

Yankee Steve's Almanac  
for the week of December 2, 2008

The following is part of the <http://www.snopes.com/politics/soapbox/confessions.asp> transcript of the commentary "Confessions of the Holidays" written by Ben Stein and presented on December 18, 2005 on CBS television's "Sunday Morning" with Charles Osgood.

Here at this happy time of year, a few confessions from my beating heart. I have no freaking clue who Nick and Jessica are. [Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson] . . .

**Next confession:**

I am a Jew, and every single one of my ancestors was Jewish. And it does not bother me even a little bit when people call those beautiful lit-up, bejeweled trees Christmas trees.

I don't feel threatened. I don't feel discriminated against. That's what they are - Christmas trees. It doesn't bother me a bit when people say, 'Merry Christmas' to me. I don't think they are slighting me or getting ready to put me in a ghetto. In fact, I kind of like it. It shows that we are all brothers and sisters celebrating this happy time of year.

It doesn't bother me at all that there is a manger scene on display at a key intersection near my beach house in Malibu.

If people want a crèche, it is fine. A menorah a few hundred yards away is fine, too. I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution and I don't like it being shoved down my throat. Or maybe I can put it another way. Where did the idea come from that we should worship Nick and Jessica and aren't allowed to worship God as we understand Him? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where Nick and Jessica came from and where the America we knew went to.

Stein bio in brief: Lawyer by training, presidential speechwriter, author of novels, non-fiction and editorials. Perhaps most recognizable for his monotone bit part in the 1986 movie *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. Host of 1997-2002 tv's Comedy Central's "Win Ben Stein's Money." In 2008, the force behind the documentary *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* comparing the instruction of evolution and intelligent design.