

Christmas tat

Published: January 13, 2026, 6:30 am

I was, as is my habit, working in a coffee shop yesterday afternoon, editing videos to a background of the pop songs that now seem to be an inevitable part of Christmas. Whilst, by and large, I ignore the background noise when working in this way, these songs permeated my consciousness and left me with an uncomfortable feeling.

Might it be the case that most younger people now think that Christmas began in 1973? John Lennon, Mud, Roy Wood, Greg Lake and others all turned out Christmas hits around that time that must have guaranteed their financial well-being ever since so often have they been played. The only one I heard that appeared to be substantially more recent was Bill Nighy's version of 'Christmas is All Around', and that is from 'Love Actually', which is now well over twenty years old. All the rest appear to have been recorded when I was either a teenager or a very young man.

How was it, I wondered, that this very sugary period in pop history, for which I had remarkably little affection at the time, has come to define the whole Christmas period? Isn't it time that we learned to move on?

I am not suggesting that we need another load of new, sugary Christmas pop songs. I think Mariah Carey tried that, and as far as I can recall, she did not feature during my visit. I am simply suggesting that there must be better ways to celebrate Christmas, if we think it's important, than by listening to all that old tat all over again.

I went home to listen to some Rutter.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdWOF7u624U&si=KAbcDtceaBqu_k31