

Fa La La Blah Blah

BY STACEY WILLICK

What's that I hear muffled in the distance? Could it be...? Is it? But of course, it could be none other.

Yes, even from within my academic cocoon of assignments, papers, and exams, I can make out the faint strains of angel choirs, the steady rum-pa-pum-pum of drums, and the merry jingling of sleigh bells. Christmas is coming, and it's making no secret about it.

So, let us sally forth into the shopping malls, armed with credit cards and chequebooks. Let us go bearing a brave countenance, prepared to meet the barrage of other panicking last minute shoppers who are hungry for bargains and discounts. Don't hesitate to wrestle with that guy in the music store who grabs the last CD on the shelf! Elbow that little boy out of the way if he reaches for the Nintendo game you want! It's all in the spirit of Christmas anyway, right?

Okay, you argue, Christmas is about giving gifts of appreciation and friendship, about spending time with family. Is this not a noble purpose itself? Sure. So why the candy canes and Christmas trees, stockings, ribbons, tinsel,

bows and toys? Why the often meaningless gifts we bestow upon one another? Tradition? Perhaps we ought to change our traditions.

Many of the trivial holiday customs that we mindlessly continue were, in fact, initiated by commercial enterprises. As we are

grimaced by their local church. In fact, the majority of people who fully participate in the Christmas traditions will not remotely consider attending religious services — many are not even Christians.

Christmas has become a secular holiday. This is not a problem for the masses. However, one must question the validity of a holiday which has become so commercial that children bawl in department stores if they are denied the items on their wish lists, and adults take their places in the queue at the banking machine as though it is distributing food rations. The extent to which we indulge in consumerism today is a far cry from the original gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, or even a simple demonstration of friendship.

So, as I emerge from my cocoon and see the world once again metamorphosed into icicles and snow (hey, wasn't it just autumn?), and as I am once again assailed with cheery Christmas carols and jovial greetings of "Merry Christmas!" at every turn, I will try to remember why I made the 27 hour train trek home for the holidays: simply to relax and spend time in the company of my family and closest friends.



bombarded since infancy with Santa Claus propaganda distributed by his puckish little elves, the great corporate marketers, it is often difficult to remember the reasons we do celebrate Christmas.

Obviously, most people do not celebrate Christmas solely to rejoice in the birth of our Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ (hallelujah!), and probably only the most "devout" will make their annual pil-

Ashley, like me, off the honour roll

BY ALAN LEBLANC

Maclean's will be launching its new Honour Roll next year commemorating some of our more distinguished and upstanding Canadians. One potential honoree was deleted from this list: Ashley MacIsaac, who is neither upstanding nor very distinguished. There's something left to be said for, pardon the pun, fiddlin' around.

MacIsaac, known for his seditious behaviour, was interviewed in a rather seedy New York club about three weeks ago. He discussed his interview with the *Advocate*, a Los Angeles-based gay magazine. Ashley mentioned several of his sexual preferences, including urinating on his partner and "drawing energy from people and [being] like a vampire."

He also claimed he has a sixteen-year-old boyfriend. This I found a little disturbing, because it implies immaturity and a lust for domination. Believe me, if he were dating a sixteen-year-old girl and making these statements, I would tear into him just the same. It's possible the two aren't having sex, but I just checked my birth certifi-

cate and it turns out I wasn't born yesterday.

None of this matters, because whether MacIsaac likes it or not, he has become a role model for gay youths. In this day of AIDS and a multitude of other sexual diseases, he should be encouraging monogamy and a bit of restraint. Mind you, the straight people could use this, too. What floored me was this boorish statement: "I actually consider myself quite straight. And I want to go out and sleep with a lot of girls and have all kinds of kids. I always have." Ladies, doesn't it make your heart flutter?

What Maclean's didn't realize is that its infamous article didn't have to be published. Appearing as more of an apology letter than an explanation, they succumbed to what MacIsaac wanted. Not only did he get all of his ridiculous quotes published, he gets to declare himself an unfortunate victim of the homophobic Maclean's. The magazine held to its philosophy of public accountability by not honouring an unhonorable male. That is male, because Ashley is not a man by any stretch. And that's no fiddling tune I'm playing.



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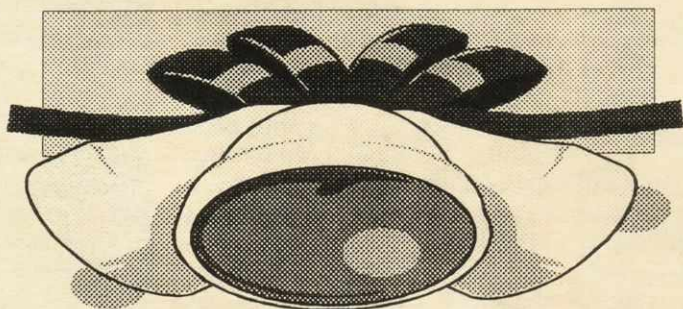
I'm looking forward to hear from you!

Pastor John Babson
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