Blog Posts

The Laziness of High School Pessimism

Early on in high school I -like many peers- got sucked into the **Attitude of Assumed Despair.** It was one day in 10th grade Science, when my desk-mate greeted once again with: **“I’m so tired?”** I suddenly realized. My immediate response should be **“same”,** or **“I know right?”**

Truthfully, I wasn’t tired. Bored in science class sure, but not overcome with exhaustion. But I couldn’t reply with, “actually I’m feeling great!” Because it’s not how you are supposed to feel, or at least, not how you are supposed to converse with classmates.

This culture of **resigned pessimism** has only increased over the years, the **“I Know Rights”** becoming **“Big Moods.”** What is concerning is it is not simply the **angsty** teen attitudes of high schools past. Before, at least according to Brat pack and nineties movies, there was a restlessness and rebellion among teens, a feeling of injustice in the world. This is feigned melancholia, used as a social crutch.

Presently, poor mental health is a real problem. Numerous teenagers are feeling exhausted, negative, and stressed to the point of clinical diagnosis. But those challenges and emotions are not being discussed and shared among students. Instead the idea of depression is being hyperbolized and used as an excuse to eye roll instead of having an engaging conversation. Maybe it’s just one more coping mechanism, trivializing problems and complaining with others on the daily. But after struggling through classes and homework everyday anyways, isn’t it worth it to celebrate times when we feel okay, or maybe even good, instead of being forced into an attitude of pessimism? Perhaps I’m naïve, but despite the brief satisfaction of commiserating with peers, I would rather have a conversation that leaves me happy, even if it doesn’t include why **“my week is gonna be death.”**

[Posted by Student Name: 6:07 pm. Jan 21st, 2019]

 Dear Valued Customers, We’ve Noticed.

Working as a Cashier, I’ve joined the ranks of Sales Associates expert in the art of **Customer Identification**. I know how our interaction will go before your first item hits the belt. Even if you consider yourself a special individual, you have been categorized by every service rep you’ve ever dealt with. There are many infuriating categories, but I’m talking to one specific group. “**Upper Millennials”**, the mid-30’s women, this one’s for you.

Many of you are friendly and well adjusted. But a surprising subgroup of you has me losing faith in humanity. You might sport fashionable **athleisure** jackets or a **“unique”** rainbow fur vest. You dress like hip twenty year olds, nails and makeup done. It’s a nice look, no judgement here. Only when you roll up with four hundred dollars’ worth of groceries does the fun begin.

So dear “Upper Millennial” Women,

We’ve noticed your lack of awareness. We notice you staring at your phone, lackadaisically placing your items on the belt one by one. We notice you staring off into the middle distance, while we struggle to fit your fifty groceries into the reusable bags you threw at us earlier. We notice when you shove on the last of your giant order, and say “I’ll need plastic, I always leave my bags in the car” (*Always*? It’s a small store. Your car is two minutes away). We especially notice your inconsequential phone conversations loud enough for everyone to hear, as you give us **“The Nod”** to use said bags.

The sad fact is, you live unaware of the grief you cause on a daily basis. But understand, to us, you are all one inconsiderate person. So next time you grocery shop, remember wherever you go, people notice. Maybe it’s time you break the stereotype, and notice too.

[Posted by Rebecca Tralli: 5:05 pm. Jan 21st, 2019]

Where Have All the Boarders Gone?

When you picture snowboarders, you imagine a culture of laidback riders, here for the good times. It is certainly the **vibe** exuded by famous snowboarders like Shaun White and Mark McMorris, and indeed it was the attitude I admired in my first instructors, college students teaching as an excuse to ride for the season.

However when I joined a lesson program at Blue Mountain, I met a new snowboarding personality. Two years I attended the program, boarders ranging from age eleven to seventeen, and I found I hated them all. They were either pretentious attention-seekers, teenage guys making middle-school-level dirty jokes, or a spoiled brats. They made what I loved, the feeling of riding, annoying. They would whine, flex on each other without subtlety, and make everything a competition. So as I sat, anger brewing on the chairlift, I wondered if the ideal snowboarding attitude was gone.

It could’ve be a matter of my situation. Toronto isn’t place where snow sports are necessarily accessible, and you need some cash to have any lifestyle as a skier or snowboarder. My guess was, in order to afford a program like that one each season for 8 years, these kids were raised **spoiled**. But without question, there was a **maturity** problem.

Maybe if I were to meet them again at age twenty we would get along. Maybe Mark McMorris and Shaun White were just like the pudgy spoiled 13 year olds with state of the art gear, or the pimply 17 year olds recounting fake-sounding party stories. I have to hope those other snowboarders are out there, shredding the **Fresh Pow** and livin’ for the thrills and not the jacket brand. Because part of the beauty of the sport is it’s attitude, and I wouldn’t want to ride any other way.

[Posted by Rebecca Tralli: 7:42 pm. Jan 21st, 2019]