

WOULD YOU LIKE A CHOCOLATE

by JAMES COLLINS

“Would you like a chocolate?” These words, as a box of chocolates are proffered, can cause a chocoholic to salivate. Chocolate, known for centuries, has been shaped and marketed to the public in many forms. Specific chocolate confections are designed to appeal to the individual sexes and to children. Women are drawn to slim and dainty chocolates. Thin walled swirled chocolate coverings surround raspberry, strawberry, coconut and other flavored centers with marvelous aromas. They are wrapped in beautiful attractive metallic wrappers. Gold is reminiscent of the Cinderella story of glamor at the king’s ball while silver brings Snow White to mind. Women and young girls see themselves as princesses and feel this glamorous delicacy is their reward for just being themselves. Children are drawn to M&Ms, the small, highly reflective brightly colored candy with the chocolate center. Designed and advertised to ‘melt in your mouth not in your hands,’ it also has a unique sound when in a bowl. Children perk up and turn when they hear the sound rattling around in the bowl or when spilled out on a table. For men the chocolates are more robust; solid; something to bite into and chew vigorously- a manly delight. The candy chews and the nut filled morsels are also favorites with men.

Last week I was given a single piece of chocolate in an unattractive, messy, blue wrapper. This was obviously designed by someone to be unobtrusive, mundane and to be ignored. The only target market that this could be designed for, in my opinion, is the Witness Protection Program (WPP). They have numerous infamous candidates who can’t draw attention to themselves and need a candy that enhances their invisibility. This piece is one inch square and chunky with a rotund center like the paunch on a fifty year old mobster and we each gravitate to our own reflections. So, it appears, this is the candy for WPP mobsters. The wrapper really gave it away. It is depressing and dull. It won’t be noticed. As pointed out, the package was the identifier but how was this created? Someone had to design the cover separate from the item. This person had to know the market and probably is a member of the WPP.

After all, the Program has to create jobs for these barely literate individuals. I can imagine the selection committee meeting discussion.

“We need the design package for the new candy for our members. We also need a job for ‘Benny the Dip’. Maybe he can design the package. He hid out from the police for seven years and knows how to blend in.”

“But he’s so depressed all the time; he may never finish the job.”

“Even better- he never dresses flashy; never has on tailored clothes and only likes dull colors. Everything he touches gives off depressing vibes and people tend to shy away from him”

“OK, give him the job.”

Thus the WPP candy was created and you may note the shiny silver coating is on the inside; the dull blue is on the outside while flecks of gold enhance the camouflage appearance. This is a predictable design from a person with intense depression.

For the study I collected all the candy types described and I sampled and consumed them, while writing, as the mood seized me. In the end all but the WPP candy were selected and consumed. My subconscious avoided it at each selection. Finally I forced myself to eat the WPP sample to finish the study. Strangely, now I feel depressed.

THE END