

## Crayons

All of the colors in my new crayon box are black. I thought it was a fluke at first, so I took them back and brought another box home. I laid them out on the table - Inky, Jet, Midnight, Coal, Ebony, Raven, Cauldron-read the sides. "Wait a minute," I wailed, "who wants 64 black crayons all sporting different names.

I was irate, but I waited until I was calmer and then I studiously composed a letter to the manufacturer, the gist of which was- Please be informed that vivid vibrancy is hard to achieve without the proper shades.

I received my reply a few weeks later and I was not at all satisfied. It read:

Dear Consumer;

We were pleased to receive your correspondence regarding our new line of psychotherapeutic crayons.

This new product was developed at great expense using the most advanced technology. In order not to overburden the customer with complicated techno jargon we have condensed this new process into a short motto, " What You Buy Is What You Are."

What this means is that tiny powerful sensors have been placed in all crayon dispensing outlets that are capable of detecting a person's fundamental mental state and then react in such a way as to send short subliminal messages directing the customer to the appropriate crayon choice.

Your selection of our black crayons (twice) would seem to pinpoint you as a discerning individual who sees the world in patterns that do not fluctuate.

If you feel there has been an error please see your doctor or other professional and try choosing from our fine line of tactile enhancers at a later date.

Sincerely;

Binney & Smith Inc.

Now, please understand that it wasn't the letter or even the diagnosis of my mental state that really alarmed me. It was what happened in between buying my crayons and receiving the letter. I sent the neighbor boy after crayons for me a few days after my initial purchase and he had returned with a box of red ones- Arson. Fire, Emergency, Stop, Blood, Disaster.