

POLITICS AS USUAL: Bah Humbug!

By Alison Collins-Mrakas

This week will be a bit of a rant. Yes, a slightly hypocritical rant, but a justified rant nonetheless.

I am, of course, talking about the holiday creep. And by ?holiday?, I mean Christmas (and yes, it is Christmas, not ?holiday? season. There are indeed other holidays of importance occurring at around the same time but they are not the source of the ever growing tacky, shiny, fat guy in a red suit extravaganza of advertisements. That belongs to Christmas. So, Merry Christmas.)

Let's get the hypocrisy out of the way right from the start: I love Christmas. I love the decorations, the carols, the cheesy movies (come on, who doesn't love White Christmas? Or the Griswolds?), the cookies, and of course the many celebrations big and small with family and friends. I love it all.

I even love the special coffee that is available only at this time of the year: Spiced Egg Nog from Second Cup. The lovely staff at York University's Second Cup special order boxes of it just for me. I picked up my first box last week and have been enjoying my Spiced Egg Nog coffee for six days now. I could drink this coffee all year long if it was available. So, in my defence, it has nothing to do with Christmas ? it just so happens that that's the only time spiced egg nog coffee is available.

I can't wait to put up the decorations and plan out how I will decorate the outside and the inside of my house weeks in advance (apparently, I have nothing better to do with my time). So, while I am eager to get all Christmassy, the point is I DO wait to put it all up. Yes, I am restrained by the fact that a real Christmas tree will be a gigantic fire hazard if I kept it up for months on end.

Unlike Costco, I don't put up Christmas decorations in August. Why? Because it is ridiculous to do so, and, a wee bit offensive truth be told. It devalues a holiday that is, ultimately, at its core, a religious celebration.

Yes, Christmas has become incredibly commercialized. It's been that way for quite some time. I get it. Retailers depend on Christmas for over 25% of their sales. Indeed, selling Christmas is vital to the retail economy but, my goodness, can we hang onto whatever shred of the real meaning of the day that is left and hold off covering every spare surface in tinsel until at least after Remembrance Day?

Remember Remembrance Day?

The one day we mark in remembrance of those who gave their lives in service to our country so that we can live our lives in freedom? Can we give our veterans that much? One day?

The Hudson's Bay Company flagship store on Queen Street already has their famous Christmas window displays up. They had them up this weekend, fully two months in advance of Christmas. I used to look forward to seeing those windows. I have since I was a kid.

But now? Not so much. Putting them up so far in advance dulls their shine, if you ask me. And that kind of defeats their purpose. Bah humbug indeed.

Until next week, stay involved, stay informed because this is ? after all ? Our Town.