

ED/OP

Sucking all the fun out of X-mas

No good balls?

To the editor:

I find it very difficult to follow the bunkum argued by Gayle Heinrich in "The Power of Genitals." The irony of her response is laughable if it were not meant to be honest. Excusing the primitive language please allow me to cite Heinrich "...an individual who wields most of his power by virtue of his genitals... The victim is innocent. One who is innocent suffers at the power and force of another; a powerful and forceful Other... In order for our society to be free of bias and prejudice it is necessary that those who wield power relinquish it." Or in other words, again excusing my language, but this time echoing the political satirist Orwell, "two balls bad; no balls good." To relinquish power to the "good" is to make your hate love, your war peace and your slavery freedom. Rather than determining a persons worth by what disadvantaged group they belong to and dividing us into antagonistic groups who never know whether we've failed or succeeded because of what sex we are, let us live together as people. Rather than pontificating in vile language remember that it is only the learned who care to learn, the ignorant who prefer to teach, or in many cases preach. How about living in a world where love is love, peace is peace and freedom is freedom?

P.E. James

As a youngster, there was no question about the fact that Christmas was the best time of the year; helping decorate the tree weeks before; watching the presents gradually increase underneath; drinking egg nog on Christmas eve; waking up on that wondrous day to find the cookies and milk gone, believing that Santa had actually, somehow, gotten down the chimney and refreshed himself while delivering his quota of presents. Ignorance truly was bliss.

When I got older, however, the Santa myth was nullified, and as I had no ties to the Christian faith, I began to question what and why I was celebrating. This year a non-Christian friend of mine asked what Christmas meant to me and why I considered that day to be a special event. Unfortunately, the only answer I could muster was, "Tradition. Because I've always celebrated it." This of course led to a philosophical debate with the outcome for me being "Why do I celebrate the supposed birth of Christ?"

The more I pondered, the more it became apparent that I

have no reason, and am a hypocrite to celebrate this day. As the days to Christmas became fewer, the more contempt I felt for this government-regulated holiday.

As usual, I was bombarded with advertising for things I should buy, and I began to wonder why this religion is so economy-oriented on its supposedly most holy of days. The paraphernalia surrounding the Christmas "spirit" made me cringe: bows, ribbons, cards, wrapping paper, tags, tape, coloured light-bulbs etc. (I don't think that Jesus intended for garbage to be a by-product of his existence.)

Then the "plastic factor" struck me. While walking through my neighbourhood, I could not believe the overwhelming majority of houses that had the exact same plastic candle ornament in the window. Some houses had upwards of six of these beauties, strategically placed in every window of the house.

Add to this the three-foot high, plastic Noel candles outside of some of these houses, plastic Santas on rooftops, plastic wreaths, plastic snowmen singing carols, and a complete plastic nativity scene illuminated like a Las Vegas casino, and

one gets the impression that no spirituality remains in this once religious celebration. I got the impression that neighbours were trying to outdo each other via their plastic ornaments, each one making the statement that "I am proving my

religious beliefs!" I must assume though that, like me, many of these people do not go to church and probably do not believe either. So why do they celebrate the birth of Christ? Tradition.

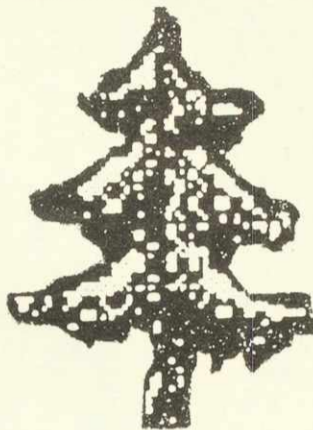
Having visited some friends during the school break, I was next appalled by the fact that my generation is propagating this consumerist tradition without ever questioning their own motives. I saw Christmas trees and mistletoe and

holly (some real, some plastic) and presents and all the aforementioned disposable paraphernalia, and I felt like running away and sitting on top of a mountain, free from all the gimmicks and commercialism.

The final straw for me this holiday season was that I found out two very interesting tidbits of information. Firstly, that the use of trees covered in ornaments originated as a pagan tradition, and, secondly, that our present day version of Santa Claus, that jolly fat elf in red, was an invention of the Coca-Cola company sixty years ago. What this says to me is that Christians have usurped a tradition from heathens (whom they despised and condemned), and that their Christmas representative has the spiritual equivalent of the Pillsbury dough boy.

I have learned much this past Christmas by merely opening my eyes and being receptive and critical to what I have seen. Next year I plan to celebrate a non-traditional holiday which has a real meaning to me. Like my dog's birthday.

Steve Mills



GRAPHIC: JANET LARKMAN

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