

Sex doesn't sell at Target. Here's why.

You can tell a lot about a trend or product by checking out the clearance aisle of Target. You can see that a certain type of battery-powered toy dog that barked constantly wasn't a big seller or coconut lip gloss or Star Wars curling irons. I like to stalk the "loser" section because sometimes I can grab a bargain and, you know, I feel sorta sorry for the things that end up there.

Sometimes, a jaunt down the markdown row is just plain funny. It's snicker-to-yourself, pull-out-your-iPhone-and-take-pictures amusing. This week I thought it was interesting to see what remnants were leftover from Target's Valentine's Day fare.

It was clear, checking out the mark downs, that sex didn't sell very well this Valentine's Day at Target. I don't mean hearts filled with candy or cute cards with cunning innuendoes; I mean like, sex stuff or sexy stuff.

There was a plethora of these chocolate body stencil kits left over—two whole shelves that greeted you as you entered the section. Even with the cute love birds and sweet packaging it still musters-up images you'd rather not think about as your kids tug at your shirt and whine for a box of Goldfish.



Then there were a ton this Ed Hardy candy and popcorn, which isn't really sexy, but more just kinda wrong and just done-to-death. I simply enjoyed seeing them stacked one on top of the other with little red tags on the side.



They probably thought these bags of ONLY GREEN M&M's **wink** wink** were going to fly off the shelves, but you could have your pick of any one of the 50 or so bags left over. The "New color of LOVE" just didn't take I guess.



Then, there was the "sexy" stuff. Now, I buy almost all of my...(Ahem) undergarments...from Target, but garder belts and black lace, in my opinion, should be left the professionals...and by professional I mean Victoria's Secret.



Now before you all think I'm a.) being a snob or b.) being a prude, let me tell you why I think they didn't sell and why I wouldn't buy them—at Target.

The first and most obvious reason is the checkout situation at Target. I would just feel downright embarrassed to have the 18-year-old boy who dutifully scans my Sponge Bob toothpaste and ziplock bags to come across some of these babies. It's almost not fair to the poor guy and my kids, who are almost always with me when I'm at Target, would be mortified.

And what about that? Having your milk and 8 oz tumbler glasses mingling around in the same basket as your lacy panties. Just seems all sorts of crazy to me. Especially now since my Target is going to start to carry fresh foods, which I'm altogether excited about, but solidifies my other point, and here it is: Do we really have to buy EVERYTHING we need in one place?



Aren't there somethings that deserve to be wrapped in scented tissue paper and handed to you in a little pink bag? I mean, after I took these pictures I priced the same sorts of items around (*Note to Husband: that's the story behind my Google*

search history from today) and found they weren't that much more expensive—when on sale— at the more traditionally “romantic” places. The kind of places with lower lighting, sales girls with measuring tapes flung around their necks, and classical music playing in the background.

The first time I saw these kind of adult-type things at Target I thought it was just me, but after seeing them with “Marked Down 50%” signs in front of them, I think others might feel the same way.

Another thing that didn't seem to sell this Valentine's Day: Cynicism. Which is comforting in a way. These shirts could be yours for a song.



Written for my blog at OC Family.

Other things there this week: The Olympics and me. Me! Me! Me!



What's your Starbucks' name?



Peet's Coffee is not only has my favorite coffee, it's the closest coffee place to my house. Just a quick walk and I can be sipping my au lait within five minutes of leaving my front door. But I'm back on Starbucks. The reason is as simple as it is pathetic: I can't get my coffee from a barista who

doesn't laugh at my jokes. Sorry.

I have tried all my best stuff on the tall, David Byrne-vibed, middle-aged barista at Peet's:

My: "I think I want something *naughty*" (in English Accent) as I tap my fingers together.

My: "I'm going to tell you I **don't** want whipped cream and then you're going to know that means I want whipped cream, Okay? And then when you hand me my coffee with whipped cream I'm going to be all 'I said NO whipped cream!' and you're going to be all 'I'm sorry' and then I'm going to say 'You might as well keep it there now' and you're going to shrug in shame, okay?" Always gets a laugh out of every barista.

But this guy? Nothing. It's like I'm reading him the phone book. So I stopped going there.

Anyways, here's my question: Do you use a fake name at Starbucks? What is it? IF you don't have one, please adopt one NOW! It will give you unimaginable (and patently immature) entertainment.

I always use Suzie....and if they spell it wrong, I ALWAYS point it out. Even though it's not really my name.

Over at OC Family I tell another Starbucks story. The one where I act like I've never stepped foot in a Starbucks in my life:

Ways to amuse yourself at Starbucks.

Breaking News: Rain

For most of you "Rain" isn't news, but in Southern California rain is a screaming headline, a reason for breaking news tickers running at the bottom of the T.V. screen. "Rain" is covered with the same intensity as a natural disaster and for my dogs—George in-particular—it IS a disaster.

Maybe it has rained five times in his life so far. He's still a puppy, but still you would have thought I had asked him to cuddle with a cat the way he looked at me when I asked him (very politely) to go outside and do his business in the rain.

First with the attitude.



Then once I got him out there, there was the **overly dramatic and reproachful shaking.**



After several attempts at running for the door, came the **waiting it out.** Both of us standing out in the rain to see whose will was stronger. Who could out stare the other. **Who could stand in the rain the longest.**

"George is getting upset."



Finally, probably due to my years living in San Francisco, and my umbrella, I won out and he finally gave in.

He then high-tailed-it back to the door.



It was suggested to me on Twitter that someone should come-up
with Doggie Depends just
to accommodate the skittish California Dogs on raining days.
Not a bad idea, someone get on that...

Bob's Big Boy: Reunited and it feels so good



For some reason, most of my fondest memories of being a kid are associated either with food or music. Along with the AM radio, Bob's Big Boy played a major roll in the first 15 or so years of my life.

There used to be a Big Boy right down the street from where I grew-up. As a little girl it was a place to go on special occasions or for a special treat to get milk shakes, brownie sundaes, and fried shrimp dinners.

In High School, Bob's was the meeting spot after concerts, dances, and parties. We'd hang out in the parking lot, climb on the back of Bob to get our picture taken, and sneak cigarettes from the machine in the lobby. It was THE place to fraternize with your friend over french fries, kind of like Arnold's, but without Leather Tuscadero.

After too long an exile, Bob is back in Orange County and I couldn't wait to bring my kids and Larry (*who knew it as Shoney's Big Boy on the East Coast*). I ordered usual, which is

the same now as when I was an eight-year old, the child's grilled cheese, fries, and a strawberry silver goblet shake.

I'm a little surprised and probably disproportionally happy to report that it was just as good as I remember.

I don't know why exactly, but watching my daughter enjoy her own shake and kid's chili spaghetti (accompanied by the traditional garlic toast) and then declare it "the .best. spaghetti. ever!" gave me a thrill. Like I knew some sort of pop culture mythos was going to live on.

Now, here is the big question that has torn Bob's Big Boy enthusiasts apart for decades, pitting traditionalists against progressives: Do you dip your fries in your shake or not?



Personally, I'm a french fry shake dipper. I love it. So does my daughter, but the act never fails to produce cringes and shudders from the male side of the table. If you have an opinion, please, by all means, weigh in on the matter.

I give the return of Bob's Big Boy a big thumbs-up accompanied by a Fonzie-style "Aaayyy." Now, if only we can get Naugles, Pup-n-Taco, and the lunch counter at Buffum's to come back to OC, then I'd be in retro '70s heaven.



We missed you too big guy. We missed you, too.

Read my story about Bob's Big Boy's strawberry silver goblet shake:

...and I never cried again. Not really.

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You can go to my Blip.Fm channel to listen to Peaches and Herb's

Reunited.

What was your first job? Mine was working at KFC



Picture lifted from this person's Flickr page. My first job, at fifteen, was working at

Kentucky Fried Chicken in Huntington Beach. Not very glamorous, but at fifteen, you took what you could get. All of my friends worked there, which was really the only criteria for a first job—well, that and your parents willingness to drive you there. The uniforms were dark brown with orange and beige stripes...very Urban Outfitters.

The man who owned it was a veteran named Bill who sported a neat flattop, high and tight. From what I can remember, he drove an old, very old, burgundy Cadillac and looked a little like W.C Fields in polyester pants and a bolotie. I can just see him now, all in brown, hunched over a large white plastic container, elbow-deep in macaroni salad, mixing it with his ginormous hands.

Bill had a little dog named "Mimi" bequeathed to him by his late wife if my memory serves me. He always said when "that dog" died, he was going to sell KFC and travel the world. He acted like Mimi was a pest to him, but he hand-made a seat in

his Caddie just for her and took her everywhere with him. You know the type of man, right? All rough and grumpy but, deep inside sensitive and thoughtful.

I loved to make the famous KFC Biscuits. Every time I worked, at the beginning of my shift, I would mix the ingredients in a giant industrial mixer, roll out all of the dough, and cut hundreds of little round circles. Then I would place them all, an inch apart, on baking sheets the size of an unfolded newspapers. They were then ready to be thrown into the massive ovens and baked until yummy golden brown.

One night, after about an hour of preparing that night's batch of biscuits, I looked down to find the band-aid I had on one of my fingers was missing. Bill always had us wear gloves, but for some reason that night I didn't. I remember looking out over the sea of uncooked biscuits contemplating what I should do. Should I trash them all and start again? Oh, Bill would be upset with me. Should I just cook them and hope for the best, betting the one containing the lost bandage would be a straggler, thrown out at the end of the night.

At fifteen, I decided to put them all in the oven and never breathed a word to anyone. I had a horrible fear of disappointing any adult and the thought of Bill, hands on hips, shaking his head in disappointment with me was unbearable. He was such a kind, but firm man—I would have died of shame. I thought I would take my chances.

I never had a customer complain, but I studied every person I rung up that night, wondering if they were the type who ate their biscuit. I played the horrific scene in my head over and over again, "Mommy, what's this?" or worse, "cough, cough....What the...Oh, my God!"

I went back to visit KFC when I was going to college and Bill was still there. Mimi had died years before, but he stayed on. He was very uncomfortable with my happiness to see him again. He asked if I still "liked to take pictures" (see?...so thoughtful he remembered I liked photography) and gave me a free pint of cole slaw when I left.

I still think about him and wonder if he ever got to travel

the world.

Bill was probably the best first boss you could ask for. I wish I had a picture of him to show you. Isn't it sad I have millions of pictures of people from High School that now I can't even remember their names. But I didn't take one of Bill, someone I will never forget.

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Do kids still get jobs at 15 years-old anymore? All of my friends and I went out and got our worker's permits the day we turned fifteen, is that still the case? Do you want your kids to work while in high school? I do.

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