

## "The whole truth and nothing but the ..."

By Jade Wolfe

"Truth is often uncomfortable. It is only comfortable for those who do not wish to ignore it." (Conversations with God, Book 3 by Donald Walsch).

Truthfulness is considered a primary color in our palette of acceptable human behaviors. Children hear all about the importance of truth. "Never lie ... tell the truth ... the whole truth and nothing but the ..." The phrases go on and on in an endless litany. Yet, truthfully, we accept in theory what we seldom honor in practice. As usual, I am including myself in the "we" and "our" of this reflection. Understandably, perspective can determine which type of truth is spoken.

Law is an interesting field in which "truth" depends largely on wording and the timing of such wording. After a few years working alongside the law, sometimes with it and in spite of it, truth manifested itself as a very fluid, fleeting tool of the trade. As more than one lawyer will admit, law has less to do with justice and more to do with the proper arrangement of words in determining a legal outcome.

What about religion, the realm of "received" truth? PLEASE, let's not go there or half the people reading this will stop. For a lot of us, religion is not a very entertaining read, is it? Yet, during this month of May, it is a religious holiday I wish to consider.

May is a perfect time. It is void of the media, retail and institutional barrages as Christmas time nears. Without all the hype, it is easier for me to contemplate the "Christmas" truths. You might find a similar effect. Years ago (and I so hate using that phrase, but ...) years ago, we weren't bombarded by sale flyers, commercials, signs or sounds of Christmas until late November. How old am I, you wonder. Keep wondering. My point, however obscure, is this: of all the holidays, the Christmas season provokes some of the most radical shifts in our truths and "truth practices." Not being a world traveler, I am left with this country's populace to observe.

Sadly, it is only during a brief pre-holiday time that truth of conscience is acceptable in practice. During the yuletide season, not trying to nose ahead of everyone else in a long store line or in traffic is admirable. At any other time you're "not being assertive enough." Take note this month while standing in line or sitting in traffic. If you are too amicable, people will not necessarily appreciate it. Keep it up and someone may invite you to wear a rather confining white jacket as you ride to a "special" destination.

Another unique "noel time" shift in our truth perspective is the feeling of charity towards others less fortunate. As Christmas fades this attitude dissolves into, "Those welfare people are just taking advan-

tage of the good, hard working folk."

Last but hardly least, is the miraculous truth shifting within our own homes. More specifically, for many adults it is the extended family gatherings taking on an often-unpleasant surrealism. Endless routines are born out of these tortured exercises. People who ordinarily hate the sight of one another hug and smile, offering gifts and support to one another. Children capitalize on this phenomenon, grabbing packages, forbidden candies and later bedtimes.

As a child, I remember (through the dusty cobwebs of memory) how bizarre it all seemed to me. I would watch my parents act lovingly with family members they could not stand during any other time of the year. Inevitably those "other-part-of-the-year truths" towards one another seeped through during the festivities. By the end of New Year's Day multiple emotional wounds had been received and inflicted. It would take another whole year before anybody could muster their other set of "truths" to again spend the holidays together.

So today, as I sit in the splendor of springtime, minus yuletide hype, the truths yet to emerge for the remainder of 2001 are forming a mobile in my mind's eye. Realizing the tremendous benefits of proactive choices, is it possible for us to rise a notch above last

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year's truth shifts? I would feel better if we could eliminate pretending for at least one holiday this year.

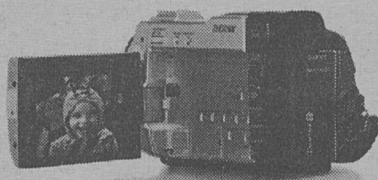
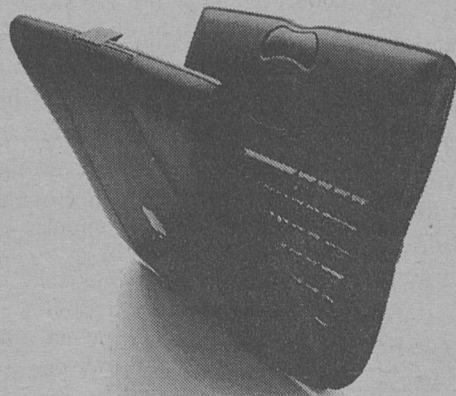
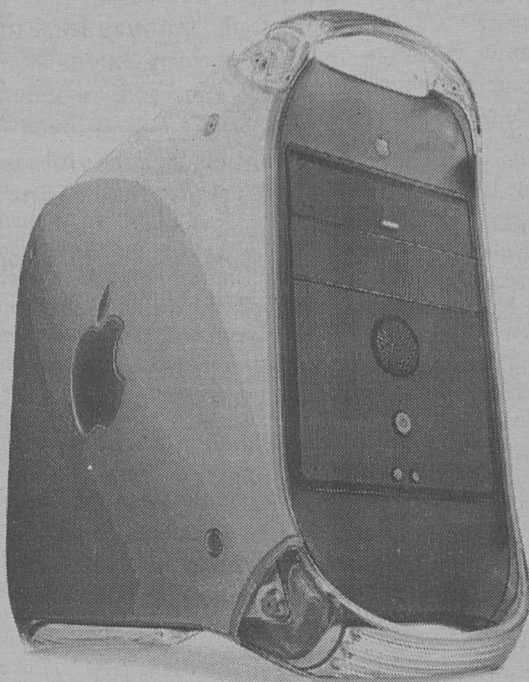
Obviously there is a formidable Christmas industry that would never be diminished should we cease pretense. It seems unfair to put on a mantle of togetherness and caring for "fellow human beings," when at any other time, those who promote these ideals are called "saps," "push-overs," "fools" and "do-gooders" at best. While I wouldn't want to deprive all of the businesses and professionals whose living depends on discord, maybe Christmas could be the one exception to pretense this year.

This proposition is quite radical, and yet it could prove to be an illuminating practice. As I seem to recall, the being

whose birth is so significant at Christmas celebrations was executed because he had the audacity to speak unpopular truths. As of late, his unpopular truths and many others are accepted in theory, just not encouraged in practice.

As usual, feel free to disagree with any or all of this, it is only my perspective. It probably comes from too many optimistic moments. As a "closet" musician, I am accustomed to holding obscure views. It may be wiser to keep such truths to myself. Truthfully, I don't even agree with me that often.

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