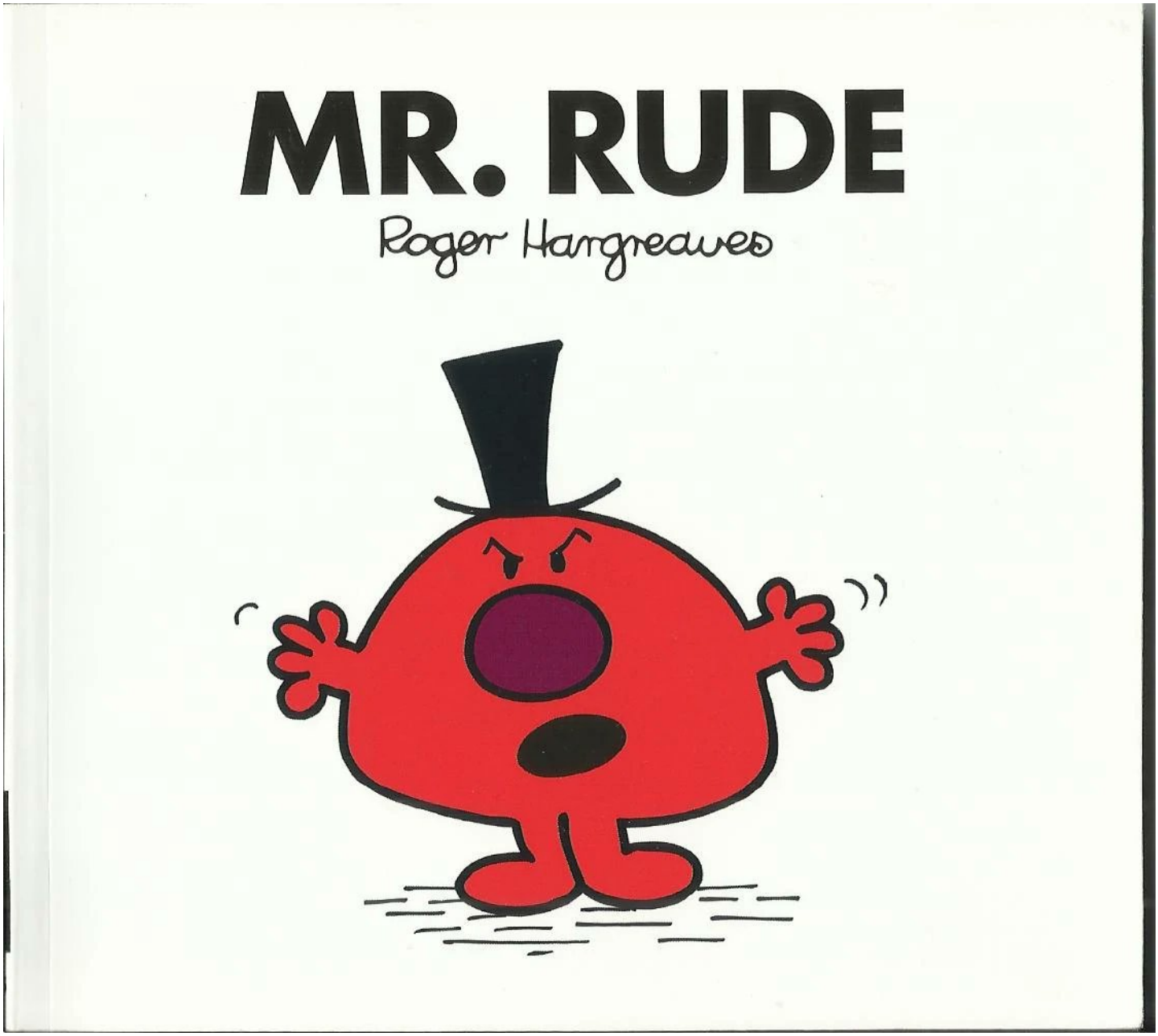
Twitter Thread by Jon Ericson



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I've talked with people who argue that they should be allowed to have the sort of conversations that might offend people because if someone is offended, they don't have to be part of it. It's a seductive idea, but it won't

Why? Because there's a ratcheting effect. If you could measure rudeness, a chat might start at 1. People who don't care for that level will leave. So now the chat can start moving toward rudeness level 2 with fewer people to object or moderate.



Where is the limit? Well it will trend toward the comfort level of the most committed members. If part of the "value" of a chat is that it's "honest" (read "rude"), people who don't value that will leave. Problem solved? No! The next level will offend another set of people.

This is what make me so uncomfortable about the ignore feature. It gives people the idea that the way to handle rude behavior is to look away. On an individual level, that's not a bad technique. Why put yourself though frustration if you don't need to?

https://t.co/udHgABiBfp

But for a group, it's a disaster. It just creates a situation where many people feel powerless, unheard and left out. At some point someone speaks up and discovers it wasn't just them. Now everyone is in for a world of hurt and misunderstanding.

In my experience, the people who understand this dynamic the least are the people who love to push the boundaries of behavior. I struggle with communicating to them because they don't see the problem. In fact, they assume the villains are the people who complain.

Feels like yet another example of FAE. Other people are snowflakes who can't handle frank discussion. But watch what happens when the conversation turns to topics that make the formerly "tough" people feel uncomfortable. Changes the dynamics.

https://t.co/dTuTxwmoCK

Pretty easy to see this in politically active people on Twitter. Whether or not something is rude depends on who the target is. It's super unhealthy. It's why I'm uncomfortable with Biden calling Trump our worst president even though I agree.

https://t.co/cXd1DRvOxi

Whether we like it or not, there's a little Colonel Jessup in us all. Being right doesn't mean we can ignore people who disagree with us. The truth doesn't need people to behave badly for its sake.

