

Friday Five: Worst selling Yankee Candle Scents

Yep, I love a good Yankee Candle, but given my inability to follow the most basic fire safety rules and the budget restrictions heartlessly placed on me by my husband, I really shouldn't be buying them at all. I do, now and then, take a trip to this nifty little place called T.J. Maxx Home Goods. Heard of it?

(Sheesh, stop jumping up and down, okay, you've heard of it...)

I could easily drop \$10,000 there on bathmats, floral file folders and Yankee Candles—which are 1/4 the price—but some of the scents are a little...off. It made me think of what possibly the worst selling Yankee Candle scents have been. You know, like the “New Coke” of Yankee Candle scents. For today's Friday Five, here are my guesses.

- 1.) **Microwaved Broccoli:** America's favorite vegetable zapped of all its nutrients and permeating your entire house—every room, closet and media niche—for days.
- 2.) **Your Brother's Room Growing Up:** Harkening back to the days when your brother played football and your mom worked full-time, Your Brother's Room will leave you breathless.
- 3.) **Wet Dog:** Undeniably K-9.
- 4.) **Motel Room A/C:** The distinct scent you used to only be able to get when entering a cheap motel room mid-summer right after a smoker has checked out, now it's available in a Yankee Candle.
- 5.) **Desperation:** Exclusive to Yankee Candle, now the smell of desperation isn't just limited to OC home sellers, reality show pitch meetings, and plastic surgeons' waiting rooms.

Light a candle and have yourself a good cry.

Why they never made it is pretty clear.

More Friday Fives? Here ya go...

Five of the most troublesome crowd-walkers.

Five men who have my permission to wear tank tops.

Five song lyrics and their resulting legal action.

Friday Five: Five ways to use '80s music lyrics to annoy your kids and entertain yourself

I'm eight years into this parenting thing, which is far enough along to develop a few "tricks" to help me get through the squimishes and mind-numbing monotony that come with your mommy badge.

I think every mom has these little tools. They are like little idiosyncratic things I do to keep myself from boarding the crazy train everyday around 5 pm. They are inside jokes, really inside, like just to myself.

Because I'm an eighties music connoisseur, or "geek" as some people might see it, mine revolves around lyrics from all the songs I listened to long before I knew what a Diaper Genie was, could recite the book "Red Fish Blue Fish" by heart or catch a stray spitwad midair before it hits an innocent

bystander. You know, pre-kid.

Five ways to use '80s music lyrics to annoy your kids and
entertain yourself

1.) "Look at that! **YOUR KISS IS ON MY LIST!**"

"Kiss on My List" by Hall & Oats: You must say this to your
kid every time you have a list in your hand to produce the
gratifying eye-roll or treasured "MOM!"

2.) "Listen Mister, **YOU'RE LIVING IN YOUR OWN PRIVATE IDAHO** if
you think you're getting a special treat now!"

Private Idaho by The B-52s: Nothing like a little B-52's to
cheer your day and really get under your kids' skin.

3.) "**FRANKLY MR. SHANKLY**, I don't care what your friends are
doing, you're not going."

Frankly Mr. Shankly by The Smiths: Actually, Morrissey
provides a plethora of quotable irritating lines. Signing the
lyrics of "HEAVEN KNOWS I'M MISERABLE NOW," while following
your pouting kid around the house is an advanced move, but it
works wonders.

4.) This is best used in a team effort with other adult.

"Ben, didn't want to say 'hi' to his teacher. He was **TOO SHY
SHY.**"

Other adult, "**Hush Hush.**"

In unison "**EYE TO EYE. TOO SHY SHY. HUSH HUSH. EYE TO EYE...**"

Too Shy by Kajagoogoo: Keep signing until they beg you to stop. Both our kids are very outgoing and friendly now.

5.) **"YOU CAN CRY IF YOU WANT TO,"** or **"YOU CAN ARGUE IF YOU WANT TO,"** this one can be tailored to anything your kid is doing that is bothering you. I like to make up my own words for the whole verse, like this,

"YOU CAN WHINE IF YOU WANT TO, YOU CAN KISS YOUR PRIVILEGES GOODBYE, BECAUSE YOUR FRIENDS DON'T WHINE, AND IF THEY DON'T WHINE THEN THEY GET ALL THEIR DS TIME."

Men Without Hats Safety Dance: Accompanied by the hand movements, this is wickedly annoying to kids.

Other Friday Fives:

Five personal advantages to the financial crisis.

Five things I did last night to avoid working.

(I couldn't get these videos to center on the post. Argh!)

Friday Five: Five surprising reasons to watch Real Housewives of Orange County



You might think that The Real Housewives of Orange County is a frivolous show, a time-waster, just another reason to move to Portland, but there are some perfectly solid reason to tune-in

to those housewives on Bravo, Nov. 5th. In past episodes they have proven to be helpful, insightful, and entertaining, but possibly not in the way they intended.

Here are some surprising reason to watch The Real Housewives of O.C.

1. For Parenting Advice: Here's how you can gain parenting guidance from the gals on RH00—do exactly the opposite of what they do. If they have a suggestion on parenting take it, but just flip in around. You'll be golden.

2. For An Ego Boost: There is nothing that makes me feel like a better mom (or person) than a dose of RH00. The phrase "I'm not THAT bad" runs repeated through my head while watching, like some kind of self-affirmation conveyer belt. They're like the Tony Robbins of Bravo.

3. For The Suspense: Heels, alcohol, and poor judgement make it a better suspense show than CSI—someone, at some point is going down: Literally or figuratively.

4. Etiquette, style and decorum lessons: Jo from Season 1 says to her friend while getting ready to go out: Yeah, don't show your butt, it will be classier like that. Or when Vicki says this about tattoos in during Season 4: It's inappropriate to put that stuff (but she didn't say stuff) on your body. Because no one rocks the natural, no-alterations needed-look like Vicki.

5. Finding new ways of looking at the world: Lauri says in an interview on the show in Season 3: My life has turned around 360 degrees. Referring to how she used to be flat broke and single and now married and loaded, you might think she meant 180 degrees, as in it's totally different than before. But no, she means life is a circle. It's the circle of life.

You see, these gals are actually brilliant social commentators, week after week pointing out the irony and

satire of modern life. Right? I mean, it's educational.

Read my "The (more) Real(istic) Housewives of Orange County"
post.

Julie & Julia plus my top five romantic comedies



I guess I consider myself a romantic comedy connoisseur.

Maybe even an expert or possibly an aficionado, for sure a snob. More than just casual 'date night' entertainment, I expect a lot from my romantic comedies and Nora Ephron (oh, add name dropper to the list), Julie & Julia's writer and director, almost always delivers.

The worst thing about being an expert about anything is when it's done badly, it's pure torture to watch. Let's say you were really, really into, I don't know, blowing bubble gum bubbles and you are forced to, no, have to pay to watch someone doing it all wrong, or not the way you would do it—making a sticky mess with small careless, unacceptable bubbles. That is what it's like for me when I watch a bad romantic comedy (Like any movie Jennifer Aniston has made...pick anyone.) Luckily, Julie & Julia is a good movie. A great one, with exceptions.

Larry was one of three men in the almost full theatre when we went to see it last week. I suppose being a chick movie about cooking gave this movie a one-two punch that even a cameo of Jason Bourne concocting a Molotov cocktail from one of Julia's discarded olive oil bottles couldn't dodge. But, even without that, (I think brilliant image) Larry enjoyed it. He's like that, all big and tough, but he will nudge me in a movie and say things like "That's just like you," "Cute dog," or "I like

that kitchen."

Nora Ephron is the master of romantic comedies: When Harry Met Sally, You've Got Mail, Sleepless in Seattle...you get the idea.

She is absolutely my romantic comedy idol (and very funny) and she has made this movie sweet and likable even with its flaws—like making Julie less adorable and more whiney and dreary.

There were so many things in this movie that were so Ephron; the way Julie holds her ranch-dipped carrot as she talked, the mix of '40s jazz and modern music, the manner that Paul (Julia's husband) asks her if she really wants to make hats, and even blatant lines from her other movies, "You're right. You're right. I know you're right" is straight out of "When Harry Met Sally."

The best test of a good romantic comedy is if the next day you still feel a residual warm, golden, syrupy sweetness in your heart that you can't quite pinpoint, but makes you want to throw your arms around your husband and laugh at his silly ways when he forgets to run the dishwasher, again. A great one should make you feel your heartbreak is part of some super corny, yet noble global sorority, not alone in your bedroom watching a movie on Lifetime at 1 a.m. They should leave you happy, hopeful and quoting memorable lines for years to come.

My top five romantic comedies:



When Harry Met Sally
His Girl Friday
Bridget Jones' Diary
Sleepless in Seattle
Roxanne

Other Amateurish Reviews by Me:

Bustin' Down the Door
Atonement

Five tips/factoids for the male readers of Alive in Wonderland



1.) Jane Austen is NOT Steve Austin's, The Six Million Dollar Man Bionic Man, sister. She's a famous author.

2.) Leaving a comment calling me a "spoiled, boy-chested, journalism school dropout," while accurate, doesn't hurt my feelings and in the end only makes me happy because it's obvious you've read my blog so thoroughly.

3.) If you ever need to de-girlie yourself after a particularly estrogen-laden post, watch this The Ducks vs. The Flames video where no less than 10 fights breakout during a six minute period. I love that the announcers start to discuss who would win if the coaches were to fight each other.

4.) Rest-assured, you're not the only one, Chris reads my blog, too.

5.) I have always wanted to sing the female part of the song "Poison Arrow," by ABC in Karaoke: "I care enough to know...I could NEVER love you!" But, my husband, and every other male I've asked won't do it with me. If you are interested, and you own a gold lamé suit, email me at suzbroughton@yahoo.com.

[More Friday Five:](#)

Five things I did last night to avoid working

Five personal advantages of the financial crisis

Friday Five: My top five '70s TV crushes

In order of coolness to young girls in the '70s—number five being my biggest crush.

1.) Baretta.

Listen: He loved animals, he carried a gun, and he wore clean, white tanks. What more could a young girl ask for?

2) Stanley “Wojo” Woiciehowicz from Barney Miller.

He had that Polish-American immigrant, big, dopey charm I just couldn't resist (and which served as a prelude to my '80s Lech Walesa crush).

3.) Captain Benjamin Franklin “Hawkeye” Pierce from M*A*S*H.

I was drawn to his banter, confidence, and practical joke prowess. His East Coast, college educated air was magical to California-girl-me.

4.) Michael Landon on Little House on the Prairie. I really love Charles Ingles. Though he would have wanted me to go camping, which is grounds for instantly ending any relationship, but he was still, well—M.E.O.W!

5.) The Fonz.

Like you really need me to list the reasons—“Aaaayhh!”



(Yes Fonz, you're three cooler.)

I loved the Fonz so much that when I was about eight-years old I insisted everyone call me “The Suz.” I even made signs for my room.

My friend Jana begged me not to post that story about “The Suz” on my blog. She thinks it makes me look like a dork-a-

mundo.

Other Friday Fives:

Five things my mom never said to me in high school.

Five lyrics to '70s easy listening songs that I hope aren't true.

Five Ways You Know You Are Really, Really Late For Your Own Funeral

- 1) Your children, who are now fully-grown, cut you off in the parking lot with the Escalades they bought with their inheritance.
- 2) You unknowingly complement your husband's new wife on her shoes.
- 3) Reading your eulogy, your brother keeps referring to you crossly as his "late, very, very late, beloved sister."
- 4) The pew you are sitting in is dedicated "in memory of" you.
- 5) When you go to sign your guest book, your fingers shatter into a million pieces.

Happy Halloween!



Friday Five: Personal advantages of the financial crisis

You no longer have to sit through someone's long, detailed description of their kitchen remodel.

You now have a solid excuse to cancel your gym membership.

You get to rediscover the knock-off magic of Old Navy.

You have always secretly loved In-N-Out burger more than sushi.

A nap is now considered a viable leisure activity due to its thriftiness.

More Friday Five:

"Five things that creep me out."

"Five things I love that are English"

The four deadly party personality types

The Crashing Bore

Favorite topics of conversation: Possible deadly reaction of

buffet food to their medication. The "freaky" dream they had last night. How cool they were in high school.

How to handle: Play interested. To everything shake your head and say "that's interesting." (Note: This only works if your spouse knows that when you say something is interesting, it means you think it's not interesting.)

The Arrogant Real Estate Related Professional

Favorite topics of conversation: Their weekend at "the River." How much they bought their house for in 1998. Wine.

How to handle: Play dumb. Act as if you haven't ever heard of anything they are talking about.

"What river?" "Where is Villa Park?" "Is that a type of alcoholic beverage?"

The Salesman

Favorite topic of conversation: How much money you could be making selling (fill in blank here). How much money they made last year. How much money do you want to make?

How to handle: Say you and your spouse have more money than you could possible manage already. "We are loaded. My husband makes so much money, I wouldn't know what to do with any more." Then blow your nose in a twenty dollar bill and throw it on the ground, just to drive the point home.

Minute-Detail Talker

Favorite topic of conversation: The difference between French goat cheese (or chèvre) and domestic sheep cheese. The thread count of the napkins and why I should care. How she wanted to bring her New Graphic Op Art Large Sabrina bag by Coach but was afraid the bold pattern would throw off her Dolce & Gabbana Satin Psychedelic Dress she got at....

How to handle: Ask the waiter if they serve Mountain Dew, when

they don't storm off and go sit at another table.

Recent party story: (read THAT story here),

Friday Five: Five videos that would have been perfect on Noggin, if Noggin were around in the '80s

...or five videos from the '80s that could be children's music videos made today and played relentlessly on Noggin...or Playhouse Disney.

Toni Basil—Mickey

Madness—House of Fun

OMD—Locomotion

Devo—Through Being Cool (Will require explanation of words "ninny" and "twit.")

Altered Images—I Could Be Happy (Running Lion and bouncing ball over lyrics makes this the clear winner.)