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Court: Serial liar Glass can't be a lawyer

By Ann O'Neill, CNN

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Stephen Glass, who faked dozens of magazine articles, lacks the moral character to be a lawyer, a court says.

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Stephen Glass is denied admission to California Bar

Court says he lacks moral character to be lawyer

Glass admits fabricating magazine articles in 1990s

Glass, 41, is a paralegal in Beverly Hills

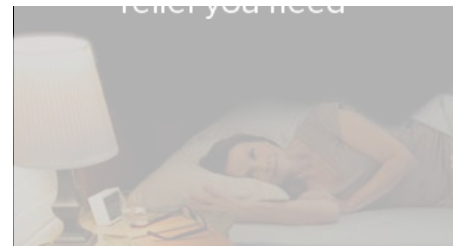
(CNN) -- Trust me, the scandal-scarred former boy wonder said. No way, responded California's highest court.

The state Supreme Court rejected former journalist Stephen Glass' request for admission to the bar on Monday, finding that he had not truly reformed in the 15 years since he made up facts in more than 40 magazine articles -- and then lied some more to cover up his misdeeds in one of the journalism world's most infamous scandals.

The court found that Glass, who works as a paralegal at a Beverly Hills law firm, lacks "the good moral character" to be a lawyer. It simply doesn't buy the disgraced serial liar's arguments that he has changed.

In a scathing 33-page opinion supporting its decision to deny Glass admission to the California State Bar, the court concluded that he failed to show genuine remorse and never fully came clean on all his fabrications and that his "lack of integrity and forthrightness" continued even during his hearings before the court.

Lawyers and journalists aren't highly regarded, although they usually rank a notch above lobbyists, members of Congress and used-car salespeople in Gallup's annual Honesty and Ethics survey.



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Lawyer jokes to the contrary, the court insisted, "A lawyer's good moral character is essential for the protection of clients and for the proper functioning of the judicial system itself."

Glass, who has declined to discuss the case publicly, could not be reached for comment. His lawyer, Arthur Margolis, said he was disappointed by the court's decision. He said there would be no further comment.

[Stephen Glass wants to be a lawyer](#)

Glass, now 41, was a rising star at The New Republic when he was exposed as a serial fabulist in 1998. His editors investigated and learned that he had fabricated quotes and sources -- sometimes entire events -- in dozens of articles he wrote over three years for the magazine and other publications. The events of his rise and downfall became the basis of a movie, "Shattered Glass."

Even while he was writing magazine pieces, Glass attended night classes at Georgetown's law school. He graduated in 2000 and passed the bar exams in New York and California.

Richard Bradley, former editor of George magazine, said in 2011 that at least three pieces Glass wrote for the magazine contained fabrications. He added that Glass was good at "figuring out people's blind spots."

Bradley said he forgave Glass long ago but added, "Being a lawyer is a privilege, not a right. He can be a fully contributing, valuable member of society without being a lawyer."

Glass withdrew his application to the New York State Bar in 2003 when it became obvious he would be turned down. He applied to the California Bar in 2005 after he moved to Los Angeles. A bar review committee declined to find him morally fit to be a lawyer; Glass appealed, and the California Supreme Court added "In Re Glass on Admission" to its docket for 2012.

The State Bar Court argued that the past was not the issue: it's Glass' moral character today. The bar examiners -- the lawyers who vet other lawyers -- argued that Glass' lies were so "staggering" he hadn't done enough to demonstrate he had reformed.

"Going to law school and living a normal life isn't enough," Rachel Grunberg, a lawyer for the bar court, said in 2011.

The Supreme Court was not impressed with Glass' arguments that he was sorry for what he had done and that he had changed. Nor was it impressed that he had won over a long list of accomplished people.

"Our review of the record indicates hypocrisy and evasiveness in Glass' testimony at the California State Bar hearing," the court's opinion stated. "We find it particularly disturbing that at the hearing Glass persisted in claiming that he had made a good faith effort to work with the magazines that published his works. He went through many verbal twists and turns at the hearing to avoid acknowledging the obvious fact that in his New York bar application he exaggerated his level of assistance to the magazines that published his fabrications."

Writing a book and appearing on the TV newsmagazine "60 Minutes" cannot be considered indicators of genuine remorse, the court observed.

The court also noted that since Glass' journalism career crashed and burned, he seemed less motivated to help others and more inclined to "advance his own career and financial and emotional well-being." Even his volunteer legal work was not particularly



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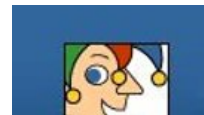


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charitable, since all lawyers are expected to perform pro bono work, the court noted.

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 An attorney passed on and found himself in Heaven, but not at all happy with his accommodations. He complained to St. Peter, who told him that his only recourse was to appeal his assignment. The attorney immediately advised that he intended to appeal, but was then told that he would be waiting at least three years before his appeal could be heard. The attorney protested that a three-year wait was unconscionable, but his words fell on deaf ears. The lawyer was then approached by the devil, who told him that he would be able to arrange an appeal to be heard in a few days, if the attorney was willing to change venue to Hell. When the attorney asked why appeals could be heard so much sooner in Hell, he was told, "We have all of the judges."

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