

VIEWPOINT

Christmas burdened with commercialism

BEVERLY SHEPARD
Special Projects Editor

Well, it all begins right before Thanksgiving when city workers in every American town, big or small, spend an entire day streaming long chains of red and green lights from one end of main street to the other and raising wreaths to the heights of telephone poles. All of this is followed by a pre-mature Christmas parade.

Next, the department stores make their contributions by adding to their background music soft lyrics of "Silver Bells" and "White Christmas" and by hiking up their prices on home appliances, stereo component sets and everything in general. They may tell you its a sale but by already having the item overpriced, a mark-down means that they are still making a profit.

But that's just the beginning of the Holiday season. As a last minute shopper, you've begun making your Christmas list only about five days before Christmas. Needless to say, the shopping center or mall by this time is just suicide. At the jewelry counter in Belks, you see this little old lady trying to examine this necklace in the same showcase you're standing in front of. You take your time, thinking about your own item, taking for granted that she will wait her turn. Much to your surprise, however, comes this little knob-by elbow out of nowhere as this "innocent little old lady" just knocks you right out of the way.

In addition, all the sales clerks have agreed to wear something red or green. You facetiously eye the overweight one working in the pantyhose department, who is wearing the red popcorn sweater, the green pleated skirt, the green shoes and has a Santa Claus ornament pinned to her blouse. To top it all off she has on those clasp-on Christmas tree earrings, to complete her "Khris Kringle incognito" disguise.

The main attraction in every large department store, however, is Jolly Ole Saint Nick himself. To find him, merely look for the mile-long line of screaming kids accompanied by their exhausted mothers.

The most appealing area in the store around Christmas time is the toy section. About 50 kids, different ones each day, encircle five rows of toy-lined shelves, oohing and awing with their tongues hanging out and their eyes wide and sparkling over what the manufacturers have concocted through which to rip their parents off once again this year.

But the worst is yet to come as you frantically search for the Baby Wet and Care and the Stretch Armstrong that your niece and nephew requested from Santa Claus. Baby Wet and Care, now let's see . . . is that the one that grows two inches? No. Well, then there's the one that cries "mama" and the one that can crawl. Oh darn! Why can't she just settle for a disco

Barbie right here on the second shelf. But then there's the Barbie with the growing hair — the blond, the brunette and the chocolate-coated one — the Malibu Barbie, Barbie grows up and Barbie goes camping.

The whole thing becomes too complicated so as you turn around in disgust, you happen to be facing Stretch Armstrong, a hideous hunk of green man. There's always one busted package, so you decide to take it out to see how well he stretches. Darn thing is so hard to pull — now what is a six-year old to do with that, you ask yourself disgustingly. Turning the package over, you stop short! gasp! as you notice that \$12.99 price sticker.

Anyway, the well-known adage is not to stand in the toy area too long as it is an unofficial danger zone, especially on Saturdays when you are liable to get chunked on the head with a football by a miniature Roger Starbuck or pierced through the head with a rubber-tipped arrow, courtesy of the local cub scout troop testing out the archery equipment.

As you leave the store, Christmas trees line the sidewalk. You chunk out \$25 for one, and get home with it to discover one of the limbs broken and that no matter which way you turn it — to the window or the wall — there's always that big naked spot where you can't hang any ornaments that you didn't notice before you bought it.

So after a long day, you kick off your shoes, turn on the television, and plop down in a chair to relax. As the picture comes into view, what's the first thing you see — Donny and Marie jamming to "Santa Claus is coming to Town," and let's not forget, a Julie Andrews Christmas with the Muppets. The night before, you sat through "Rudolph-the-Red-Nosed Reindeer" for the 17th time since your childhood and sighed as once again, the "Grinch" succeeded in stealing Christmas.

All of this is well and good and at the risk of sounding like a "Mr. Scrooge," I offer a much more important message about Christmas. Don't forget that it is meaningful time, that there is much more to it than a new coat or that diamond necklace from your boyfriend (that's probably cut glass anyway).

Take a moment to realize and then to relish the joys of Christmas — the laughter, the family and the friends, the good times and most importantly, the Holy Savior. Somewhere, somebody's Christmas may be filled with sadness instead of happiness, tears instead of laughter. Take a moment to realize a much more simplistic Christmas spirit that lies within true loving, sharing and caring for other people. So, away from the hassle, the hustle, the crowds, the football games, the parties, in the quiet of your own thoughts somewhere, take a moment to understand what it's all about, to be thankful for your blessings, to make someone smile, take a moment . . . to pray.



NEWS FOCUS:

DTH does it again

JAMES ALEXANDER JR.
Co-Editor

Once again, the campus newspaper, The Daily Tar Heel has found it fitting to get the goat of UNC's black student population with inadequate journalistic judgment and poor coverage of black campus affairs.

To start things off, North Carolina Nazi party leader Harold Covington was portrayed in a three-page spread in the Tar Heel Weekender section recently, complete with several colorful, yet racially-derogatory graphics depicting blacks as "coons," "watermelon lovers," "big-lipped earringed jungle roamers" amid striking displays of the words "Nigger beware" and a genuine "Boat ticket to Africa."

When approached about the situation, DTH editors who made the decision to print such "garbage" rationalized that the choice of the highly-offensive material was to "show how insane these people (Nazis) really are."

However, from reading the story, and from using prior knowledge of what the American Nazi party is all about, such a conclusion could easily be made, without the "aid" of blatant uncensored graphics.

The article and the graphic display that made the Weekender has cast two reflections on the DTH staff and its decision-making.

First, it has opened the door for speculation that not only are Harold Covington and crew insane . . .

Secondly, it reflects the editorial ability of some members of the DTH staff and it exhibits the editorial censorship that is absent in DTH reporting.

Honestly, any good newspaper with an understanding of its readers and with a basic knowledge of journalism ethics would not have gone to such great lengths to "show the world how insane Harold Covington and the Nazis are."

In addition, DTH coverage of black events on campus has severely lacked in quality and quantity, as evidenced by the recent coronation ball photo showing fraternity members "stepping" at the formal affair in tee shirts and jeans.

Such coverage insulted many black students who now feel that black news is treated all alike at DTH, whether its a chittlin' strut, a step show or a formal affair.

One picture fits everything . . .

BLACK INK

The essence of freedom . . .
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