

It's the holiday season and boy am I glad that I live in a society that isn't obsessed with money. If I did, all the ads for Christmas and other gift giving would be about good prices and not about good people. Fortunately for me, I don't have any money, but I have a vault full of artistic integrity. That's more valuable right?

Artistic integrity is a high-falutin term that we undiscovered artistic types think of to comfort ourselves when we ask our friend Joe for money. In an alternate universe, where baseball players don't make \$25 million a year, there's some poor fellow wondering how he's going to buy gifts with his athletic integrity.

Just the other day, I went to buy some groceries and didn't have enough money. After I explained to the clerk at the register that I never do material that I haven't written myself and never use that hack Pakistani gas station attendant voice on stage; he just bagged my things and told me that was payment enough and to have a nice day. I could have also told him about my work with indigent children but I wasn't that hungry.

I was at one of those all natural grocery stores. I guess it's just a coincidence that organic food is both healthier and way more expensive. I'm glad all the organic growers just want our kids to live a life free of pesticides and man-made fertilizer. Bullshit, clearly, is the key ingredient in all facets of the organic food boom.

I do prefer to eat organic food and I believe in alternative medicines. I just realize that a lot of times the best medicine is one cooked up in a lab by really smart researchers. Only in America would we turn down a proven antibiotic to dissolve a bunch of feel-good herbs under our tongues. Try suggesting that in Chad. Kwame, the local doctor serving an entire village racked by Cholera, will tell you to screw the herbs and send over a hard core, man made, scorched earth, biotech remedy.

To be fair, a lot of companies do donate all sorts of drugs to third world areas--strangely enough, right before their expiration date. I'm sure that when you're dying of hemorrhagic fever, it's a comfort to know that you have plenty of cough syrup and hemorrhoid sticks at your disposal before you bleed out.

Now we all know I was kidding about paying for groceries with my comedic integrity. Everybody needs money and needs the things that money can buy. If you lose everything in a fire and the people at work have a donation box for you, you'd rather look in and find a warm cable knit sweater than some "eating at the Y" jokes from the guys on the loading dock. Not that both gifts wouldn't be given with equal empathy.

And I'm sure all of you realize that the burr under my saddle about money is completely hypocritical. I'm just pissed that I don't have money and this time of year makes me really think about it. I'm not a communist. I'm just broke.

When I make it big, I promise that I'll be practical. Of course, a little---no a big---part of me wants to be the guy blowing thousands with Axle Rose in an upscale strip joint. More Christal! That way I can help other people who don't have money or artistic integrity to spend.

There's the trickle down economy in action. I tip for the lap dance that pays for the Gucci bag that's manufactured by the poorly educated textile worker, which is shipped by the fatigued and reckless trucker, and finally sold by the clerk who buys the groceries to feed her loving family. Happy holidays!