



Merry Christmas

I love Christmas. It is my favourite time of year. The city gets covered in a gentle white blanket of snow and the air seems fresher and more crisp.

I love to walk around town and weave my way through the deadlocked traffic. It is so nice to watch drivers station themselves beside parked cars for hours on end, blocking traffic to mark their spot like a dog pisses out its territory. The blaring din of horns and yelled curses tells me that Santa is coming.

I love to wander through the malls and look at the shoppers. The sight of Islanders running from bargain bin to bargain bin, their Christmas list trailing behind them like toilet paper stuck to their shoes, always fills me with a sense of peace. Their faces are locked into a grin of need and despair, their eyes dead and empty. Sometimes I close my eyes and just listen to the sweet jingles of a shop's register and the clicks of its VISA machines. Good ol' Cash Kringle.

I love to visit the music store and look for just the right Christmas CD. The choices are endless, so I have to take my time. I usually buy the music of the Saviour -- the Saviour being Elvis; and HIS Christmas is always blue. This year, the kids are buying the

hymns of some gangsta rapper named Sniffy Dog Drop-pings, who has gloriously taken time out from singing the beauty of crack and cop killing to tell us that Santa is black and he be THE MAN. How can "Silent Night" compare?

I love to walk around my neighbourhood and see the annual 'Outdoor Decoration Festival.' This is a time-honoured tradition where people compete to see who can light up their house with the most multi-coloured light bulbs. The winner gets a congratulatory phone call from the astronauts of the space shuttle when they spot their house from orbit.

Christmas is all this and more. It is the sign outside the Inn on the Hill that tells me there are only 35 shopping days left. It is the frantic rush of my friends trying to kill a tree in the name of baby Jesus. The form letters from my political representative, the processed egg nog, the blinking ornaments that beep out "Joy To The World" at three different sound levels. Who could ask for anything more?

What I love the most about this season is Christmas Eve. It is the time when I am sitting in my parent's living room, surrounded by family, with my third glass of wine slowly moving to my head.

My father is telling his latest joke while my mother is rushing around serving carrots and dip. My wife is curled up against my shoulder and my little niece is on my knee chattering to 'Unca Peter.' For one very brief moment, time freezes; and I gradually look around the room, seeing the faces of everyone I love. It is at that point that a feeling of incredible peace comes over me and I can't help but say to myself "This is... right." One needs to look no further to see what Christmas is really about.

Merry Christmas, everyone.

Editorial

Why I do not like Christmas....

The snow is coming down in those big flakes that young and old alike enjoy catching on their tongues. The air is frosty but not bitter. A green tree stands in the corner adorned with ribbons, lights, and delicate glass balls. Christmas carols spread through the house like the smell of turkey roasting in the oven. Loved ones gather around and listen to stories of Christmas before Nintendo. Parcels of green, gold, red and silver adorned with ribbons and bows burst from under the branches of the tree ready to spill their contents. Ah, Christmas. Bah Hum Bug!

No, I do not like Christmas very much. Why? It is too commercialized, too...overdone. I have not always had this attitude, in fact I used to love Christmas - the gifts, the lights, all the gaudy decorations. I grew up. There is no such thing as Santa. My family never calls me by my first name around the holidays, they call me the Grinch, or Scrooge they know their merry carolling disgusts me.

Perhaps if Christmas was celebrated in a more meaningful way I would enjoy it more. My ideal Christmas would be getting together with my family, enjoying a big meal, spending the evening playing board games and cards. Just like Thanksgiving. I could do without all the trimmings that stores push on us--make us think we need in order to have a Happy Holiday. Do you really need a six foot Santa on your front lawn to enjoy this time of year? I

didn't think so. Or this obligatory need for people to spend hundreds of dollars on gifts in order to prove to friends and family how much we love them? Again--no.

Christmas should be a time of just enjoying life, no bells no whistles just quality time. Celebrate the birth of Christ if you are a Christian, but I do not remember Mary and Joseph breaking out into a rendition of "Jingle Bell Rock", or showering each other with gifts from Sears. Last week my professor brought in Dr. Seuss's "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", it was supposed to be a lesson in poetry, (how rhyming poetry is not always bad), for me it turned into a beautiful way to think about Christmas. The Grinch finally gets the whole meaning of Christmas in the end of the show. I can not remember the exact words, but it goes something like... "[Christmas] it came without boxes and ribbon and tags". The Grinch realized, like the Who's from Whoville that you do not need fancy gifts and decorations to enjoy Christmas.

It is time that people learned to enjoy the holidays not for the gifts and packages they bring, but for the people who bring them.

Remember, Christmas is a time for giving not receiving. Why not give a toy to the Children's Wish Foundation or become an angel at the Upper Room this year? Your loved ones will appreciate your kindness, your generosity and your presence.

Reminder:
**Submissions for
 the first issue of
 1997 must be in
 no later than
 Thursday,
 January 9, 1997
 at 5:00 pm.
 Please make
 sure you sign all
 of your
 submissions.**