



Dear L. A. Plume,

I went with a friend to a thrift shop today and while we were looking around we couldn't help but overhear one of the volunteers conversing with a customer about Donald Trump. They were both in agreement, and not in their quiet voices, about how awful they think he is and how his presidency is akin to the Southern history of slavery, and on and on it went. Although Trump may not have been our choice, we don't think it is a subject that needs to be discussed in a place such as that. We each considered saying something, or just leaving, but we did neither. An organization with a thrift shop derives income for said organization and we don't think it's an appropriate place to make your politics known in a way that clearly was meant to be overheard, and perhaps to offend. What should we have done?

Annoyed

Dear Annoyed,

I have no idea. I have overheard these conversations in one form or another just about everywhere and I think most of the places/times are inappropriate. It comes down to whether or not you want to be confrontational, and that's usually a losing proposition. When people are in a mode like that, they are not likely to hear anything you say anyway; they didn't invite you into the conversation so your best choice was to continue shopping, or leave.

Written by Editor
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L. A. Plume

Dear Ms. Plume,

What is the right thing to do when a friend comes to visit you and there is a misunderstanding like the following? A recent guest was sitting close to my outdoor fireplace when a spark from the fire landed on his sweater and left a small burn mark. He maintains that my insurance should replace his sweater, which could be repaired without much ado. I was astounded he would even suggest that I should file an insurance claim, as he has to know there are deductibles applied to insurance claims that would far exceed the price of a sweater. I offered to take the sweater to be looked at for repair but he isn't satisfied with that. What do you make of this situation and what should I do?

Jimmy M

Dear Jimmy M,

Stick with your offer to take the sweater to see if it can be repaired. If your “friend” doesn't respect that offer, re-think the friendship. Only if you think he is that badly in need of a new sweater, or the sweater can't be repaired, should you buy him a new one. And don't invite him to sit by the fire next time, if there is a next time.

L. A. Plume