

Speaker 1

0:07

The University of Detroit Mercy presents another brand new episode of Ask The professor. Today's program was recorded using zoom video conferencing technology.

2

Speaker 2

0:25

The university tower chimes ring in another session of Ask The professor, the show in which you match wits with the University of Detroit Mercy professors in her session questions and answers. And let me introduce to you our panel for today. To my whatever direction, it's Professor Beth Oljar.

0:43

Hey, good to be here.

2

Speaker 2

0:45

Glad to have you here Beth. We've made it, sort of, to the end of dead week,

I have a big text group that I'm part of, I believe Professor Lindsay is a part of that today, and one of the professors asked. Hey, is that dangling Monday thing does that still happen like, yes. Yes it does.

3

Speaker 3

1:06

I know my, my friend, Audrey who teaches at St. Joe's in Philadelphia. She, She texted me and she's like, Are y'all done. I'm done. No, I said well we have this weird dangling Monday thing. So I'll be done Monday she's like, well that's kind of strange I'm like yeah well

Speaker 2

1:23

I actually laughed out loud Beth, because further on down the chat, a certain person who is also part of that chat who is a dean chimed in, "Don't forget that exams start Tuesday". I thought, thanks for the reminder, thanks for the safety point, you know. Oh my gosh, so funny.

Speaker 3

1:44

I wouldn't mind it If we could have the grades be due on Tuesday, that would be better.

Speaker 2

1:51

The fact that we have finals on Saturday and then grades are due by lunchtime Monday, it's a little ludicrous it's a little bit ludicrous. Professor Jim Tubbs is also here you see he's wearing his tiny, tiny bishop's mitre.

2:07

If I move up, it will look like that little crown there was made for Queen Victoria, you know,

3

Speaker 3

2:12

You look like Peter Cook in Princess Bride, so I keep expecting you to say "Marriage"

2:19

That why I said he should lead a wedding ceremony.

4

Speaker 4

2:21

We're really messing up our listeners by talking about all these visual things.

2

Speaker 2

2:26

We are, but you know, I'm pretty good going from Professor Jason Roche, that we are always going to be capturing video going forward.

Oh dear Lord,

And we can start throwing these up on our YouTube channel, so stay tuned we'll be able to see your -

2:42

You mean, we'll have to be decently clothed during our taping?

2:44

from the waist up.

2:47

But I've forgotten where my pants are.

2:50

What are pants?

2:52

It's been a long quarantine.

2:54

Don't even think about doing a tuban.

2

Speaker 2

2:58

Now, Professor Mara Livezey, you actually blocked your face when I said that we were going to start recording video.

5

Speaker 5

3:03

I Did. I put my face on today. You don't want to see me other days when I don't.

2

Speaker 2

3:07

Okay, that's good, that's good. If you show up wearing a Halloween mask, we'll get the vibe, we'll still hear your voice. Everything will be fine. You know, so, but iPads are just the right size to block a human head so

5

Speaker 5

3:18

while you've given me a great idea. I think I'll need to purchase a handful of masks and just surprise you each week.

That would be great. That'd be no different than what Professor Dave Chow does with his picture which I'm sure he's gonna click into like right now, right,

Hold on hold on I'm trying to find George Lazenby right about now.

Oh, there we go. Oh.

6

Speaker 6

3:38

There's little Ralphie

He wants to put George Lazenby up so that the image of me on a tight rope juggling chainsaws will stop distracting. People on, on the radio, you can't see that at home though on the podcast.

3:49

Oh Jeffe, just wait till you see the photo I've chosen

4

Speaker 4

3:50

Dave, why don't you do Diana Rigg in her Game of Thrones outfit

2

Speaker 2

3:58

Well, we've got Professor Jeffe Boats here with us and all of his, I don't know, end-of-year finery, maybe

Speaker 6

4:05

I'm just looking forward to the George Lazenby be pic that Dave is going to put up for me. I hope it's pre beard, not post beard.

Right.

4:13

Yeah, definitely

yes and yes

all right

4:17

Double 0 3.14159, that's me

pretty much

3

Speaker 3

4:21

You see, that's the thing. math is an artificial language right so i think Jeffe is just doing this kind of like meta "I am my discipline" type thing by being the voice of mathematics.

4:34

Oh that's Way too deep.

6

Speaker 6

4:36

I will allow people to mistakenly think any brilliant thing about me they want.

Now it would be great.

Yeah, you're runnin Plato's heaven for heaven's sakes.

2

Speaker 2

4:45

Professor Dave Chow is joining us of course today, aka. Ralphie.

Pleasure to be here. As always,

I can't see that image Dave without thinking, I mean I don't know what it is, but I've read and listened to Gene Shepard so many times when he's speaking of the different flavors of soaps as if they were fine wines, I just like this is a beautiful, beautiful humor, just beautiful.

I love that movie. It's so wonderful,

4

Speaker 4

5:11

you wonder what kind of soap would have been needed to clean the teeth of the evil Scott,

5:18

not a lava.

7

Speaker 7

5:20

And at the end of the movie, that line where he says, he's explaining to his parents what happened, he said he was the life buoy

5:29

paralyzed him for life.

5:32

Like if had been Palmolive, he wouldn't be this crippled, blind person.

Speaker 2

5:36

Professor Dan Maggio is also joining us today. What's going on, Dan.

8

5:41

Oh, not much. End of a long week. Now you've made me want to watch your Christmas story but I, I will wait until the 24th

5:51

Oh, it will run 24 seven there for a while.

5:53

I watch it as much as I can.

2

Speaker 2

5:56

See you later Joe. My son Joe is going to work,

Hold it, where's he working now?

Yeah he picked up a job at the Hollywood Market in Royal Oak, So, He will be packing up your groceries for you. He became the Mio family member who is gonna be, no joke, basically the first or second in line for the vaccine, because essential workers get first hit, so that was weird, but that's the way it's gonna be.

6:24

Send in the red shirts.



6:29

So Dan, are we gonna go up there and order like a gallon of headlight fluid.

Yeah, I gotta go, I'll harass him. Is it the one on Main Street. I'll come visit him.

I actually think of you pretty much every time we pass there Dan, because your apartment was so close.

You remember that. I used to live right next door to that. It was a great apartment, great building.

Professor Stephen Manning is also here with us today. Good to see you, Stephen

Good afternoon.

Excellent. Something about naps when we were doing our little pre-show chatter.

6:58

Yeah, naps. Naps are good.

7:03

Stephen, It sounds like you're still in one,

7:05

I am taking one, as we speak.

7

Speaker 7

7:07

Somebody mentioned Bishop with Jim's background. I have to recommend the Queen's Gambit.

4

Speaker 4

7:14

I've heard, that's been recommended several times to me Yes,

It's a very good show. We're at the end of I think it's uh - the first season is seven shows. I think we've got the last one tonight.

7:26

I started watching it last night

7:28

Yeah, I think when I wake up, I'm gonna take up chess again

2

Speaker 2

7:32

Or give it up all together right.

Perfect. The data, according to an NPR story I heard right before the Thanksgiving holiday says there will not be enough chess sets for Amazon to deliver to keep up with the demand for Christmas this year because of that series.

Wow,

Good.

Well, it tells you how many people have Netflix too. Doesn't it.

3

Speaker 3

7:56

So how old was everybody when they learned how to play chess.

Oh, that's a good question.

12.

Sixth grade, 12.

8:02

Well, for me, I think it comes with the territory, so I mean, gotta learn those intellectual things

8:09

being Canadian?

Yeah. No, I hung around the geeks in middle school, so I think I was about 12, 14, give or take, thereabouts. I was the A/V nerd.

you must have been a charming little geek

It could have been worse

I was about five or six I think.

my dad taught me. You were five, Jeffe?

I can't remember, very young yeah. they had this educator chess set, where on the backs of the pieces that told you how they move. Ever see that, for little kids. It's called educator chess set. It's really cool.

Wow.

It's a good idea.

2

Speaker 2

8:44

I'll tell you what folks this is a program where you can send us questions regarding anything it's been a while since we've had a good set for chess, you stump the panel you win a prize. You can send us the questions in a number of ways - you can email us at ATP at UDMercy dot edu, find us on Facebook and Instagram or ask your favorite smart speaker to play ask the professor at University of Detroit mercy. We have a set of questions here, sent by longtime question sender although, it's been a while, Mr. Frank Burroughs and family from Valencia California, "Dear Matt and panel: I know this academic year has probably been one of the oddest in a long time. I hope is the holidays are upon us, we can still be thankful for all that we have. I know our family has been extremely grateful to you, your show and the entertainment it gives us in return. Here is our submission, or donation if you will of 20 questions for your Christmas or holiday themed show we wish you all the best and the warmest of greetings, Frank Burroughs and the Burroughs family PS. We're still compiling a new list of ATP favorites I'm sure the panel has picked up on the fact that we actually ran the entire table on a multi page document the Burroughs family sent us. So, for this special show throughout these questions, I'd like to know what each professor's favorite portrayal of Santa has been over the years, so something to chew on while we do a few Christmas questions here. A few we've had before, but it's always good to think about them just like our taxes, once a year. If you add up all of the birds from every additional repetitive verse in the 12 Days of Christmas, how many birds are you going to get?

Dan, Jeffe, save our bacon.

Math people, do your thing.

10:36

I'll help with the numbers, but I don't know the lyrics.

5

Speaker 5

10:39

So there's Four calling birds, Three French hens, two turtle doves And a partridge in a pear tree.

10:45

Are those the only birds?

10:46

Those are the only birds. Actually, no

5

Speaker 5

10:51

Seven Swans a Swimming

Why are there's so many birds?

so 764321

And a partridge in a pear tree.

6

Speaker 6

11:01

And for each of those numbers, you have to multiply it by the number of times it's been repeated v

By the number of versus

11:06

Which is that number subtracted from 13.

11:11

That's right.

This is why I went to art school.

So, 11, 20, 27,

Dan. Dan,

11:22

while Dan is doing the calculation, I will point out that if my wife Leslie were here, she would say that the translation is actually from, if you will, pagan roots. And when we are talking about golden rings, they were actually referring to golden ring necked pheasants, so those are supposed to be birds too, although that doesn't count here. So you were getting birds for the first like solid week you're getting birds. Birds bird, birds,

You had a small aviary

4

Speaker 4

I read somewhere an interpretation that they were all Christian symbols, and some of them were really outlandish. I mean really outlandish

I'm waiting for Dan to cast his lot here.

12:03

I think Jeffe said 151

I'll go 174

174?

What does Dan get.

All right, so just take the average,

12:14

I said 150.

So according to this calculation, it's 184; so I mean you're both very very close barking distance there.

Got it.

You know the way that because of Professor Hill, the way I do the error bars I mean within 10 we're pretty solid,

One's a Siamese chicken. Don't worry about it. It's a two headed chicken. You know, it counts twice.

I didn't listen to Jeffe's advice

or a Russian royal Eagle with two heads.

Alright, I see my mistake. Alright, very good.

Speaker 2

12:50

Dancorrected the calculation. What pre existing manufacturing equipment was used to make the very first artificial Christmas tree. Now you could probably figure this out practically if you just think a little bit

aluminum foil.

Yeah, you're thinking plastic although it's good to think about it that way.

13:10

Oh scrub brushes.

2

Speaker 2

13:12

Yeah, they weren't toilet scrub brushes Yeah.

Ah. Hopefully they didn't mix up the batches.

I was thinking more like bottle brushes, you know, because that's what those trees used to look like.

You know bottle brushes would have been, you know, I feel like Alex Trebek, God rest him, you know. that's acceptable, that's acceptable. So who provided the voice of Kris Kringle in the original animated feature the Rankin Bass made called Santa Claus is coming to town,

Mickey Rooney

It was Mickey Rooney. That's right. Good old Mickey Rooney, there are some pretty serious anniversaries coming up for those Rankin Bass specials Dave, we're going into the 40s and the 50s as a number of years since release. It's pretty incredible.

Actually what's amazing is I think the gentleman that designed all of them, I think he's still around.

Oh wow.

He was one of the original Mad Magazine guys but he's one of those guys that he fell off the face of the earth. Last I heard I think he moved to like, I think he did the Diane Manica thing moved to Arizona and just became kind of a recluse.

Wow, wow,

Well, I wouldn't call Diane a recluse.

4

Speaker 4

14:22

She says hello, by the way. I talked to her just the other day, she told me she sent some questions.

2

Speaker 2

14:27

She sent some questions, and we'll be doing those in an upcoming show, for sure.

Johnny Mattress questions?

No, not Danny Johnny Mathis.

Oh, I was studying up on that.



You're listening to a special edition of Ask The professor, in which each of the eight professors participating in this recording session we're connecting to each other from different locations, thanks to zoom video conferencing technology. We're grateful to those listeners who submitted questions for today's show, and we welcome your questions at ATP @ ud mercy.edu. Now, let's return to our host Matt Mio, with more questions for the panel.

2

Speaker 2

15:04

We've got questions from Frank Burroughs and family from Valencia California, which singing duo released their first Christmas album, which was entitled Christmas portrait. on the 13th of October 1978, the carpenters,

yeah it was the carpenters, a beloved Christmas album. And what better time to release it

I love that Christmas album. I could listen to her sing any time anyway.

They had some great Christmas specials. Yeah, I'll listen to her sing anytime

Regardless of what you think about the actual content of the songs, her voice is pretty incomparable

That woman could read a shopping list and I would listen to it.

Yeah.

So this is pretty funny. It was just about that time, late 70s, the Billboard Top 100 started keeping track of the best selling Christmas albums and the most played Christmas songs. I ask you what was the best selling Christmas album of 1980,

the carpenters again.

It was not

Oh, Charlie Brown.

16:09

No, that's a that's a very good guess Stephen but we're probably going back to the late 60s when it comes to Peanuts.

Too, a little too early for Do They Know It's Christmas.

How shall I put this. It's a intersection of Christmas and a very very famous sci fi franchise.

Star Wars,

It was the Star Wars Christmas album.

I never heard of it.

I don't know what to say --

it couldn't have been very good

That Christmas special was legendary

Yeah this was during their disco era, wasn't it?

Speaker 8

16:51

Can I just say that I googled Star Wars Holiday and the first YouTube result is "the most disturbing moments of the Star Wars Holiday Special." That's not a really good way to lead.

4

Speaker 4

17:02

At least it wasn't grandma got run over by the reindeer,

You don't like that song.

2

Speaker 2

17:08

I'll tell you what, let's move a little bit over to something like this. What is the majority ethnic group on Christmas Island. 21%

Now, Christmas Island is what Pacific or Indian Ocean? I'm trying remember.

17:25

it's north of Easter Island, isn't it?

Like maybe Samoan then.

No, that's not what it says here,

Is it a South American country?

Hawaiian?

It's not Hawaiian, No.

What's the religious denomination? isn't that what -

17:38

No, they're asking for the ethnic group.

I'm sorry Mara, What did you say,

Oh, I was just clarifying that it was an ethnicity.

Ethnicity, I'll give you the rest of the rundown and maybe we can piece it together backwards so 21% is number one. Number two is Australian then Malay than English, then Irish then 41% are basically listed as other; but what is the major, the number one?

18:03

New Zealand,

or like Filipinos or,

Tanzanian

Pacific Islander,

yeah. That's generic Yeah.

It says that they're Chinese. 21% of the residents of Christmas Island.

I got the wrong address.

You could live out in the ocean,

you just strayed north.

18:28

We just swam all the way here.

Yeah, floated.

Ooh, that's a cold swim

We have another question here: In America, Children are traditionally encouraged to leave Santa Claus a plate of cookies and milk, but something different is left in Britain and Australia by tradition, what's that?

a Vegemite sandwich.

18:52

I'm gonna go and say, You're not that far off because it ain't cookies and milk I can tell you that.

Oh, like blood pudding

18:58

mince pie?

It is a mince pie Yes,

Ooh, tasty

19:03

It's like suet.

Man!

it says here, with one of those tiny little glasses of sherry no joke.

Of course, he's got to be very very distinguished.

2

Speaker 2

19:18

Oh, that's awesome. Okay, what is the profession of the fictional character Christmas Jones, all these James Bond fans.

Jeffe: (unintelligible)

19:31

What was that Jeffe?

19:32

he's a nuclear physicist.

Yes, he's a nuclear physicist, yeah that's Denise Richards, in "The World Is not enough"

yeah not one of the more stellar performances, no.

I wonder why you say that.

Actually, there are a lot of less than stellar performance.

Oh my gosh. Hilarious. What Christmas movie features the children who had the names Lynnae, Jeff, Kate, Peter, Megan, Kevin, and Buzz.

I was gonna say "the Ask The Professor show"

It's home alone. It's the McAllister children.

Yes,

Kevin was the giveaway.

Absolutely.

I gotta say that has a special place in my heart. I've mentioned before that that's in my top five movies of all time and, yeah. Fantastic.

20:19

I've never seen any of those movies,

What?

I would recommend it.

20:22

oh you should watch the first one

The first one.

The First two. you need the follow up.

20:30

I just – No, I just cannot figure out how anybody could get on a plane to Paris without counting their children.

20:36

Yeah,

I thought that they did a really good job of covering it up Jim.

20:40

They did do a good job of covering it up, but still, I just can't imagine that you wouldn't check and recheck

It seems pretty basic. Yeah.

20:52

This is a good trivia question and I'm gonna go out and say I've been helping with this show for about 20 years now, and I don't know if we've ever seen this, this one's gonna make you scratch your head a little bit. Three Tim Burton movies were set around Christmas time. What are they?

Edward Scissorhands.

Yes,

Nightmare Before Christmas.

Absolutely. and

21:14

oh Batman,

Batman Returns Yes. Very good. Very, very good. That's a good question. I'm a Tim Burton fan so you know, that's shocking to all of you,

21:27

such a merry sort, too

21:32

cheerful.

What 1944 musical had Judy Garland singing "Have yourself a merry little Christmas"

Meet me in St. Louis.

Meet me in St. Louis. That's right. I just realized the other day somehow it came across my brain that the  
- Very nice. Thanks Emmett. But what's the other one "we need a little Christmas right now" is actually  
also from a Broadway show.

Mame.

22:01

Yes. You know, I think "Have yourself a merry little Christmas" with Judy Garland singing it has probably  
got to be the saddest Christmas song to listen to.

Yeah, It's pretty sad.

22:11

It is Judy Garland, of course,

And then of course, Ertha Kitt singing Santa Baby is certainly the dirtiest

22:18

The most provocative, how's about that.

In 2003 there was a TV special called A Carol Christmas, who played the ghost of Christmas Past in this  
2003 TV special?

Tim Conway.

That's a good guess and you're in the wheelhouse but

Harvey Korman, Lyle Wagner.

No,

Vicki Lawrence,

very famous for being a child actor on an 80s sitcom.

Oh, Gary Coleman

22:45

Yeah, Gary Coleman,

2

Speaker 2

22:49

just you know interesting choices. I mean we've all seen Scrooge with Bill Murray with

Yeah, and I don't know if you guys remember a couple weeks ago, wasn't Gary Coleman like was the president of planet Earth on Buck Rogers or something like that? How did he get those roles.

23:05

I haven't seen Scrooged either.

23:08

Oh my gosh! Beth, You've got a lot of catching up to do.

23:11

I have some educating to do this Christmas obviously. It's a good thing we'll have a four-week break.

23:17

Hey, five week break.

23:21

I think Beth's more the type that when you think Christmas movie, she first thinks Die Hard.

23:28

You haven't seen my Die Hard Christmas tree topper.



23:31

Yes, I have. Remember?

Dave has, because I texted it to him. It's of John McClane jumping out of the top of the Nakatomi Plaza.

I love it

Nice

I love it.

23:40

I have a silly Angel. I wish I had Bruce Willis.

23:46

Have you folks seen the Christmas ornament for that? somebody took like a piece of like extruded aluminum made like a box and then put in that picture of like Bruce Willis climbing along and that's like now a Christmas ornament for sale.

Sure yeah that makes perfect sense.

That movie I mean is really long though

It is

longer than I remember it being when I started on Christmas Eve, Drew and I were like sleeping halfway through it I'm like well,

24:09

Alan Rickman is just so evil.

24:11

Oh yeah. I love him.

6

Speaker 6

24:16

You need to design a Christmas ornament of him falling backwards from the top of the tree. And then when it gets to the bottom a little escalator takes it back up and then he falls over and over again.

That would be brilliant

24:27

Sisyphean if you will. Hey, this is a really good one that I don't know if I've heard before too, because I'm considering if you've ever seen the movie, by the way. Oh no, another one Beth, sorry. There's a recent movie from about two years ago that Chronicles how Charles Dickens was under the gun to deliver A Christmas Carol and literally wrote it, not overnight but in just a few days considering how wonderful it is as a piece of literature and as a story. There was a US president, that used Jacob Marley's line "humanity is my business", when it came time to talk about business in America. Which President was that?

FDR?

No, but I was thinking three other letters Beth and then you've got it.

LBJ?

One more time.

JFK,

It was JFK. Yeah, but you know you had them prioritized in your mind we covered all the bases,

I had them bookended.

You were closing in on 'em.

25:21

I just can't get over, you know we do that thing every once in a while. In English, in general, where we like pick the Shakespearean bits that end up in our everyday speech and there's a lot of stuff that comes out.

Yes, there are a lot.

I love Dickens I'm sort of a Slappy when it comes to stuff like that. So, I'll lead us off for Favorite portrayals of Santa so we can finish up our show here. I can't help but tell the story. Fall of 1993, and of course it's October and we're going to see the Nightmare Before Christmas and all my friends and I really enjoyed it. and as we're getting back in the car after seeing the movie, my one buddy Dan goes, "so I'm not the only one who thought Santa was a real jerk in this movie." I'm like yeah I don't think I've seen Santa as a jerk in a long time, but he kind of was a jerk. Favorite portrayals of Santa, professors,

26:13

like in movies or,

26:14

Yeah, anyway you can

Miracle on 42nd Street,

26:18

sure

yeah that would have been my vote,

What, Edmund Gwynn?

26:22

Yeah. That was a great one

Wasn't it 34<sup>th</sup> Street? But Yeah, I know what you mean.

34<sup>th</sup> Street, yeah.

Yeah, my kids were riveted to that one. I don't know if it was because it was such a good movie or because they'd never seen black and white before. They were like "Is this real. Did they not have color back then?"

26:40

it seemed more real, that's all

26:43

I'm gonna go for Tim Allen in the Santa Clause.

26:47

That's a great movie. I'm not quite sure about all those follow up sequels, but the first one has a lot of charm to it.

26:53

Yes, all the rest are trash.

What, you mean Billy Bob Thornton's Santa Claus?

My favorite is the one in Christmas story when he, I can't get that, uh -

27:07

Oh yeah, "Ho, ho, ho. You'll shoot your eye out kid"

All of that from Ralphie's perspective,

And the boot pushing him down the slide -

I don't suppose anybody here is a fan of "Santa Claus versus the Martians" right.

27:23

Oh, of course, big john call Yeah absolutely. I mean, I know it from the Mystery Science Theater riff on it but I've still watched the movie.

The Grinch with Max.

Yeah, of course.

Now, here's an obscure Oh What about the Three Stooges as Santa Claus.

Oh my gosh,

Delivering presents. Okay, I'm the only geek that remembers that when I'm so sorry.

Dan, I don't think we've heard from you yet.

27:50

I can't think of very many examples, so I'm going to go with Miracle on 34th Street.

I gues we get off a little bit here on Santa and the time has come to say goodbye. Beth.

Goodbye,

Jim.

Goodbye,

Mara. Goodbye,

Dave. See you,

Jeffe

have a very Brady Christmas everybody.

Dan.

Merry Christmas,

and Stephen.

Bye.

Now these words -

you can email ask the professor at [atp@mercy.edu](mailto:atp@mercy.edu) or visit the Ask the professor Facebook page,

Ask the professor is transcribed in the Department of Communication Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Education at the University of Detroit Mercy's McNichols campus, we're produced and directed by Michael Jayson and Brian Maisonville, and our executive producer is Professor Jason Roche. Till next time, I'm your host Matt Mio.