

## **Christmas in October: How Early is Too Early?**

- Rebecca Twaalfhoven

You often hear complaints about radio stations making the switch to Christmas music “too early.” Let’s face it, playing “Jingle Bell Rock” on Halloween, as a radio station did in Milwaukee, may be overkill. But at what point does it become acceptable?

As a student, Christmas break is perhaps the most exciting prospect of the first half of the year, and a cause for major excitement. Two weeks without school is an intoxicating idea, and helps to remedy some of the monotony of the school week, not to mention the thrill of shopping for presents and, in my case, the joy of the entire family returning home.

So why is it objectionable that we look forward to the holidays a little early? There are several different possibilities. First, that in looking forward to Christmas and holiday break, we forget to appreciate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is, of course, a national holiday dedicated to being thankful; and now, it becomes a “stepping stone” to Christmas, leaving behind the tradition of the day.

Another possibility is that for some, the wait is simply unbearable. I personally find that the countdown to Christmas is a good way to break the repetition in the weeks leading up to vacation. However, anticipating the holidays six weeks in advance could make the time in between seem like an eternity.

This year, Thanksgiving was very late, which lessens the anticipation. All the same, thinking about Christmas while preparing for another three weeks of school is agonizing.

Alternatively, maybe it is simply the thought of Christmas time – presents, vacation planning, and family – that is cause for worry. For some, all of the hype about the holidays triggers apprehension for the likely stresses of celebration, and being reminded weeks beforehand only adds to the pressure. In general, however, I think there is an acceptable limit on when it is appropriate to break out the holiday sales and themed music, the boundaries of which are pushed more every year.