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# Millencholy

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By R. D. Rosen

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**A**n acute rapid-onset condition characterized by pervasive sadness, feelings of commemorative inadequacy and a morbid preoccupation with the passage of time. (This last fixation may lead sufferers to blurt out, "Doesn't it seem like only yesterday that the Peace of Utrecht was signed?" or "I can remember the invention of the fork as if it were just last Thursday.") Often accompanied by an in-

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tense desire to relive the last thousand years all over again, but without the plagues, pointless wars or telemarketing.

Millencholy is generally thought to be caused by important historic occasions, such as turn-of-the-century jubilees, that involve a lot of tire sales but few other established rituals. Often, the demand for invented festivity combines with the somewhat arbitrary nature of the event to result in severe expectational violations.

In highly socialized patients, there may be signs of a full-blown P.C.C. (post-conviviality crisis), in which the sufferers have no idea whether they have derived sufficient enjoyment from vigorous merrymaking.

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## Depression, ennui and tire sales.

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Such patients may well try to self-treat their anxieties with leftover glogg or by reviewing videotapes of the century's 100 greatest punt returns.

Look for pronounced self-recrimination on the part of the sufferer for having rejected a trip to a warmer climate because of ungrounded Y2K fears and stayed home instead for a marathon Big Boggle tournament with spouse.

Insidiously, this sensation — that one has badly mismanaged the millennial celebration itself — often leads to a deepening conviction that the patient failed to accomplish one single thing in the entire last millennium. In particular, victims may ruminate endlessly over failure to invest in Internet stock, exfoliate on a regular basis or finish Don DeLillo's "Underworld."

Fortunately, most feelings of celebratory ineptitude can be expected to subside in the first 100 years of the new millennium. However, if not aggressively treated, other symptoms of millencholy — especially phobias relating to round-the-clock television coverage of any kind — may persist for centuries. □