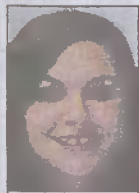


## Restraunt has right to deny Spanish speakers



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No English,  
no service.

That was the message the owner of North Carolina restaurant Reedy Creek Family Diner, Greg Simons, conveyed to customers when he posted a sign on the door that read, "God bless America and all those who protect and serve our great country. We only speak and understand American."

Simons reportedly posted the sign after a few encounters with customers who did not speak English made his employees feel uncomfortable. When the situation sparked controversy, he admitted it was wrong and removed the sign.

Many people may have had the same immediate reaction to this story as I did; that the sign is a discrimination against immigrants from other countries. But I wonder how many people, like myself, stopped and thought about it and came to a different conclusion.

As wrong as it sounds, Simons has a point.

A lot of people who have worked in the restaurant industry, myself included, have been that uncomfortable server.

They have been thrown into a situation where they had to decipher the requests of a customer who could not speak English.

According to a report by the United States Census Bureau, released in April 2010, more than 55 million people in America speak a language other than English at home. Almost half of those people reported speaking English less than very well.

A study by the American Library Association in 2007 reports about 21 million

people in America speak little or no English.

So, that little sign posted in a little family diner poses a very big question. Should businesses be allowed to deny service to those who do not speak English?

It is a controversial subject with an even more controversial answer. Yes, they should.

The U.S. has a current population of more than 300 million people.

By comparison, 21 million is only a fraction of that. And that small fraction should not mean that the other 270 million Americans should be required to speak and understand the multitude of other languages spoken by immigrants.

The ability to be bilingual is an excellent skill that can prove very helpful in today's society, but it is not a required one.

It would make sense that those people who choose to come to America learn to speak the national language, and yet it sometimes is not the case.

It sounds wrong for a restaurant in America to deny service to people who do not speak English.

After all, the Statue of Liberty tells us to welcome the tired, poor and the huddled masses yearning to breathe free.

We are a culture of mixed backgrounds.

We are a country that prides itself on this unique characteristic.

But it also sounds wrong that a restaurant owner is being criticized for not hiring employees who speak multiple languages.

The sign was wrong, discriminating against people who speak a language other than English is wrong, but maybe his point was right.

This is America, the melting pot, but the national language is still English.

## Cops invade Grove apartments

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Ladies and gentlemen, everything you are about hear is true. Only the

names have been changed to protect the innocent, but the situation, time and actions will still remain the same.

It was a cold March 20 around 1 a.m. I had just finished smoking my third cigarette for the night, an unusual number since my girlfriend made me quit, and I was standing outside of a Grove apartment while a party raged inside. It was an especially loud party with it being someone's birthday, and I was fairly surprised the law had not made an appearance yet.

I went back into the apartment to see what all of the other parties were doing. The main interest was a beer pong table where numerous drinking games were taking place. A large crowd had gathered around to watch the tenth beer pong game of the night. Beyond that, a marijuana circle had begun on a few couches. In another room, people were playing instruments.

Yes, it was a pretty typical college party with only one thing missing: a raid by the police.

It began with a loud boom on the door and the words "Asheville Police Department" bellowed from behind it. The owner of the apartment drunkenly staggered towards the door and calmly answered it.

The police said they were here due to a noise complaint. The owner of the apartment said she would shut the party down without any trouble, but the alpha-cop of the group was not having that.

He was a boorish looking fellow.

He was around 5 feet 9 inches, a little overweight and extremely angry. He began screaming about how he

**We were up to no good, but we were not causing harm to anyone. We did not physically hurt someone, cause a national security risk or have a large number of dead bodies under the floorboards.**

could smell marijuana, and how he was going to come into the apartment and teach all of us a lesson.

The owner, with the most courage she could gain, told the alpha-cop she would much rather talk about this outside.

Redneck alpha-cop was not having it.

He immediately put his foot in the door so it could not be closed, and forcefully pushed his way around the slightly intoxicated female homeowner.

She pleaded for a search warrant, but alpha-cop insisted he would get one as he barged in her apartment.

To say everyone at the party was innocent is an understatement, but I feel like the few political science classes I have taken taught me a search warrant is still needed to enter someone's home, no matter what the police assume is happening inside.

The Grove has recently been victim to numerous acts of the Asheville Police Department overstepping their boundaries.

Students have complained about APD walking up to their windows and shining flashlights into their homes, looking around resident's vehicles without their permission and coming into people's apartments without warrants or a justified reason.

One Grove resident had an officer from the APD spy through his roommate's window while she was tweezing her eyebrows. The cop assumed the tweezers were used for grabbing a small joint, and they forced their way into the apartment without a warrant or reason.

I guess they automatically assume college areas are riddled with drug use, prostitution rings and Vietnamese Russian-roulette parlors, so they feel like they have the right to look in people's windows and come into their homes.

Parties happen. There is really nothing a cop can do to prevent this fact, and, with the Grove being a predominantly college-related apartment complex, it should be no surprise there was a rowdy party on a Saturday night.

The night ended with police searching through rooms, tossing property on the floor and hauling away partygoers to jail for what was originally a noise complaint.

We were up to no good, but we were not causing harm to anyone.

We did not physically hurt someone, cause a national security risk or have a large number of dead bodies under the floorboards.

We were just trying to have a good time.

The police can suspect all they want, but just because a cop hears Middle Eastern music coming from an apartment does not mean Osama Bin Laden is hiding in it, and if the smell of marijuana lingers around a college apartment building in Asheville, it does not mean they can illegally burst through the door like a fascist regime.

As Jay-Z famously said, "Nah, I ain't passed the bar, but I know a little bit. Enough to know you can't legally search my shit."

Grove, if you're having cop problems, I feel bad for you, son.