

BUY NOTHING DAY

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 26th

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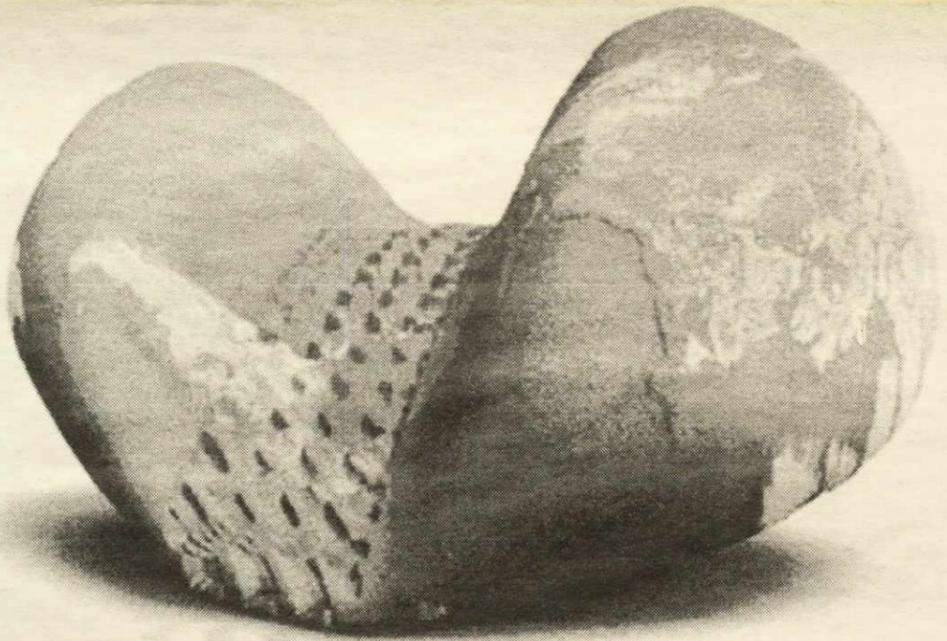
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WHAT WAS THAT BUMP?

SPECIAL

This quote from the Coca-Cola Company 1997 Annual Report gives a shocking glimpse into the company's global marketing strategy:

* This year, even as we sell 1 billion servings of our products daily, the world will still consume 47 billion servings of other beverages every day. We're just getting started. *

- From the Coca-Cola Company 1997 Annual Report



The purpose of Buy Nothing Day

by naomi fleschhut

Could you spend a day without buying a single thing? How about on the first official day of Christmas shopping? This is exactly the question that International Buy Nothing Day begs.

It is a day where culture jammers around the world take action to "draw attention to the global consequences of First World excess and prove how empowering (and surprisingly difficult) it is to step out of the consumption stream for even a day," according to anti-media gurus *Adbusters* magazine.

Its effect is hoped to be like a cold shock to the system, pulling people out of their consumer-induced somnambulism and waking them up to the real world. Forcing people to realize that their consumer habits seriously affect both their own lives, as well as the interests of the rest of the earth and its inhabitants.

Once consumer habits are examined critically, all you need to start a "revolution in human consciousness" are the facts and a sense of empowerment in consumers' ability to change global economic environments.

The facts are that the new global economy — growing quickly and nearly out of control with the powerful new World Trade Organization (WTO)

— is gobbling our resources at an alarming and ever increasing rate. To say that this is unsustainable is an understatement.

Corporations like Monsanto are gaining patent rights to the food we eat and the biodiversity of the earth while governments stand aside docile, bowing to the push for bans on labelling which would otherwise inform consumer choices.

However what is truly disturbing is the shift of human culture towards consumer culture — where consumption fills the void of what we have lost.

We are undoubtedly the most rapacious consumers in the world, consuming as much as 30 times more than those in other countries.

Yet could we also then say we are as many times more happy? Is it making us more satisfied in general, or happier in particular? Are we gaining more leisure time to enjoy family and friends, or to pursue our diverse interests? The answer should be a resounding no.

In fact, people are working more hours, eating more food on the run, and suffering from greater stress — of urban living and environmental degradation — than ever before.

Though this high paced lifestyle is coming more into question of late, an

overwhelming majority of people still seem to feel powerless against mega-international corporations and their agenda for the global economy.

And that is exactly how we are supposed to feel. In fact, even the mainstream media does not want us to so much as consider the legitimacy of corporate agendas, which is exemplified in their lack of coverage for Buy Nothing Day protests and actions.

CBS goes so far as to explain their refusal of air time for a BND commercial on the basis that the spot is "a demonstration in opposition to the current economic policy in the United States." Obviously media impartialism does not apply to television networks.

So this is where the purpose of BND comes in. To lead people to recognize their hidden asset of consumer power by sparking debate through crafty anti-

consumerist spectacles. Last year an approximate one million people participated in the 24 hour moratorium on shopping, while the message reached many more through activist events worldwide. Some unorthodox thinkers actually opened up shops for the day where they sold 'nothing,' while other helpful activists offered a free credit card cutting service for frazzled shoppers.

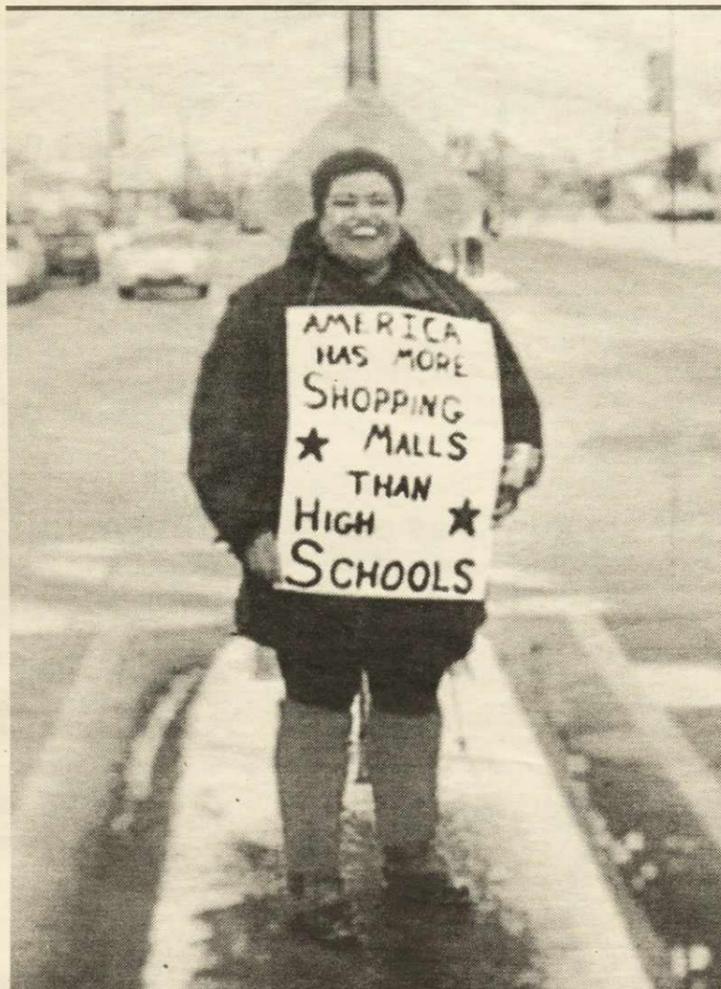
However, the question becomes what *will* fill the void if we let go of this consumerist drive? Protesters in malls of the United States last year would offer such substitutions as spending time with those you love rather than money on them, and donating to charity during the X-mas gift-giving season.

This brings up an often cited criticism of Buy Nothing mentality — what about the people who depend on retail for their livelihoods? For that

matter, what about the livelihood of our entire society which is driven by this materialistic economy?

But these criticisms are shaky on two accounts. First, they are incredibly simple-minded in that they take the objectives of BND literally. They wrongly assume that the spirit of BND is against the exchange of goods. Which leads into the second problem which is the assumption that no alternative systems of goods exchange exist or are possible.

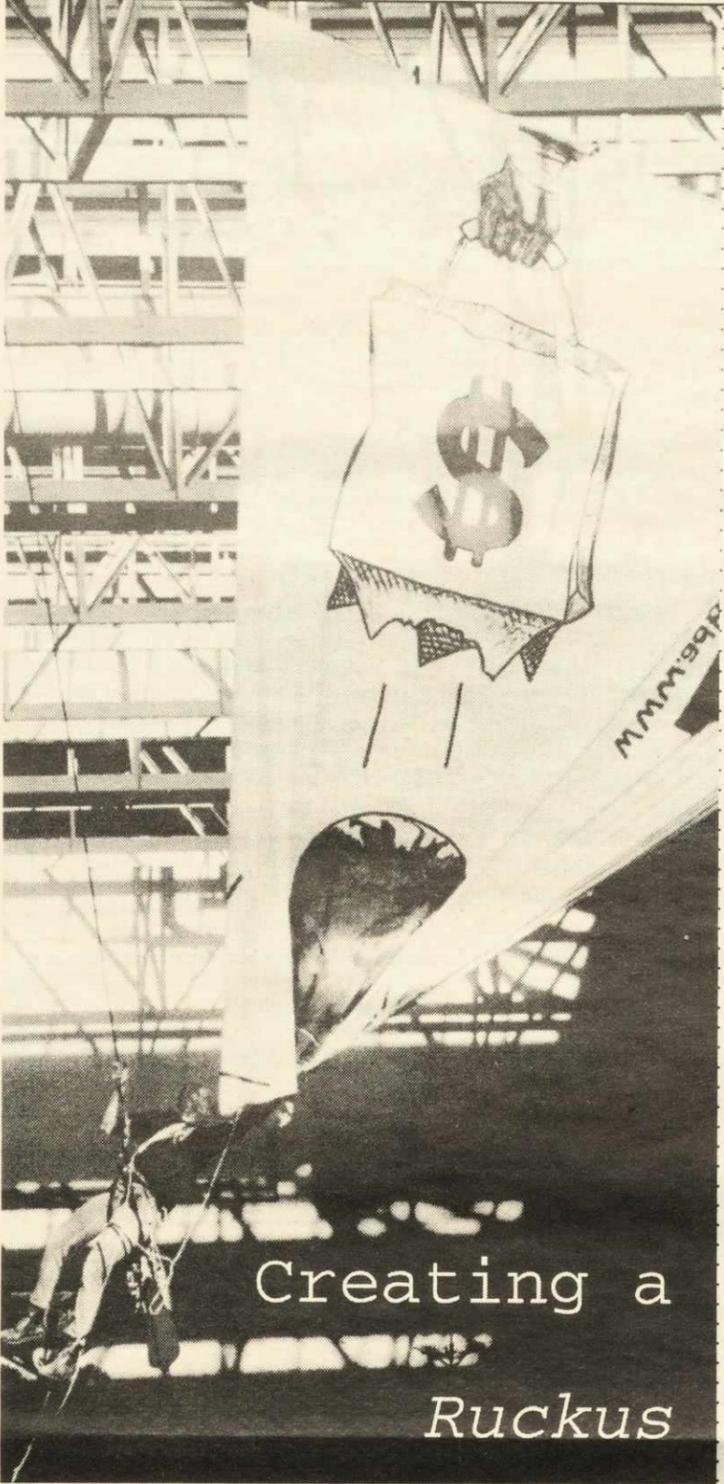
These people are missing the true purpose of Buy Nothing Day. This upcoming 24 hours of cooperation between people all over the world is a mere exhibition of the power people have to instigate change. It is one of many ways people can come together and speak out to affect the world. It is a testimony to the realization that the actions of everyday people determine our global reality.



Resistance is Mcfutile?

The chance that an McAmerican has worked at McDonalds: 1 in 8

Since 1979, there has been more than 1500% increase in the amount of money Americans spend on fast food.



Creating a
Ruckus

Champions of BND Subversion

by jon elmer

How do you hush a frenzied, holiday crowd of eager Christmas shoppers in a trendy American mall? How about unfurling a 600 square foot sign with an apocalyptic phrase reading 'SHOP TIL WE DROP?'

Setting the bar for BND subversion, California-based activists the Ruckus Society set last year's BND festivities aglow with their stunt at the *Mall of America* in Minneapolis, Minnesota - stringing up the massive banner in such a difficult place, it hung for the entire day before it could be removed.

A project of this grandeur is not unleashed on a whim, it was the culmination of weeks of designing and planning by the Ruckus Society, whose *raison d'être* is to provide 'technical training in nonviolent forms of civil disobedience to groups promoting social justice.' The project began with video surveillance of the mall, in order to monitor mall security practices and establish the logistics of the banner's placement - with the goal of maximum viewability. While the finer details were arranged by a team of Ruckus agitators, a group of around a dozen artists and designers were hard at work on the billboard-sized signage

that featured the slogan 'Shop Til We Drop?' and accompanied by a decal of the earth tearing through a shopping bag.

As important as logistics and planning are to the success of this action, nothing would be possible without climbers Marin Goldstein and Han Shan, who traveled from opposite sides of the country to Minneapolis to execute the culture-jam of culture-jams. Visiting the Mall of America in the days before BND, the team further observed the security and layout of the mall, just to be certain.

Finally, Buy Nothing Day arrived and the team descended on the mecca of modern consumerism, the shopping mall. With the aid of local activists, the Ruckus team 'ground crew' began to divert the attention of mall goers, staff and security alike with BND awareness activity, all low key but effective. As the 'ground crew' monitored the scene from below, Goldstein and Shan deftly maneuvered across the rafters of the mall and into the target position. As the climbers unfurled the 600 square foot banner a lull fell over the stunned shoppers, soon giving way to incredulous chatter - could people actually be pondering their consumption rates?

Consuming 5 times as much as a Mexican, 10 times as much as Chinese person, and 30 times as

much as an Indian, it seemed the mall was the best place to start getting North Americans to check their heads before jeopardizing our earth in the name of excess and luxury.

"There couldn't be a more appropriate location to challenge our society's runaway consumerism," Goldstein said after the Mall of America stunt.

Impeccably researched, the placement of the banner was so daring that it hung in its place for all of BND. What of the climbers? Shan and Goldstein hung suspended above the mall for more than an hour, reveling in their achievement, before repelling casually into the waiting arms of the Bloomington Police officers.

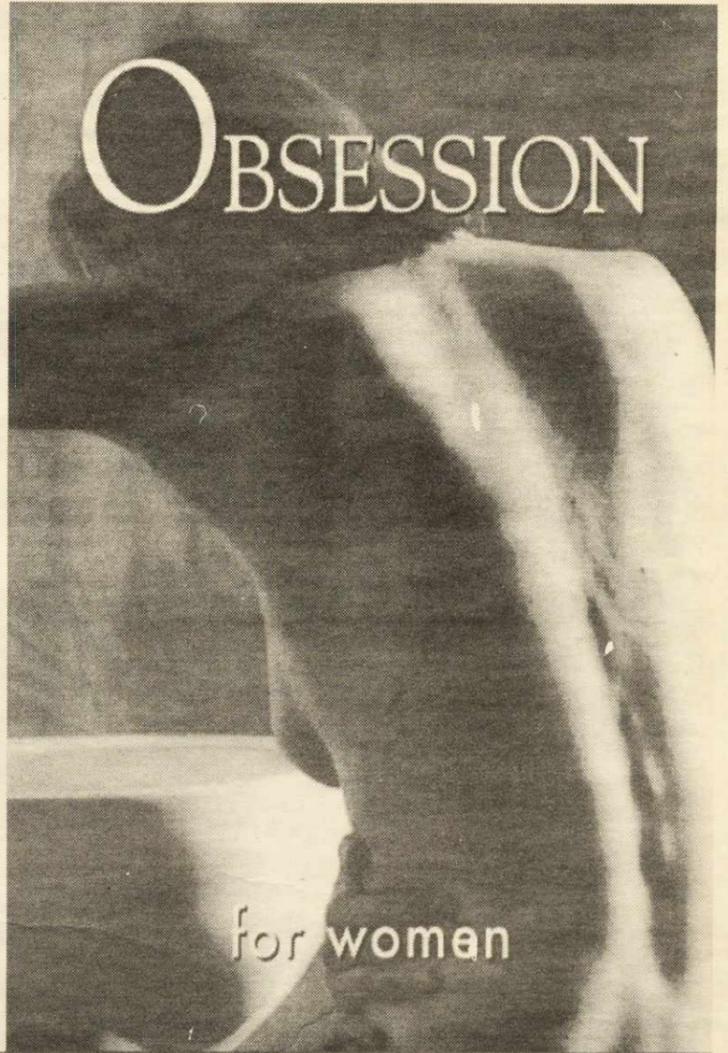
With some impressive legal aid, the climbers were able to beat the three misdemeanor charges, and slip away as champions of BND subversion for a measly \$150 dollars apiece - scarcely as much as Tommy Hilfiger pullover sweater.

So, was the action a success? Well, it's been reported that while pondering the banner, one family was overheard to be leaving the mall, to observe the 'true spirit of the holidays.'

Remember kids, while successful, social revolution may be gradual, it has to start somewhere.



Since 1988, there has been a 1000% increase in Canadian garbage washing ashore in Scotland.



for women

* It would only take four months for Toronto to fill the SkyDome with garbage. *

* With 8% of the world's population, North America produces 50% of the world's garbage. *

subconscious marketing and subliminal images

by patrick blackie

Ever wonder why you have to walk through an entire grocery store if you want a loaf of bread? Ever wonder why commercials always portray beautiful women and men being happy with their new product, or why companies will sink enormous amounts of money into ad campaigns that achieve nothing more than pissing us off?

Simple. Companies have to make money.

But if you think about their methods, it can be somewhat disturbing. Companies invest billions of dollars into researching what people will like. They test their commercials until they receive the desired effect.

That's easy enough to swallow, but then when you consider it to little more depth, then it starts to stink.

Ever wonder why a grocery store is laid out the way it is? Why orange juice is right next to the liquor boutique, or why all the frozen 'box food' is scattered all over the store instead of in one section? Is it for the shoppers convenience?

No. Stores pay people to layout their store so that people will be statistically inclined to buy more stuff. Years of

research has revealed that some people will be more prone to purchasing something, depending on its location. Subconsciously.

For example, some people are more likely to pick up a product if it is within easy reach on the way to the cash register, and based on things like whether or not most people are right or left handed, or how many shoppers are of a specific age group, stores will strategically place goods for more pick up.

Not to say that by strategic placement of goods, people will buy more stuff, but in the long run, the research pays off for the store. In the span of a year, how many people saw something on their way to get a loaf of bread and came out with a roast chicken?

But this attack on the subconscious goes farther than grocery stores. Sex — far less subtle but far more potent — has always been a popular selling tool. Companies like Gap and Calvin Kline use attractive men and women to advertise their products.

What's wrong with that, you may ask? Easy. Using the beautiful men and women in their ads sends the message that attractive people wear their clothes or smell of their

fragrances, and in order to be part of the cultural and social elite, you need a brand name.

This is a result that is inevitable, given the prominence that these companies. They may not have started it — pretension has always been a human characteristic — but they are perpetuating it. Kids growing up to Gap commercials will not lose their materialistic view when they reach maturity — they are being raised by this shit. It won't happen to all, but it will happen to some, and that is bad enough.

Ever wonder why diaper companies seem to be advertising a new diaper every week? That's because they make a new diaper.

Keeping a kid in diapers is an expensive thing for any parent. It is worsened when companies like Huggies develop a new diaper for a different age range, keeping kids in diapers and parents in stores.

But hey, there's no way people can get suckered like that...is there?

But there is. Sad but true. People are surprisingly trusting. The assumption is that if Huggies were to make a diaper for 3-6 year olds, then there must be a good reason. Hopefully when the 5-10 year

old diaper comes out, people will pay a little more attention and maybe not buy it.

They don't lie too blatantly. They do not operate a secret service to determine what people want, and they don't kill to keep their secrets.

They do, however, put billions into researching personal habits and tendencies,

create marketing campaigns designed to groom crops of customers and they do keep their intentions in the obscure.

Well, most of them do. Cigarette companies don't need to — they have the power-base to blatantly sell a harmful addictive drug. How long before the Gap can get away with subliminal images or personal threats in their ads.

Week of Reflection

The week of November 22 to November 26 will see a variety of events happening at Dalhousie in commemoration of the "Week of Reflection." The "Week of Reflection" is part of the global initiative called "Sixteen Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women," which was declared by women in Latin America and the Caribbean in 1981. November 25 is the "International Day to End Violence Against Women," and this date was chosen to commemorate the death of the Mirabel sisters, who were brutally murdered in the Dominican Republic in 1960. On November 25th look for Dalhousie Women's Centre representatives to be handing out "No means No" coasters and stickers. If you don't get one, give us a call and we will gladly give you one.

"Ten Years and Counting: Have We Made Progress Towards Ending Violence Against Women?" will be the title of a panel presentation and discussion on Wednesday, November 24. This will take place in the Green Room of the SUB, 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Panel members include: Cathy Love, Executive Director, Bryony House; Patricia Doyle-Bedwell, Chair, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; Marie Paturel, Nova Scotia representative, National Association of Women and the Law, violence against women working group; and Peter Davison, Men for Change. This will be a panel presentation, followed by questions from the floor. Everyone is welcome and sign language interpretation will be provided.

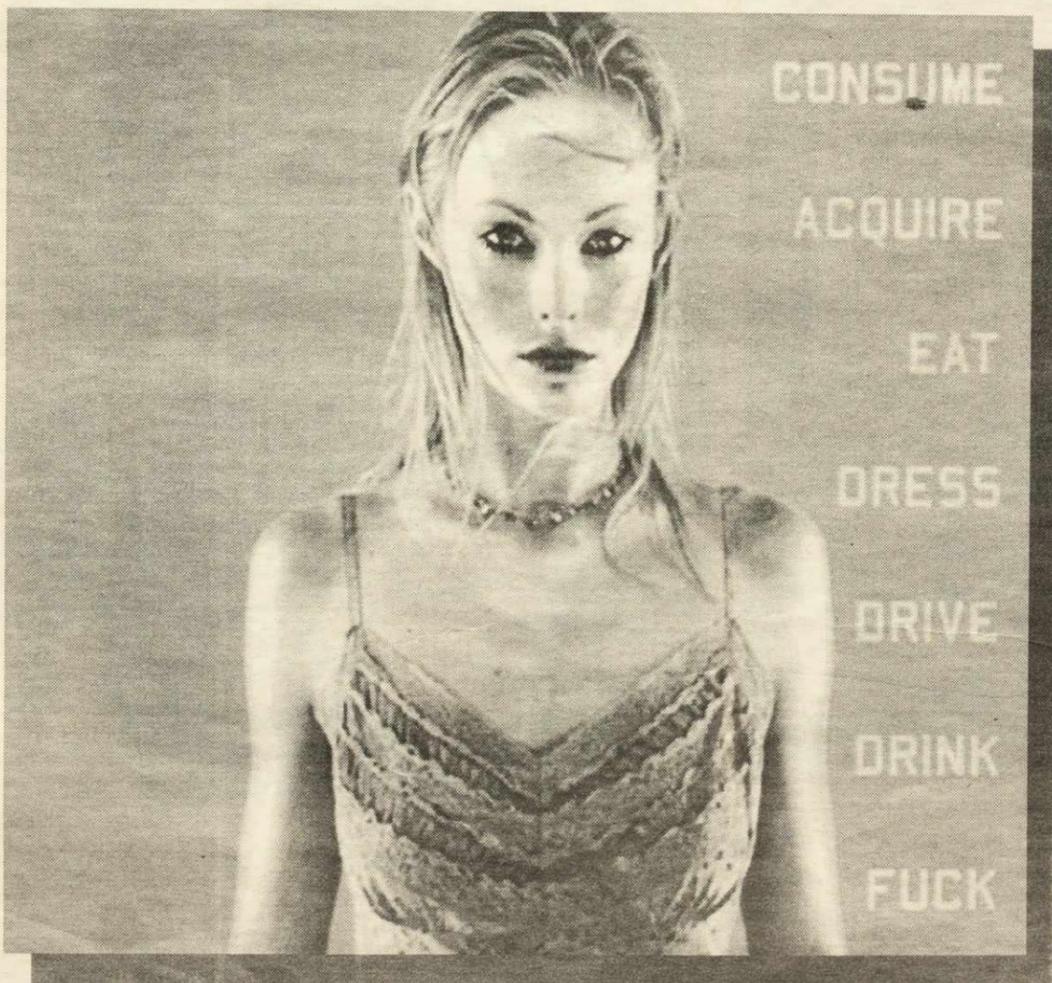
Pauline Mantley and Marjorie Willison will give a presentation entitled, "A Warm and Humane Legal System," on Thursday, November 25, during Law Hour (12:00 to 1:00) at the Dalhousie Law School. Pauline is the author of "Sile it Cries," her book which recounts her experience with the legal system that helped her to obtain a prosecution for childhood sexual assault/abuse. This is an inside look at an historic Nova Scotian case. Everyone is welcome. Bring your lunch.

A display table with information relating to ending violence against women will be in the Dal SUB on Friday, November 26, from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm. Stop by, pick up a pamphlet, get a sticker and a coaster.

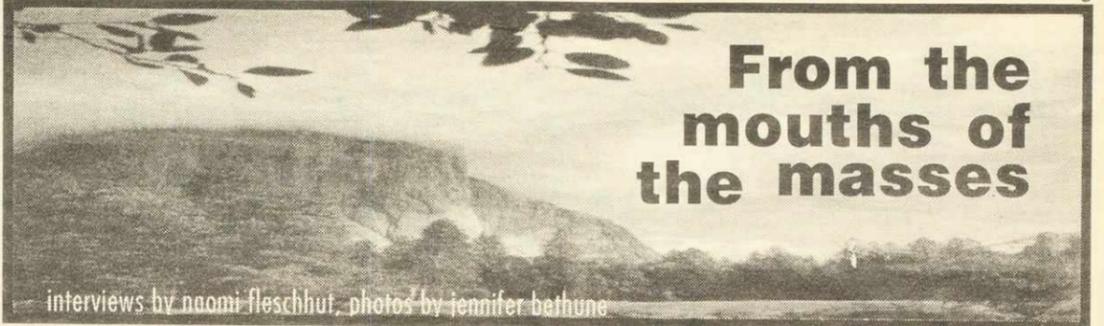
Starting on Monday, November 22, the Dalhousie Women's Centre will have Purple Ribbons available. The Purple Ribbon campaign was started as a way of raising awareness about violence against women, and is symbolic of the Montreal Massacre, December 6th. All donations received for ribbons will be given to Bryony House, a local transition house for women leaving abusive relationships. Look for a display and donation box through out campus.

December 6th will mark the ten year anniversary of the Montreal Massacre. This year's event marking the tragedy will be held in the Green Room, Dal SUB, December 6, at 7:00 pm. Music, poetry, prose, speakers, readings and candles will once again be used to mark this day. Come early for a seat. Sign language interpretation will be provided.

All "Week of Reflection" and December 6th events are free of charge and everyone is welcome. For more information or to get involved on any of the above events, please call the Dalhousie Women's Centre at 494-2432.



DO YOU THINK THAT PEOPLE HAVE REASON TO PROTEST OUR CONSUMER-DRIVEN CULTURE?



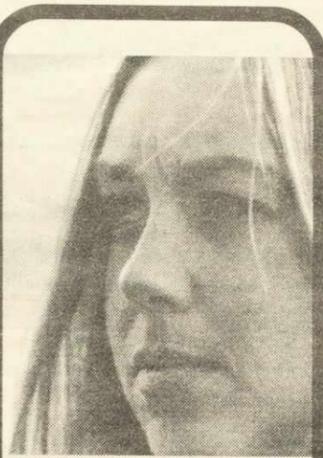
From the mouths of the masses

interviews by naomi fleschhut, photos by jennifer bethune



"Definitely. It may be fighting against a high tide, but it is a useful idea."

Elsbeth Wood



"Certainly. I am always distressed about how much money I spend in a day. It is also about being conscious of where products are coming from"

Caitlin Patrick



"I think that Buy Nothing Day is good to observe, but that its more about understanding where products come for every day of the year. It is important for the consumer to be educated about what they're buying and who they are supporting."

Allison Vuchnich



"No. People have to spend money. If you don't buy coffee, the coffee vender doesn't make a living."

Gord Danielson



"I work in retail, so I wouldn't want too many people protesting for too long."

Diane Billard



What you may not have heard about these corporations...

by jay cleary

Foreground:

Nike — "Just Do it."

Maker of slickly advertised shoes and clothing

Background:

Unsafe and morally reprehensible worker conditions and child 'sweat shop' labour

Foreground:

Canada Trust — "Friends of the Environment"

Background:

Owned by Monsanto, the company which created DDT, Agent Orange, and 2,4-D, a toxic chemical ubiquitously used as a herbicide in North America. Monsanto is also one of the leaders in genetic engineering technology.

Foreground:

Irving — "The Tree Growing Company"

Background:

A monster Maritime corporation which deals in environmentally degrading petrochemicals and oils, while also contributing its fair share to the clearcutting of forests.

Foreground:

Phillip Morris — one of the world's largest food companies

Background:

Not only a huge manufacturer of highly processed, and highly packaged foods, but also the world's largest tobacco company.

* A foam coffee cup will sit in landfill for 500 years before biodegrading. *

* If North America ate 10% less meat, *
100 million people could be fed.

Elite doublespeak: you are being manipulated

by blair powers

Currently, in corporations and governments around the world, the word "Globalization" is being sung and praised as the almighty savior. Governments are worshipping this savior in hopes of having their nation blessed.

They are dismantling social institutions and deregulating standards and services to accommodate multinational corporation upon the recommendation of corporate neo-conservative think tanks like the Frasier Institute, and the C.D. Howe Institute.

These think tanks are spewing endless supplies of

abstract economic hearsay and victimizing all who oppose their holy budget scriptures.

Unfortunately, these gross challenges to Canadian society are not being met by intelligent discourse or effective, informative blockades. Instead, corporate freedom is haphazardly sneaking its way through government loop holes.

Its ideologies are slowly seeping into the Canadian citizen's mind. They whisper, "yes, it is right to dismantle public institutions and services in the name of fiscal responsibility and business."

Why are these enormous changes not met with a massive cry of resistance from the general populace? Why are these practices either applauded or unnoticed by the mass media? Who is "The subject who is truly loyal..." being loyal to — the corporation that owns him or the citizen that reads him?

Aldous Huxley foresaw the current phenomena of stifled democracy and corporate-interest propaganda when he wrote *Brave New World*. "There is economic censorship and the media of mass communication are controlled by members of the Power elite...In their propaganda today's dictators rely for the most part on repetition, suppression and rationalization — The

repetition of catchwords which they wish to be accepted as true, and the suppression of facts which they wish to be ignored."

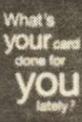
This brilliant analysis, written in 1958, is an excellent summation of why the sources we rely on for our information — newspapers, magazines, television, radio — are not providing vital information in a realistic manner representing the common good of society, rather than the self-interests of the power elites.

Buy Nothing Day is a powerful reaction against all of this corporate-media-elite manipulation. It is doing something you are not being told to do by your favorite television program or glossy magazine. It is going against the edicts of our consumerist society. It is questioning our own role in life: are we consumers or citizens? It is asking the big question: Is economic progress killing the earth?



This student is trying to win a car.

And if he doesn't win, at least he's just earned \$1,000 to help him pay for one. Not every decision will be as easy to make as getting The GM Card®. Especially when you can apply from your dorm. Upon approval, you'll get a free Frosh Two CD** and receive a \$1,000 bonus in GM Card Earnings* towards the purchase or lease of a new GM vehicle. There's also no annual fee. Then anytime you swipe your card, like to buy stereo equipment for instance, you'll have a chance to win*** a Chevy Tracker, Pontiac Sunfire Coupe, Chevrolet Cavalier Coupe or 1 of 300 CD libraries as well as getting 5% in GM Card Earnings**. Visit us at www.nobrainier.gmcanada.com for more information or to apply on-line.

The GM Card — targeting the most heavily debt-burdened demographic in our society: students.

While Federal spending is cut to post-secondary institutions, replaced by corporate takeover of 'higher learning', the good folks at GM are ensuring we have access to their lending services from the comfort of our very dorms — though it is contentious whether we are indeed buying home entertainment systems, or just buying time 'til the Spring installment of our government loans.

But it is nice to know that while we are sinking heavily into irreconcilable economic servitude, we'll also be earning a good ten percent off a car we'll buy from GM one day — if they give us a large enough credit limit.

Number of genetically altered crops currently being field tested, including tomatoes spliced with fish genes: 678

Percentage of the public, who wants labels on genetically engineered foods: 93%

Number of genetically engineered foods that are labeled: 0

Beyond Buy Nothing Day

by jennifer bethune

Most people balk at the idea of buying nothing for an entire day.

"I'd have to prepare..." said many, indicating that they'd be forced to stock up on things like coffee and snacks before the big day. While international buy nothing day is a protest against consumerism, it seems as if protesters will have to engage doubly in their ordinary consumer activities in order to prepare for buy nothing day. Initiatives like international buy nothing day succeed in demonstrating the Western reliance on consumer products. But there are limits to the notion of abandoning consumerism. Consumerism is a direct result of the division of labour, a structure which has been at the core of most of western civilization since its inception. Granted, consumerism has evolved substantially since farmers and smiths exchanged millet for tools in the earliest civilizations. Now, on the eve of international buy nothing day, it seems as if consumerism is inescapable.

For most Canadians, buying nothing for just one day may prove difficult. Making a

lifestyle of the protest may be close to impossible. The millions of people living hand to mouth in the hearts of North America's

become the first global retailer - at an alarming pace.

Study after study confirms that the opening of new Wal-

are becoming institutionalized in international agreements like the General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs (GATT) to

they swell.

Many North Americans have neither the means, nor the will to abandon consumerism altogether.

They may, though, choose to protect the fabric of their neighborhoods and towns, by following the advice of Wal-Mart founder, Sam Walton, himself: "There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company, from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else."

Initiatives like international Buy Nothing Day succeed in demonstrating the Western reliance on consumer products.

cities and towns, for the most part, face no other option than to continue to fuel their consumer society. They cannot grow maize in their window boxes, support aquaculture in their bathrooms, or raise sheep in their backyards. But it is this demographic that may be able to contribute the most to anti-consumerism protests like international buy nothing day. While these urbanites will continue to buy their food, clothing, and housing, they can mount an impressive assault on modern consumerism by combating the spread of giant retailers, thus maintaining the character of their neighborhoods by protecting small, family-owned stores.

Every three days, a new Wal-Mart opens somewhere in North America. With at least ten outlets in Argentina and Brazil, and three in Hong Kong, Wal-Mart is realizing its goal - to

Marts lead to both a net loss of employment and a decline in income for the community. Studies have shown that for every job created by Wal-Mart, as many as one and a half jobs are lost. Wal-Mart rarely pays its employees more than the minimum wage.

As well as fueling excess and consumerism, Wal-Mart, and other consumer meccas like it, works to unravel the fabric of the community upon which it imposes itself. Busy downtowns turn to ghost towns, as giant retailers succeed in luring shoppers to their havens of homogeneity. Researchers at the University of Massachusetts have found that a dollar spent on a locally owned business has four to five times the economic spin-off of a dollar spent at Wal-Mart.

Despite these, and other shortcomings, corporate consumer icons like Wal-Mart

name only one. Giant retailers may soon become the face of the global retail sector, suffocating small businesses as

COUNTRY ROADS.



Exhaust emissions. CFCs in air-conditioning. Landfills. Certainly reasons enough to come up with environment friendly cars, so BMW did just that. And then they considered the pollution problem from an unusual angle. The driver's.

The solution? A unique air-filtration system. Called AUC, this ingenious device keeps tabs on the air coming into the car, and when it detects any noxious substances (anything from carbon monoxide to ethanol or dust) it seals the air vents.

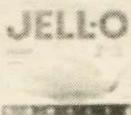
Immediately. Automatically. And then circulates the unpolluted air inside the car.

Which means that BMW drivers don't even have to breathe the same air as everyone else.

BMW — Sheer Driving Pleasure.

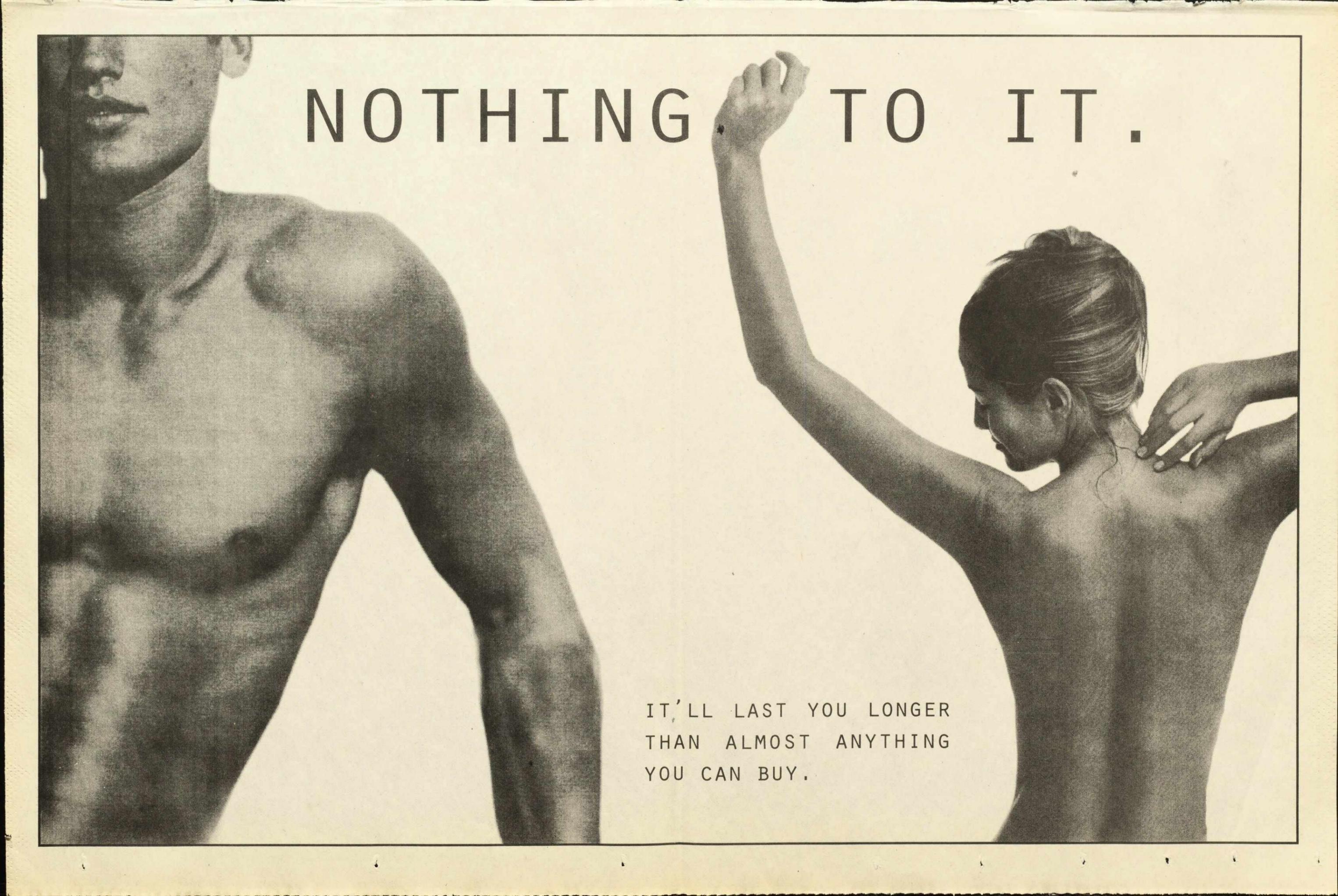
WHY ARE YOU BUYING YOUR FOOD FROM A TOBACCO COMPANY?

Did you know that every product pictured here is owned by Philip Morris, the world's largest cigarette company? Chances are you've been helping to promote Marlboro cigarettes without even knowing it. Now is your opportunity to withdraw that support by personally boycotting these products. It's sort of like giving money to a health organization that is working to find a cure for cancer — but in this case, you're taking money from a corporation that causes it. So next time you're at the supermarket — try it. You'll like it.



Number of Shopping malls built between 1970-1990: 25,000





NOTHING TO IT.

IT'LL LAST YOU LONGER
THAN ALMOST ANYTHING
YOU CAN BUY.