



Christmas: The Sacred to Santa

Tara Moore

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Black Friday. The War on Christmas. *Miracle on 34th Street* and *Elf*. From shopping malls and Fox News to movie theaters, Christmas no longer solely celebrates to the birth of Christ. Considering the holiday in its global context, *Christmas* journeys from its historical origins to its modern incarnation as a global commercial event, stopping along the way to look at the controversies and traditions of the celebratory day.

Delving into the long story of this unifying but also divisive holiday, Tara Moore describes the evolution of Christmas and the deep traditions that bind a culture to its version of it. She probes the debates that have long accompanied the season—from questions of the actual date of Christ's birth to frictions between the sacred and the secular—and discusses the characters associated with the holiday's celebration, including Saint Nicholas, the Magi, Scrooge, and Krampus. She also explores how customs such as Christmas trees, feasting, and gift giving first emerged and became central facets of the holiday, while also examining how Christmas has been portrayed in culture—from the literary works of Charles Dickens to the yearly bout of holiday films, television specials, traditional carols, and modern tracks. Ultimately, Moore reveals, Christmas's longevity has depended on its ability to evolve. Packed with illustrations, *Christmas* is a fascinating look at the holiday we only think we know.

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