his way. Plenty worse around, though: note that he has not appealed for the "beheading" of those responsible for JSTO.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by ooh aah - 01-07-2008 22:59

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Frank Skinner is a practising Catholic, but I think that probably is wishful thinking on their part, as I've never heard him

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actually campaign over anything

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**Re:Morally bankrupt**

Posted by ian.64 - 02-07-2008 07:16

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This is great news. Lose everything, Stevie boy. Pompous, vindictive cunt. On the subject of Skinner, inexplicably, he does have a strong religious leaning (church-going Catholic, I think), and probably Green may have picked up on that. Whether Skinner will accommodate the needs of a man who, via the movement he fronts, sees fit to suppress any forms of expression that doesn't conform with his beliefs, is another matter.

Just noticed ooh-aah's post above. Serves me right for being too hasty.

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**Re:Morally bankrupt**

Posted by King Mob - 02-07-2008 08:25

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We note that Jonathan Thoday's company lost £500,000 on the tour of Jerry Springer the Opera and that £35,000 is small change to him

Fantastic logic.

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**Re:Morally bankrupt**

Posted by Hofzinser - 02-07-2008 10:06

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That's some of the best schadenfreude I've had in ages.

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**Re:Morally bankrupt**

Posted by Bill Poster - 02-07-2008 10:33

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I now have a Bon Jovi "Living on a Prayer" earworm.

Shadenfreude is such an ugly emotion isn't it?

But so irresistibly enjoyable . Amen.

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**Re:Morally bankrupt**

Posted by Purves Grundy - 02-07-2008 10:48

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Reading some of those posts there does seem a subcurrent of envy towards Islam and its reputation for intolerant mouth-shutting violence. Some of those people would have loved it back in the day of the Inquisition.

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**Re:Morally bankrupt**

Posted by King Mob - 02-07-2008 10:49

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See, the problem is, that though in the short term they've got their come-uppance, ultimately I suspect they've gone a long way towards proving the existence of God.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Just Say No To Vorderman - 02-07-2008 13:43

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counter petition up and running and duly signed

"Hi,

I wanted to draw your attention to this important petition that I recently signed:

"Stephen Green must pay court costs"

[http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/Springer\\_Case?e](http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/Springer_Case?e)

I really think this is an important cause, and I'd like to encourage you to add your signature, too. It's free and takes less than a minute of your time.

Thanks!"

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 02-07-2008 14:19

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Signed.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by wingco - 02-07-2008 15:00

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Me too.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Hofzinser - 02-07-2008 15:07

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And me.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Andy C - 02-07-2008 15:18

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As have I.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Harri Saer - 02-07-2008 15:20

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What's the phrase? "As you sow, so shall you reap"

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

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Posted by Bill Poster - 02-07-2008 15:25

Me too. Tried to find a tasty bible quote but failed.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Alessandro Nesta Marley - 02-07-2008 16:04

Hmmm. While this guy is clearly a prize cunt, I'm can't wholeheartedly join in the general schadenfreude, and not just because Jerry Springer- The Opera took up two of the unfunniest hours of my life.

It does seem to confirm that people without great wealth cannot expect to have recourse to law against powerful public and business interests without the risk of being squashed and bankrupted.

Just to be clear, the man is a tool and his case was laughable. But this sort of thing has its effect on much better people than him.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Cavalry Trouser Tips - 02-07-2008 20:02

It does seem to confirm that people without great wealth cannot expect to have recourse to law against powerful public and business interests without the risk of being squashed and bankrupted.

You missed out the words 'frivolous and incorrect' between 'have' and 'recourse'.

Signed.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 03-07-2008 09:36

I accept that the rules are biased in favour of the rich, but I can't support some kind of carte blanche to bring private prosecutions with no financial risk, even when against legal advice. Civil suits are another matter.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Jimmy Bignutz - 03-07-2008 09:37

Can you not insure against this sort of thing, anyway? (provided your case isn't mental)

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 03-07-2008 10:01

The original attempted prosecution was described as "verging on the vexatious" by the judge, because Green had brought it a full two years after the broadcast, and had allowed the play to run in the West End for three years without taking any action. The implication, I guess, is that Green wanted to be sure to give the producers and the BBC enough rope to hang themselves.

That "almost vexatious" character of the action didn't form part of the grounds for the original rejection of leave to proceed, but it might well have formed part of the grounds for the order to pay the costs of Green's subsequent appeal.

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Let's be clear about this. This wasn't a civil lawsuit, it was an appeal against a refusal of leave to bring a private criminal prosecution. In other words, the judge took the view that there wasn't even a prima facie case against the producers and the Beeb.

Green chose to contest that. Anyone could have told him how ill-advised that was. Are people really saying that this is the kind of legal action that should be cost-free to the litigant?

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by gt3 - 03-07-2008 10:09

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Signed

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Hofzinsler - 03-07-2008 10:28

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I've just tried to access the Christian Voice website on my work PC and a message came up saying that access to this site is blocked because it falls under the category "Intolerance and hate". It's the first time I've had one of those access blocked messages and actually thought "fair dos".

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Tubby Isaacs - 03-07-2008 12:23

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I've got some sympathy for Green, perhaps. While I disagree with the blasphemy laws strongly, they are still with us. Clearly, the chance of success was low because they don't get used much. But on what basis? That he's probably an annoying twerp who we don't want clogging up the courts and making us look stupid?

Prima facie, wasn't the thing blasphemous? If the government isn't going to be brave enough to repeal the laws, I can't blame him for having a crack under them.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 03-07-2008 12:32

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It wasn't prima facie blasphemous, no. As the judge in the "leave to proceed" case made clear.

The test is a very stern one, thankfully: the alleged libel needs not only to offend Christian sensibilities, but to do so in a way likely to, for example, endanger the safety of the State. Now, that the show had been running for three years, largely without incident except for protests orchestrated by Mr Green's own organisation; this made it clear that no such harm was being done.

We can argue about whether that ought to be a the test: it does potentially risk blaming publishers of religiously sensitive material for the extremism of their detractors. But that is the test, and Mr Green's case was thrown out at stage 1 as a result of it.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Tubby Isaacs - 03-07-2008 12:38

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I didn't know it had to endanger the safety of the state- that at least stops this sort of thing. Nonetheless, it's hard to see that the cases that had succeeded did that either. I recall one from the eighties about Jesus being gay or something.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 03-07-2008 13:04

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Well, it's common law rather than statute, so it's all a bit vague. But both public opinion and legal interpretation have changed a lot since 1977, and there's also been the Human Rights Act. The offending poem, which as you rightly say was found to be blasphemously libellous when published in Gay News in 1977, was read out in Trafalgar Square in 2002 (on the anniversary of the case, I think) and no prosecution resulted.

This all seems to go up and down a bit. There seems to be a judgement from 1917 that says that the "fabric of society" must be shaken, and Lord Denning called this law a dead letter in about 1950, on the grounds that it wasn't any longer possible to shake the fabric of society by being rude about Jesus. But then Scarman said that it wasn't a dead letter in '77, and a looser standard was applied then than people had generally expected.

The crux, though: prosecutions under this law are incredibly rare, and successful ones rarer still.

The judge in the "leave to proceed" case also took the view that the show satirised the Springer programme (by applying its relentless vulgarity and nastiness, in a dream sequence, to sacred subjects) rather than mocking Christianity itself.

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Just Say No To Vorderman - 03-07-2008 13:19

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If only the Romans had clamped down a bit more effectively :-(

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## Re:Morally bankrupt

Posted by Jimmy Bignutz - 03-07-2008 13:36

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Hmmm.

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