

My Life as a Parent:

Brilliance in Marketing

by Kim Pleticha

So I just found out that my daughter's favorite clothing store—which I'll call "Frustice" in honor of its unique ability to frustrate me to the point of screaming like a banshee at the sheer ridiculousness of charging \$42 for a cotton ramie sweater to be worn by the pre-pubescent set—is going to launch a boy's line in Spring 2011.

Are they freakin' high?

If there's one thing tween girls do NOT want intruding on their pink-sequined-spandex dream of nirvana, it's boys.

Oh sure, they're fine with the harmless, puffy-haired Disney knock-offs singing their hearts out on the video monitors hanging from every light bulb around the store—just as long as one of them isn't Justin Bieber, whom the girls in my orbit happen to think is a poscur of the ultimate degree.

"Why hasn't his voice changed already?" mused one of my daughter's friends.

"I think he may be a girl pretending to be a guy," my daughter deadpanned.

And Frustice thinks these gals will let regular ol' boys—who bring nothing more to the table than fart jokes—shop anywhere near them?

Today's 10-year-olds are nothing like those of us who grew-up in the pre-Title IX dark ages. Today's girls demand—and get—their due attention. Nay, they rip it straight out of the boys' hands.

I shudder to think what they'll rip if they catch a boy stepping foot in Frustice.

To get folks excited about the new boys' line, the company launched a four-minute, over-produced You Tube video that shows boys being boys—like pounding nails into wooden stairs with a brick. Oh yeah. That's good PR. I can just hear my daughter and her friends now...

"OMG, did you totally see those two morons?"

"Ugh, I know: pounding a nail with a brick—seriously, do they even have brains?"

"No... if they did they'd just do something stupid with them. Like Cole's little 'experiment' in science last year—remember that?"

"Yeah... they never did find his hand, did they?"

"I wish they wouldn't have found the rest of him, either."

If the company's marketing brainiacs think naming the new clothing line "Brothers"—which they have—will do anything to endear these girls to it, they need a good lobotomy. Don't they know that any girl of a living, breathing brother (especially the little variety) would gladly trade both her hands in exchange for never having to shop anywhere near him?

The store claims its new boys' line will "equip boys for life." Maybe. My husband still gets sick to his stomach when asked to go shopping for so much as underwear, so perhaps a store like this will gird against another generation of men who consider a few strings attached with frayed elastic "boxers."

Despite its seeming inanity, I think this Frustice for Boys is a fabulous experiment that can have nothing but positive ramifications for mothers like me throughout the country.

Think about it:

No more waiting around while our daughters paw through a Liberace-meets-Cher-like closet while we're subjected to worse-than-Chinese-water-torture-

Liberace-meets-Cher-like music. (Sing it with me... *Do you BELIEVE in life after Frustice?!*) No more "looks you luv for less," where "less" is more than the person in China got paid to sew all those damn sequins on in the first place.

If the girls insist upon continuing their Vegas side-show impersonation, we can dust off the BeDazzler we bought back in the day and go to town on a six-pack of Fruit of the Loom T-shirts.

Thank you, Frustice, for shooting yourself in the foot. I'd have done it myself, but orange jumpsuits and iron bars just aren't my thing, you know?

See you at the grand opening!

Kim Pleticha is the editor of ParentWise. She not only owns a BeDazzler, she believes it is a vital wardrobe accessory.

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