

Guilty pleasures

by BRIAN LOCKHART

'We've only just begun, to live,

White lace and promises,

A kiss for luck and we're on our way,?

Those are the opening lines from the song, 'We've Only Just Begun,' by the sister and brother duo of Karen and Richard Carpenter - 1970.

Yup, those are some pretty sappy lyrics.

No one liked the Carpenters. They were 'lame,' and didn't have the punch and rebellious image of other music acts of the era.

While the Rolling Stones put out the bad boy image at the time, the Carpenters appeared to be so squeaky clean you couldn't find a piece of lint in their closet let alone a skeleton.

But wait a minute ? the Carpenters sold millions of albums, had gold records, a number of hit singles, and performed hundreds of sold out concerts over several years.

Somebody liked them.

It became a running joke in the music industry that no one would ever admit to owning a Carpenters album, yet there were millions of them out there in record collections.

The Carpenters became one of those guilty pleasure where people would hide and play 'Superstar' on their record player and belt out 'Don't you remember, you told me you loved me baby.'

Guilty pleasures are one of those things that people enjoy, but for some reason will never admit it.

When K-Mart was viable store in Canada, they were known as a well stocked discount department store. They had pretty much everything.

But no one would ever admit they shopped there for some reason.

You would never hear a conversation where someone admitted actually buying something at K-Mart ? especially clothes.

'Say, Bob, that's a nice suit.'

'Thanks Fred, I got it at K-Mart!'

I guarantee that's a conversation that never happened.

A friend of mine who worked there in the security department for a while once quipped, 'No one ever shops at K-Mart, and yet we made \$x millions last year.'

Restaurants also seem to be on the list of guilty pleasures.

No one ever seems to admit they like fast-food places. In fact there have been countless stories over the past decade on why you should never spend your money at a burger joint. They list everything from an unhealthy diet to the fact that the millions of cattle that supply the beef are responsible for global warming.

And yet, every time I pass under the golden arches, there's a line-up and no shortage of customers.

If you watch a lot of movies, here's a fun one. Try to get a man you know, to admit he likes romantic comedies.

It doesn't matter how good the film is, no guy will meet up with his buddies and say ?I saw The Notebook last night. What a great ending!?

I'd bet not one guy in the room would even admit to liking that movie, even if he admits he watched it to please his girlfriend or wife on movie night. That same group of guys would be happy to discuss the body count in the movies they will admit to liking.

That also goes for television. If you've ever been flipping through the channels, and stopped on The Antique Roadshow because you wanted to see the appraisal a woman receives on her antique broach that has been in a box in the attic for 70 years, chances are no guy is going to discuss that later with his friend.

I'm pretty sure a lot of people feel the same way about certain realty TV shows.

In a poll of guilty pleasures, food related activities ranked pretty high among those who responded.

Swigging juice right out of the carton and putting it back in the refrigerator or dipping your finger into a jar of peanut butter for a quick snack is apparently okay, as long as no one sees you do it.

The same thing applies to eating habits like gorging on ice cream or some other food stuff that is not recommended for binge eating.

It's okay to do it, as long as no one else knows.

We all have those little guilty pleasures. You might as well enjoy them, well, as long as they are harmless and not criminal or something like that.

Comedian Norm Macdonald used to do a skit where he described taking a shower and what his routine was. He made the audience laugh when he looked at them and said ?You all thought you had your own little secrets, didn't you??

For the record, I always did like The Carpenters.