

editorial

'Tis the season. . . .



Christmas time. The time of the year when we turn from the serious task of trying to survive our current profession as students to a carefree group of people going home to join family and friends and celebrate what we wish, each in our own way. Each year it is different but is the same.

There seem to be two sides to Christmas, the one we all enjoy and look forward to and the one which everyone conveniently forgets about. Christmas seems to start about mid-November these days. There isn't any snow on the ground yet but every store speaker tells you that chesnuts are roasting on an open fire and that Santa Claus is comin' to town. At first you think to yourself, "Christmas!?, Now?!" And then you realize that yes that seemingly far off time is slowly approaching. Like the scene from an old Pink Panther cartoon showing a street corner Santa with a sign beside the collecting bowl saying "364

days until christmas" it shows how long and drawn out the fiscal Christmas season is.

Santa Claus comes to town, complete with red suit and white flowing beard, visiting the stores and malls of the town. That's great but wouldn't it be nice if Santa didn't visit them all at once? A child can believe that Santa is magic but not that omnipresent. And if Santa is magic how come in many places it costs money to see him? Many children find out early that Santa Claus isn't. They are convinced that Santa Claus doesn't exist and stay disillusioned until much later in their life.

And then the christmas sale onslaught begins. Buy your child a Julie feed and wet dolly. Johnnie down the street got a miniature build by number nuclear reactor model - that really works. Amaze your friends, soon they'll want one too!! All of this is communicated on Saturday mornings over the television to children while

unsuspecting adults sleep. Granted, it wouldn't be so terrible if these children (we were once children too -remember?) didn't believe this, but they swallow it. Do you realize that these 'interesting' items are not just limited to children. There is more sexie lingerie sold at Christmas than at any other time of the year? And that shortly after Christmas there are more embarassed housewives returning these items?

*"Relatives sparing no expense,
to buy you some useless utensil,
or a matching pen and pencil,
just what I always wanted.
How nice
Tom Lehrer*

For most of us Christmas is not possible in the middle of the never-ending sets of mid-terms, followed by our 24 hour study week followed by...the finals. Then, as quickly as exams loomed; they're gone and you're on your way home. Home, time

to spend walking downtown through the park with all the decorations and lights on the trees and happy faces. Partying with family and friends. Catching up on the lives of all the people who you've missed while busy at other items.

You realize that what you are experiencing is the least communicable but most shared emotion of all. And so you take your families collection of children to see Santa, enjoy the canned elevator music in the stores and streets, go buy that Christmas tree which gets more expensive every year and you swore not to buy again last year. You shock your system yet again with another fantastic meal courtesy of Mum. You drink a little(!) too much, go skating and have snow fights. Be a child, after all Christmas is for children. Christmas Eve you hang stockings on the fireplace and climb the stairs, just like all the other years. But it'll never be the same, it'll always be better.