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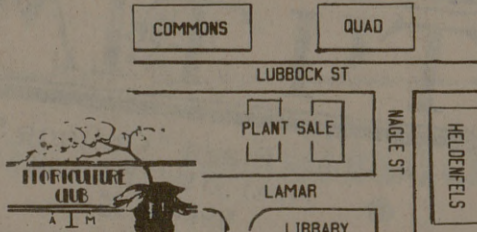
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Some people just don't buy shopping

A&M researcher finds ways to reach anti-shoppers

By Polly Bell
Reporter

Shaun Gianetti shops only three times a year — at Christmas, on his wife's birthday and on his wedding anniversary.

The 26-year-old free-lance artist from Bryan even puts off those trips until the last possible moment.

Gianetti belongs to an elite group of "anti-shoppers," who make up 15 to 25 percent of the respondents in shopping studies.

Dr. James McNeal, a Texas A&M marketing professor, is researching this atypical category of consumers. He says the numbers are significant enough to warrant retailers' attention.

Because Gianetti hates shopping, he says his wife makes all the household purchases. She even buys his shoes — the same brand he has worn for three years because he knows they'll fit.

"I'm real tight," Gianetti says. "I don't like to spend my money. I like to know I'm getting a good deal, so I

"Traditionally, women are supposed to love to shop, but as my career demands become heavier, it's the last thing I want to do. It's a burden."

— Yvonne Kosolow, independent insurance broker.

feel like I have to comparison shop, and I hate doing that."

Aggressive clerks turn off this reluctant shopper, and if they offer to assist him, he refuses.

"I don't like the feeling of a vulture wanting me to buy something," he says.

McNeal says that for some, shopping evokes feelings of suspiciousness and of being threatened. He adds that anti-shoppers often think prices are too high, ads are misleading and clerks are dishonest.

"These people just don't like to go to the store," McNeal says, "and there's no simple reason."

For others, an aversion to shopping has more to do with time and convenience.

Yvonne Kosolow, 47, an independ-

ent insurance broker, says she never shops for fun.

"Traditionally, women are supposed to love to shop, but as my career demands become heavier, it's the last thing I want to do," she says. "It's a burden."

"My business is very demanding, and I want to focus on that. It's incredibly frustrating to have to take time to buy clothes and computers."

Kosolow has anti-shopping tendencies, but unlike the anti-shoppers McNeal identifies, her reasons for not shopping are practical rather than psychological.

McNeal says anti-shoppers avoid stores and minimize shopping by asking friends or family members to pick things up for them, hiring personal shoppers, ordering goods

from catalogs or over the telephone or using convenience stores for necessities.

With a significant number of potential customers avoiding the stores, retailers may be missing out on a considerable amount of business, McNeal says. For this reason, retailers need to understand anti-shoppers, he says.

Retailers should know that anti-shoppers are not moved by credit price or advertising appeals. They do not impulse buy and personal sales efforts offend them.

Anti-shoppers also react negatively to changes in products, packaging and location of merchandise, McNeal says.

Since these shoppers often delegate their shopping to others, he suggests retailers market their products to a third party, promoting them as "sure to please."

He adds that retailers who want the anti-shopper's business should allow undamaged goods to be returned and make shopping more convenient.

Counseling program offers help with eating disorders

By Matt Diedrich
Reporter

A counseling program for victims of anorexia and bulimia has been helping to save the lives of Texas A&M students for four years.

The program, offered by A&M's Student Counseling Service, relies on group therapy to treat students with the potentially fatal eating disorders.

Cases of both eating disorders are widespread on college campuses, said Dr. Judy McConnell, a psychologist for the Student Counseling Service.

Anorexia, the less common but more dangerous of the two, is willful self-starvation in pursuit of weight loss. It usually affects teenage women and can cause extreme weight loss, heart problems and eventual death.

"(Anorexics) spend all their time concerned about their weight, watching their calories and over-exercising," McConnell said. "They are very concerned with what other people think about them and their appearance."

Bulimia, which most often affects college-age women, operates on a binge-purge cycle.

When under stress or worry, bulimics may overeat (binge), then either force themselves to vomit or use an excessive amount of laxatives (purge).

The binge-purge cycle may occur as infrequently as once every few weeks or as often as 12 times a day, McConnell said.

Bulimia often starts as a dieting shortcut, she said, but can eventually cause severe tooth decay, ulcers in the esophagus and damage to the digestive system.

Bulimia, which may affect as many as 20 percent of college women, can also cause a chemical

imbalance that can lead to heart trouble and death.

Both anorexia and bulimia are usually symptoms of other problems like depression, McConnell said.

"It's easier to focus on your weight than it is to focus on the other problems," she said. "It's easier to say, 'If I were just thinner, everything would be fine.'"

Anorexics and bulimics tend to be

"It's easier to focus on your weight . . . to say, 'If I were just thinner, everything would be fine.'"

— Dr. Judy McConnell, counseling psychologist.

overachievers and people with low self-esteem, McConnell said.

"They're always trying to please other people," she said, "so therefore, they don't express — or don't know how to express — what they want."

McConnell said society's preoccupation with appearance is partly to blame for recent increases in eating disorders cases.

"Our society focuses so much on how you appear," she said. "They've set up some pretty unrealistic standards."

McConnell said early recognition of an eating disorder is crucial.

"The sooner you get help for the problem," she said, "the easier it is to change."

The group approach used by the Student Counseling Service is the most effective way of treating anorexics and bulimics, McConnell said.

"They're around other people who are just like themselves," she said. "They don't feel so alone. They can confront each other on their

thinking patterns, and they won't let each other get away with as much."

The program consists of weekly group meetings conducted by McConnell and Dr. Virgie Nolte, also a counseling psychologist. In the course of the 90-minute meeting, group members are asked to discuss personal problems they may be having. The group then tries to determine the origins of the problems and ways of dealing with them, McConnell said.

First-time group members are not obligated to participate in discussion.

"We don't push them to say anything the first time or two," McConnell said. "It's up to them. We just try to help them feel as comfortable as possible."

The meetings also involve teaching students how to cope with stress, how to develop a positive self-concept, and how to be more assertive, she said.

Another positive aspect of the group approach is the fact that the students are able to lend each other support, McConnell said. Students can call each other, for example, if they need someone to talk to in order to avoid going on a binge.

Treatment of people with eating disorders is a long-term process, McConnell said.

"(An eating disorder) is a problem that takes a lot of time to get over," she said. "It involves changing your whole way of thinking about yourself and the world in general."

"(The program) helps people look at their problems and start to make some changes in their behavior."

The program is open to any student enrolled at A&M. Students should arrange for an initial screening interview with a counselor by calling 845-4427 or going to the Student Counseling Service's office in 300 YMCA.

Local lawyer says NBC film inaccurate

BRYAN (AP) — An NBC docu-drama about a former Bryan resident's custody fight for his daughter was a highly fictionalized movie, said Bryan attorney John Hawtrey.

"It brushed up against the truth in a couple of instances, but mostly it was just fiction," Hawtrey said.

Hawtrey criticized the movie for emphasizing the racial issue of Linda Palmore's remarriage to a black man rather than focusing on the custody suit.

The docu-drama, "A Fight for Jenny," revolved around the custody battle between Palmore and her ex-husband, Anthony Sidoti. When the two divorced in Florida in 1980, Palmore was awarded custody of their only child, Melanie.

Two years after the divorce, Sidoti tried to get custody of his daughter, saying his wife was neglecting Melanie and having relations with a number of men.

A Tampa circuit judge awarded custody of the child to Sidoti, but the Supreme Court ruled the decision invalid in April 1984.

But the Supreme Court ruled the argument invalid in April 1984, declaring, "The Constitution cannot control such precedents, but neither can it tolerate them."

Shortly after the verdict, Sidoti moved to Bryan where he worked as an air-conditioning repairman. He also had his lawyers pursue custody again.

Hawtrey said he expects Palmore to sign papers within the next month giving custody of Melanie to Sidoti, but leaving her with visitation rights.

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