

OKLAHOMA CITY OK 731

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The Equinox, November 1906, Rocky Mountains

MOORE LIQUOR STORE
914 S.W. 4TH STREET
MOORE, OKLAHOMA 73160

73160+2403

Ashamed to think I am even spending 24¢ on your store. Your ads are the most disgusting display. How shameful for Moore. We pay a little more and drive to [REDACTED] to patronize a respectable business. How sad for the 4th Street businesses to be subjected to your crass, demoralizing signs.

(This postcard was sent to Moore Liquor on 2/7/07. Since the sender left no return address or contact info, my reply is below.)

Dear Anonymous Postcard Lady,

First, I know it is somewhat oxymoronic to have both "anonymous" and "lady" in my salutation but, at the risk of making an "ass out of you and me," I will venture a few *assumptions* about who you are. I only do this because you did not have the intestinal fortitude (i.e., the balls) to present your very strong viewpoint in person or even leave a return address on your typewritten (really, did you actually use a typewriter?) postcard. So you are a woman, almost assuredly an older woman and if someone sees you at the mall they could easily identify you by the huge stick coming out of your butt.

How am I doing so far?

Second, thank you for acknowledging that you have to pay more to shop somewhere else. I'm not sure how you know you are paying more unless you actually made the mistake of shopping in my store before you noticed the "crass, demoralizing signs" but, you are absolutely right...people who shop at Moore Liquor save money. In fact, our prices are generally 10%-30% lower than any other liquor store in town. There are lots of times when you could spend \$100 at another liquor store or buy exactly the same stuff for just \$75 at Moore Liquor. On the postcard, I blacked out the name of the store that you patronize now because he threatens me every time I point out his prices are too high. He's not a cheerful fellow. But I am glad you are standing by your beliefs and not shopping somewhere that puts funny signs out by the road. Of course, that makes you a top notch hypocrite but, unfortunately, not much different from the rest of us. You were just dumb enough to send the postcard.

Let me explain...you shop at Wal-Mart right? Me too, but only when I have to. Most of the time, I'll hit GFF (12th & Santa Fe) because I know they are locally owned and operated and I like the people there. I don't have anything against Wal-Mart and, from what I've heard, they have the lowest prices on most everything they sell. My point is this, Wal-Mart is currently being sued for systematically discriminating against its female employees. Wal-Mart was also recently busted for hiring cleaning companies while knowing that they regularly employed illegal aliens. Yet you still shop at Wal-Mart. Now, in fairness, they didn't put anything on a sign in front of their stores that might have made people think of something unseemly. *That's probably worse.*

Even if you don't shop at WalMart, where do you shop? How about my competitors? Well, let me throw a few "signs" out there about them. One of them does not pay his taxes. In fact, he often flaunts it by asking customers to pay cash for a better deal where he will neither charge them tax nor report that sale to the OK Tax Commission. Sometimes he charges the customer tax but then just keeps that money for himself. So he happily benefits from the tax system by driving on the roads, calling the cops when he is robbed and enjoying the freedom afforded us by the U.S. Military but doesn't mind screwing Uncle Sam at every turn when selling booze. He doesn't have a sign out front telling you he's a tax cheat, but he is. You shop with him? Maybe.

A different liquor store owner in the area paid all of his employees under the table. Nobody paid taxes on that income and he could hire employees at a much lower rate than someone who is playing it by the book. Still another liquor store had people who worked there who hated minorities and went out of their way to discourage Hispanic & black folks

from shopping there. They didn't have a "whites only" sign posted outside but they might as well have. Are any of these businesses the "respectable" business you referenced in your postcard? You don't know, do you. Because your moral outrage is reserved for those of us who make funnies out by the street.

Don't get me wrong, I am not claiming my goofy signs are a social statement or that I'm so worthy to deserve everyone's business in and around Moore. I am only pointing out your hypocrisy. You go out of your way to avoid my store because you are offended by something I was bold or stupid enough to put out in the open but don't think twice about shopping somewhere where something much worse may be going on. That's ok. Most people are that way. Still, it does not make you any less of a hypocrite. Nor does it make your postcard any less ridiculous and inane.

Well, now that we've gotten that out of the way, let me explain a couple of other things that you may not know (or even care to know). I have had several complaints about my signs since we opened just over a year ago. Some of the more complained about include my special Christmas sign, "Get her what she wants for Christmas...Moore Liquor...Wait, reverse that" and "Cheap & Easy...like you Mom" and "Alcoholics Unanimous Meetings...Every Night at 7pm...Except Sunday." The only sign I ever felt bad about was the "Alcoholics Unanimous" one because I was afraid it was too close to making light of a serious disease. I pulled it early because a lady came into my store and made a convincing heartfelt argument that it was hurtful to people struggling to overcome alcoholism. I am still sorry about that one and, by the way, am grateful you gave me this forum in which to apologize. That's not to say that I didn't think it was funny or that I would have complained about it myself if I saw it in front of someone else's liquor store but I did understand the nice woman's point and my aim is to make people laugh not impede their growth or make fun of a mental disorder. Of course, when I say "make people laugh," I mean people with a sense of humor, not people like you. Just for the record, I also took down the sign early that could be read as a thinly veiled oral sex joke but only because the City of Moore sent out a Code Enforcement officer who asked nicely and didn't threaten me or try to force the issue. Incidentally, asking nicely sometimes works, sending a nasty little indignant postcard usually has the opposite effect.

I'll leave you with this challenge..

The next time you are offended by something, whether it be a sign by the side of the road or a sitcom or something on a morning radio show, think it through and ask yourself if it's really worth complaining about. When it comes right down to it, my stupid little signs aren't really that important. If you don't like them, just don't shop here. For every one of you, there are ten people who make it a point to stop in and say "thanks for the giggle" or "I look forward to the new sign every week." I imagine, in an indirect way, your postcard will increase business here. Maybe it'll even make me enough money to buy a bigger sign with which to offend you.

In the end, it's not a "Freedom of Speech" issue for me, it's a business issue. If there were more people like you and less people who enjoyed the signs...the signs wouldn't be there. Unfortunately for you, there are not nearly enough hypocritical, hypersensitive, high-horse ridin', funny sign hatin', liquor drinkin' dunderheads out there. Maybe you should start a club. Call it "Citizens United for the Nullification of Tasteless Signs." You could serve wine from a different non-offensive liquor store every week.

That works for me!

Most Sincerely,
Bryan Kerr
Owner, Moore Liquor

P.S. And the horse you rode in on.