

# COMMENTARY

Editor in Chief:  
 Michael J. Kleckner  
 Managing Editor:  
 Jessica Richelderfer  
 Editorial Editors:  
 Salena De La Cruz, Pat Payne

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Steve Baggs Emerald

## Let your conscience be your shopping guide

The day after Thanksgiving, I was wondering what to do with my day. I had a lot of homework, but I couldn't bring myself to crack a book with my belly in shock from eating home-cooked mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie. Like any self-respecting American on Nov. 29, I decided to head out to the mall.

The Friday after Thanksgiving is supposed to be one of the biggest shopping days of the year, when droves of frenzied shoppers con-



Julie Lauderbaugh  
 Judge Julie

verge on malls to buy, buy, buy! I wasn't at the mall at 5 a.m. with the thrifty soccer moms pressing their noses on Nordstrom's display windows — early hours don't agree with me. But by 1 p.m., it was obvious to me that most of the soccer moms wanted to bring minivan-loads of children into the fray.

After parking what seemed to be a mile away, I pushed my way through crying babies, angry parents and hordes of teenage boys and girls smacking their Bubble Yum with holiday glee. The capitalist world was my oyster — then I saw a leaflet on the floor: "Nov. 29, 2002 — Buy Nothing Day!"

Amidst all the joyous consumerism, someone had planted a seed of doubt into my conscience. But is one day of shopping abstinence re-

ally effective or even worthwhile in our struggling economy?

Buy Nothing Day started in 1993 by the founders of Adbusters, a magazine that proclaims to be "concerned about the erosion of our physical and cultural environments by commercial forces." More precisely, Adbusters is devoted to showing Americans how stupid we are.

For this year's Buy Nothing Day, the organization mentions two main reasons why people should have refrained from consuming on Nov. 29: the environment and poverty. The Adbusters Web site says only 20 percent of the world population (dubbed "the rich western countries") are consuming more than 80 percent of Earth's natural resources, which causes an uneven level of environmental damage as well as a uneven distribution of wealth.

The organization got it right on the first count, at least; Americans' over-consumption and preoccupation with packaging is what has metropolitan cities and rural areas alike struggling with overflowing landfills.

Adbusters thinks our gross consumerism is also attributed to poverty, which the magazine links to terrorism, albeit unsuccessfully. The magazine has an idea about sharing the wealth, which might be noble, but in this day and age, it just isn't safe. If incidents in Kenya and Bali are any indication, terrorists don't want the "rich western countries" to share the wealth through foreign tourists funneling money into local economies. They want us eradicated from the face of the planet.

I'd hate to think that all of the Bubble Yum consumption going on in the

mall last week is going to be the cause of another suicide bombing.

Buy Nothing Day is a great idea in theory, but I believe shopping helps drive our economy and keeps Americans employed. And all of the worthwhile environmental and poverty causes in the world aren't going to make any difference to me if I graduate and can't get a job to make ends meet — especially a job at the mall.

I applaud those who let their conscience be their guides last week and stayed at home. But for this bargain-hunting capitalist, putting my pennies in a lock box the day after Thanksgiving would be simply un-American.

Contact the columnist at [julielauderbaugh@dailyemerald.com](mailto:julielauderbaugh@dailyemerald.com). Her views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

## Exercise reigns over diet fads

I've tried it all, from Metabolife to Slim-Fast, and still it seems those few extra pounds are adamant on staying stuck to all the wrong places. It's not a new quest — many women are unhappy with the way they look and are trying to find the easy way to lose unwanted pounds.

So, after much research, I have found a few ways to lose weight that work, and a few ways that don't work so well. This is in no way to be intended to be 100 percent fact, but rather it's just some helpful hints from my own experiences — those that have worked or those that left me reaching for the German chocolate cake.

The old adage that hard work, exercise and diet works, yes, but it is necessary to actually have the time and the motivation to "feel the burn." Being a college student, working at the campus paper, working another job and still trying to get homework done is difficult. I used to dance, from when I was 4 years old until I was 18 years old, not to mention playing softball, volleyball and the football game that my



Salena DeLaCruz  
 Say it loud

friends and I planned every fall.

It was easier than working out and keeping myself "pumped up." Now, it seems there's barely time to crunch it up. Last year at Clackamas Community College, I took a Health and Fitness for Life class and lost six pounds in three months, along with seven inches off my waist and three off my chest. If you have the time and the energy, this is definitely worth it. Don't forget to drink lots of water.

And Metabolife, a dietary supplement, worked wonders for me. After high school, I gained more weight than I was, or am, willing to admit. My mom was using Metabolife, and so I started taking one before breakfast, lunch and dinner. I felt revitalized, rejuvenated, ready to take on the world. I lost 24 pounds in six months. The down side — I felt like I drank a full case of Mountain Dew. My heart would beat very fast, and I'd have hot flashes and get nauseous if I did too much while taking them. Who needs methamphetamines? I had Metabolife.

Just last week, I tried Slim-Fast. My aunt had been on it for nearly two months and had lost about 40 pounds. Of course, to have any real effect, one must be on the program for at least one month. Here's the basic plan. A shake for breakfast, a snack of fruit or a Slim-Fast bar, a shake for lunch, another snack of fruit or a Slim-Fast bar and a sensible dinner.

Hmmm... Sensible to me may not be sensible to someone else because, you see, I don't like vegetables. And again, living as a college student and buying sensibly is difficult when it's just easier to pick up a Big Mac and french fries. Mmmm... I'm already getting hungry.

I did the Slim-Fast program for a little more than a week, and the shakes actually tasted pretty good — kind of like the milk left at the bottom of your bowl after eating Fruity Pebbles or Fruit Loops. Sweet yet satisfying, it could also be compared to canned milk. However, a couple of hours after drinking the shakes, I was looking for a little sustenance to make me feel full. So basically, I seemed to want to eat more on this program, but maybe being on it longer would do more for me.

I got the most results with watching what I eat, and no matter what, finding the time to dance, exercise or play football — anything but sitting around and watching television. All that does is add more junk to the trunk, and I have enough.

So get up and do something — don't just sit there.

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### Letter to the editor

#### Debating a resolution

On Wednesday at 3 p.m. in the EMU Fir Room, the University Senate (the main legislative body of the University) will consider whether or not it should concern itself with the impending invasion of Iraq. If senate members decide that it is appropriate to do so, they will then debate a resolution that would ask our government and other United Nations member states to seek a peaceful resolution to any disagreements with Iraq. Full text is on the University Senate Web site.

This matter is of great interest to your readership, who should be made aware that senate meetings are open to all and that "all members of the University Assembly shall have the right to introduce legislation and to take the floor on any matter under discussion..." "The University Assembly is composed of all... officers of instruction, librarians, officers of administration; 18 members of the Student Senate; 25 members of the ASUO Executive; and five members of the ASUO Constitution Court." (Sections 6.1 - 6.2 of the University Senate, Enabling Legislation).

Franklin W. Stahl  
 professor  
 molecular biology

#### CLARIFICATION

Tuesday's article about January's income tax measure ("ASUO shifts voting focus to Measure 28," ODE, Dec. 3) should have said that the measure would increase the tax rate for personal and joint filings by 0.5 percent, and for corporate filings by 0.33 percent.