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SCO bloodhounds search for Groklaw author

By Dan Goodin in San Francisco

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The sequel to the 2005 Linux mystery thriller concerning the identity of the Groklaw blogger going by the name Pamela Jones has hit the street, and despite some fresh intrigue, it's as rough a slog as the original.

Since splashing into the blogosphere in 2003, the author has written some 3,000 articles, the vast majority of which portray SCO as an opportunistic parasite in the guts of an otherwise thriving open-source organism. Her tireless unearthing of legal flaws and lapses of reasoning in SCO court documents has brought a smile to many Linux geeks' lips.



But it's also led to accusations that the author is, in fact, a paid agent of IBM pulling off

one of the most successful <u>astroturfing</u> (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astroturfing) campaigns in recent memory. Those theories recently gained a new lease on life.

First, SCO lawyers trying to serve Jones with a subpoena were unable to locate her at a home in Darien, Conn. where she was believed to live. Suspicions were further aroused on Saturday, when the author <u>announced</u> (http://www.groklaw.net/article.php? story=2007021013564542) she'd be taking a hiatus for an undetermined amount of time while she recuperated from an illness.

Following *Forbes* <u>publishing</u> (http://www.forbes.com/2007/02/13/groklaw-sco-ibm-tech-enter-cz_dl_0213sco.html) the details of the latest hunt, the Linux faithful wasted no time unleashing their indignation. Of course Jones was a real person. She answered her own email. She blogged about the evils of patents. She held Sony's feet to the fire when it slipped a root-kit-laced mickey onto some of its CDs. Surely, no one carrying IBM's water would do such things.

But that hasn't stopped the theorists from continuing to question the true identity of the Groklaw blogger. Among them is Maureen O'Gara, a dogged reporter who in 2005 set out to meet the blogger at her Hartsdale, N.Y. residence but came away empty-handed. What she was able to piece together, she said in an interview, was a 61-year-old woman who lived in a run-down apartment and kept Jehovah's Witnesses pamphlets in the back of her car - not exactly the portrait conjured up by her relentless scrutiny of SCO.

"She sprang fully formed from the brow of Zeus like Athena," O'Gara said of Jones when asked what first piqued her suspicions. "She comes with a fully formed open-source philosophy and a mission to try a case before it's even been heard, and there's nothing balanced in her."

When O'Gara published her findings, along with Jones's address and other personal details, all hell broke loose. *Sys-Con*, which owned one of the sites carrying the story, was DDoSed back to the Stone Age. The *Sys-Con* management took down the offending story.

We emailed Jones, asking for comment, but haven't received a reply. Which pretty much leaves the sequel as unresolved as the original story.

In an earlier edition of this story we incorrectly reported that *Sys-Con* had removed all of O'Gara's work. ®

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