

Opinion

An editorial Enjoy your season without the stress

It's the most wonderful time of the year," or so we're told. Maybe a more appropriate theme would be, "It's the most psychotic time of the year."

Countless piles of holiday music albums, lights, decorations, department-store sales, advertisements, etc., these have all become annual events, dare we say, traditions that seem to sneak in sooner and sooner every year. And whether we realize it or not, the majority of things associated with the holidays encourage us to do one thing, spend money.

Any local business would be happy to report the dramatic increase in sales during the holiday season. According to Anne D'Innocenzio of *The Associated Press*, sales for the two days following Thanksgiving were up 5.4 percent from last year, totaling \$12.4 billion. That's a lot of shopping, folks.

Buying gifts for loved ones is something that's not suggested but rather expected in today's material world. Yet adhering to that "rule" doesn't seem to be the problem. In fact, people feel good about using what they earn to consider others during the holidays, as they should. It is the giving, unselfish acts that make the season so cherished.

But this attitude known as the "holiday spirit," is, alas, dying. Time constraints on nationwide sales such as "Black Friday" (the day after Thanksgiving) drive your average shopper into a hip-checking, elbow-throwing, money-saving carnivore. Black Friday has evolved from what used to be a great way to save a buck to what is now a feared day of inevitable chaos. What used to be a social or fun event has turned to legitimate issues such as road rage, increased stress, and domestic violence. In recent years, including this one, innocent shoppers have been trampled when store employees opened their doors.

The sad part is, John Q. Businessman couldn't care less about the stressful, unnecessarily tragic holidays as long as the cash flow hits goal. Instead of solutions to the lucid downward spiral, the marketing masterminds come up with mores ways to attract shopping with fewer ways to do it affordably.

With the modern, money-driven holiday season comes only one solution to the problems it creates. Deal with what's within control, and try to forget about what's not. You can't control the fact that radio stations play 24-hour holiday music beginning the day after Halloween. You can't control the outrageous prices of the must-have Christmas tree. You can't control the cars that stop in the middle of the road to stare at the thousands of dollars worth of decorations plastered on your neighbor's house. The singular toy coveted by every child in the world, including yours, traffic jams, mall madness ... all out of reach.

What you can do is try your best. Relieve your stress by whatever means possible, shop online or with a friend to make the experience fun. Get your picture with Santa. Eat a candy cane. Remember what you're celebrating this year and what you're thankful for, because nothing is more important than that.

People Poll

Staff writer Stacie Mann asked:

What was the worst holiday gift you ever received?



A candy dish with no candy.



I got a rocking chair from my grandmother once.



My grandmother gave me this headband with antennas sticking up. They were sparkly Christmas trees.



I got one of those abnormally over-sized pencils from my brother.



I got a gigantic yellow sweater-dress when I was 12. It had matching boots to go with it.

Chris Kast
Freshman

Danielle Milnes
Sophomore

Lauren Bolduc
Junior

Jack Tsai
Junior

Taryn Chance
Freshman

The 'talent' of Paris Hilton ended when she received her inheritance

With the money that she inherited from her great-grandfather, Paris Hilton is trying everything to stay in the spotlight. She isn't finding it hard, considering the sex tape that ended up on the Internet, or her new reality TV show, "A Simple Life."

This show is how Hilton and her best friend, Nicole Ritchie, daughter of pop icon Lionel Ritchie, leave their homes in Los Angeles to live and work on a farm in Altos, Ark.

Work? Do rich girls really know the meaning of the word? Apparently not. The girls are only running around in their expensive outfits trying to fit in. And the chores that they are required to do don't require much effort, but to Hilton and Ritchie, well, let's just say they take the expression of being blonde to a whole new level.

Fox chose to have Hilton be the main character only because, apparently, she's everywhere, like all of Hollywood's biggest events. Truth is, until her little video sex scandal popped up, I had no idea who she was.

She isn't a very good actress, and shouldn't be paid attention to. By her stuck-up, snobby personality you would think she's a queen. If she was even half-decent, Hollywood would have spotted her long ago, and everyone would have already known who this rich ditz is.

You're not necessarily famous because you're wealthy. People work hard for their money, and, well, Hilton and Ritchie are only guilty of inheriting money. So, girls, that doesn't make you special; it only makes you spoiled.

The show was produced only because the girls are rich, and they think that everyone is interested in the lives of the rich and famous. The reality is, both girls came into the show with extra baggage, and that is what Americans are interested in. People like hearing the gossip of how rich people screw up. For example, Ritchie was caught trying to drive with a sus-

ended license, and allegedly had drugs in her possession when she was pulled over. And I don't need to remind you of Hilton's amateur adventure video.

These girls manipulated the entertainment industry and invited themselves into the regular American home, all because they have money. Regardless of their inability to sing, act or be athletic, they are inviting themselves into American lives whether they are interested in them or not. This they can do because of all the cash they accumulated ... oops, I mean inherited.

Since when did they have such control over the media? And why are they competing for ratings with people who work really hard for the money? Hilton and Ritchie may be rich, but that doesn't mean they get the opportunity to flout it like a peacock's tailfeathers.

The only thing these girls are doing is providing comic relief through their attempt to fit in and act like the normal American. I will admit they are funny, because I have never seen anyone act so stupid. The sad thing is, they aren't acting, what you see is what they are.

If you've seen any of the episodes, you already know that the girls aren't learning anything about labor. They take naps, sunbathe and lounge around while everyone else works. And they sounded surprised when

their boss fired them. I guess they forgot they actually had to do something other than get naked in front of this TV crew.

What, this isn't the luxurious vacation they were expecting? Did someone forget to remind them that work isn't ringing a bell for the butler? Oh, I forgot to mention, they could break a nail.

Hilton appears clueless that people are laughing at her. She is acting like she made a huge accomplishment by having a show all about herself, but truth is, she isn't worth the 22 minutes of fame. Soon it will all disappear, and no one will think twice about this apparent star.



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