

NON

THE DAILY
Collegian

Rossilynne Skena
Editor-in-Chief

Holly Colbo
Business Manager

About the Collegian: The Daily Collegian and The Weekly Collegian are published by Collegian Inc., an independent, nonprofit corporation with a board of directors composed of students, faculty, and professionals. Pennsylvania State University students write and edit both papers. Collegian advertises for itself during the fall and spring semesters as well as the second six-week summer session. The Daily Collegian publishes Monday through Friday. Issues are distributed by mail to other Penn State campuses and individual subscribers.

Complaints: News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor. Business and advertising complaints should be presented to the business manager.

Who we are

The Daily Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by its Board of Opinion, with the editor holding final responsibility. The letters and columns expressed on the editorial pages are not necessarily those of The Daily Collegian, Collegian Inc. or The Pennsylvania State University. Collegian Inc., publishers of The Daily Collegian and related publications, is a separate corporate institution from Penn State. Editorials are written by The Daily Collegian Board of Opinion.

Members are:
Chris Bickel, Ian Brown, Matt Brown, Adam Clark, Rich Coleman, Matt Conte, Abby Drey, Kathenne Dvorak, Beth Ann Downey, Stacey Federoff, Mike Felletter, Stephanie Goga, Mandy Hofmocker, Patrick McDermott, Andrew McGill, Dave Miniaci, Elizabeth Murphy, Michael Oplinger, Dan Rorabaugh, Enn Rowley, David Rung, Alexa Santoro, Heather Schmetzlen, Shannon Simcox, Rossilynne Skena, Danielle Vickery, Alex Weisler, Aubrey Whelan and Julie Wolf.

Letters

We want to hear your comments on our coverage, editorial decisions and the Penn State community.

■ **E-mail**
collegianletters@psu.edu

■ **Online**
www.psu.collegian.com

■ **Postal mail/In person**
123 S. Burrowes St.
University Park, PA 16801

Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include year of graduation. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people.

Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters it receives. Letters chosen also run on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

PSU not averse to vocal students

Student activists' goals and university plans don't need to be at odds.

With the efforts of Penn State Beyond Coal (PSBC) and the Sierra Club, one official said that one or two student voices may be present in the task force researching an upgrade of the West Campus Steam Plant.

Through taking interest in a university decision and a quick undertaking of peaceful activism, the groups' efforts have paid off. RJ Van Auken, a student leader for PSBC, said his organization isn't trying to force any ideas on the administration.

By not being too forceful

and showing interest about being part of the actual process, it shows the dedication of the groups and how taking the right form of initiative can bring students and the university officials together in common work.

Although the university has been exploring an upgrade since 2005, according to Office of Physical Plant spokesman Paul Ruskin, we think it bodes well to bring the students into the decision making. The groups' vocal expressions and zeal helped them possibly nestle their way into the process, so kudos to PSBC and the Sierra

Club. Their visibility and openness only aided to gain good standing with Penn State on the use of coal as the university makes its plans to progress.

Because of these groups and their passion, students are taking part in a significant long-term university undertaking.

This collaborative effort is a great example of the student body and the university coming together to achieve a common goal. We would like to see this proactive approach more often in the future, with understanding and common direction on both sides.

James A. Schrumpp
Monrovia, Md.



OUR MISSION DEPENDS
ON THEIR GOVERNMENT
ROOTING OUT CORRUPTION
AND IMPLEMENTING
DEMOCRATIC
REFORMS...



Bill Decker
junior-broadcast journalism

Acting against consumerism valuable in fighting world ills

In his last column, Rich Coleman presents Buy Nothing Day as a useless protest, as a "misplaced rebellion." He writes, "What is buying nothing going to do for our country? Capitalism has been around for hundreds of years and someone walking around the mall with an empty shopping cart isn't going to change that."

I ask Rich, and like-minded individuals, what action WILL change our system?

Our consumption habits determine the health of our economy. A tenet of ethical consumption is that we vote with our dollars, i.e. when we buy something, we show our support for that product, that store, that company and the global consequences of its business. Those who participate in Buy Nothing Day are not "doing nothing," they are voting "no" to a system that, as Rich glosses over, "has its drawbacks."

What precisely are those drawbacks? It doesn't take 20/20 vision to see the adverse effects consumerism has on our environment, the lives of millions of species (including humans around the world working in sweatshops) and even our mental health (because things = happiness).

With the advent of huge global crises like peak oil and climate change, not to mention war, terrorism, poverty, genocide, Extinction and Population Explosion, it's a cold truth that consumerism and capitalism need to end before our world does.

Our country runs on consumerism, yet consumerism cannot continue without us, the consumers. We have the power to change the way things are. And that can start with simply becoming more aware of what we are paying for and choosing to buy (or not to buy) accordingly.

Gabrielle Bedelan
sophomore-English

TV dependency needs attention

By Stephanie Goga

WHEN I arrived back at my dorm room after Thanksgiving break, I made one important change in my life: I unplugged my TV and sent it home with my parents.

With the bulky screen removed from its precarious position atop my microfridge, I suddenly had a clear space — and a clear mind.

The idea to ditch the Magnavox came to me during my trip back to State College, as I reflected over what I had accomplished during the long break. Instead of the studying, paper writing and class reading that I probably should have completed, my agenda had been filled with far less academic pursuits.

I realized that hours of daytime TV had informed me all about Adam Lambert's scandalous performance on the American Music Awards and the "Twilight" craze. However, nothing stood out in my mind as eye-opening, educational or inspiring.

I started to fear that I had squandered my gift of 10 glorious days off, and I wondered: Had I completely wasted my entire Thanksgiving break — on television, of all things?

Apparently, I'm not the only one who's grown transfixed by the tube. A Nielsen report found that the average American who watches TV views over 151 hours every month, according to CNN.com. This new "all-time high," which measured based on the last quarter of 2008, increased from 145 hours during the last quarter of 2007.

Of course, one should remain a little wary when looking at these statistics: The 151 hours could conceivably count the hours when the TV is on in the background.

Still, 151 hours a month, about five hours per day, is a huge chunk of time. I don't think this is a figure to boast about — rather, excessive TV watching is something we should try to acknowledge and assuage in our daily lives.

CNN reported that devices like DVR and TiVo plus today's wide variety of shows have helped to increase the hours of TV viewing.

The sheer number of TVs in people's homes is also a factor of the increase. We're living in a country where there are more televisions than people per household: 2.73 versus 2.55, according to screentime.org. Only 19 percent of U.S. homes have one TV.

I don't normally live up to the American standard of five hours of TV every day, particularly when I'm at school. It's hard to justify watching sitcom repeats when textbooks and ANGEL beckon.

At the same time, I know that it will be upsetting to miss out on some parts of my TV existence, especially at this time of the year. The cheesy Christmas movies on ABC Family and Lifetime will soon abound, but without a TV, they will no longer fill my days with holiday cheer.

Through all of this, I don't mean to sound like a TV hater. I really enjoy watching TV, and I understand that it's an important facet of American culture as a means of recreation and relaxation.

For example, the 2008 American Time Use Survey Summary performed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 96 percent of Americans enjoyed daily leisure activities. Watching TV was the most practiced leisure activity — proof of the popularity of this pastime.

Giving up TV forever seems unnecessary, not to mention tremendously difficult. Every once in a while, though, it's nice to know that you're not totally dependent on something like TV. So, I'm viewing these last couple of weeks in the semester as a trial period to try to lessen my obsession.

In any case, I'll soon be home for the holidays, and my house has four TVs and five people. It's not exactly the national norm, but I think it will suffice.

Stephanie Goga is a senior majoring in journalism and is The Daily Collegian's Thursday columnist. Her e-mail address is scg5025@psu.edu.

blog lines

Between the Pipes

Ten Question Tuesday makes its return following the holiday break and brings you Icers sophomore forward Nick Seravalli. Seravalli provided a number of interesting answers, telling us about his feelings on Allen Iverson, his love for Taco Bell and an interesting choice of what school he would go to if he didn't attend Penn State.

1. Who are your three favorite bands right now?
A: Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Hank Mills.
2. Who is your favorite Penn State athlete, not on the Icers?

Read more from the **Between the Pipes** and the rest of The Daily Collegian's blogs at psu.collegian.com.