



## Season of Goodwill Threatened by "Till Rage"

November 20, 2003

**November 20, 2003:** A leading stress expert has warned of "till rage" and high blood pressure this Christmas following a study into the effects of High Street shopping.

Consultant Psychologist Dr Aric Sigman was commissioned to conduct an experiment on behalf of online retailer Amazon.co.uk. He took two volunteers--one male, one female--tasked with buying Christmas presents for family and friends and monitored the physiological and psychological effect of shopping on London's Oxford Street. Dr Sigman then measured the same factors for the volunteers as they shopped for the same items on Amazon.co.uk. **High Street shopping: as much fun as rowing with your partner**

Among the physiological and psychological effects measured were: heart rate, blood pressure, number of collisions with other pedestrians, time necessary to complete the shopping trip, the weight of bag--even the ability to control violent impulses. The results showed:

- Everyone knows a bustling High Street can fray the nerves, but the experiment showed pressure levels on the High Street were almost as bad as those experienced while arguing with a partner--and higher than the frustration of being stuck in a traffic jam!
- While we might outwardly appear patient in queues, inwardly heart rates are increasing by over 10 per cent--in particular when forced to wait in line to see a sales assistant
- The sight of a long wait at the ladies loo made the female subject's heart race--raising it by 10 per cent--but the man also panicked with his heart rate (bpm) rising by eight per cent
- In addition, inconsiderate queue-jumpers caused a heart rate increase of 16 per cent in the male and 12 per cent in the female volunteer

### Under pressure

- Shopping online caused small increases in blood pressure in both the male and female volunteer, while blood pressure rose dramatically on the High Street
- Female blood pressure increased the most when shopping on the High Street--increasing by 13.3 per cent by the end of the day compared to a 9.7 per cent increase for the male volunteer
- "The longer the pavement walked and the heavier shopping bags got (towards the end up to a shoulder tensing 8 kg worth of gifts) the more blood pressure climbed--at times reaching high levels of 136/97 in the female subject

### Black and blue

- "Dr Sigman's High Street analysis showed a high bruise potential with a Bump per Minute rate of 1.9. That's 114 collisions every hour... Jonny Wilkinson experiences less knocks in an entire international rugby game. (This study was conducted at the very start of the Christmas shopping season--imagine the bump rate come December!)
- Just one bump can result in an immediate 17 per cent rise in heart rate

### "Till Rage"

- An aggression quotient was calculated by subjecting the case studies to psychometric testing, asking them to rate their emotions from 1-10 in terms of violent impulses
- By the end of the shop, the female showed a greater increase in feelings of aggression, which is somewhat surprising as women are generally perceived to enjoy shopping much more than men
- The male was moderately aggressive from the start and became increasingly more so throughout the day

### Stress-free on Cyber Street

- Shopping online merits a steady--and healthy--average 67 bpm and 126/80 blood pressure reading with no affect on our aggression quotient
- "The process took just 35 minutes compared to a harrowing 4 hours 20 minutes on the High Street to perform the same task--plus the subjects showed no stress indicators while online

Dr Aric Sigman who conducted the study commented:

- The modern High Street will be the scene of tantrums this year as the sheer stress of the modern shopping experience leads to people finding their own violent impulses difficult to control. The High Street shoppers showed signs of classic "fight or flight" survival responses--although there seemed to be more desire for fight as opposed to flight.
- Women feel the pressure the most as ordinarily they're responsible for making sure Christmas happens without a glitch and will make more considered purchases.
- Men generally have a much more laid-back approach to gift shopping--they have more of a "grab, pay and hope she likes it" attitude! It's only when they're faced with waiting for their girlfriend outside the ladies toilet for a while that you see the biggest leap in stress levels!"

Robin Terrell, Amazon.co.uk's Managing Director commented:

- Amazon.co.uk is aiming to offer a quick, simple and stress-free shopping experience this Christmas. With great features such as 1-Click® ordering, personalised recommendations, a giftwrapping service and free delivery on qualifying orders over £25--alongside amazing offers on a huge selection of items--there's never been a better time to shop at Amazon.co.uk.

For further information please contact the Amazon.co.uk press office on 020 8636 9280.

#### **About Amazon.co.uk**

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As used herein, "Amazon.com," "we," "our" and similar terms include Amazon.com, Inc., and its subsidiaries, unless the context indicates otherwise.

#### **Forward-looking Statement**

This announcement contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Actual results may differ significantly from management's expectations. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties that include, among others, risks related to potential future losses, significant amount of indebtedness, competition, management of growth, potential fluctuations in operating results, fulfillment center optimization, seasonality, commercial agreements, acquisitions, and strategic transactions, foreign exchange rates, system interruption, international expansion, consumer trends, inventory, limited operating history, government regulation and taxation, fraud, and new business areas. More information about factors that potentially could affect Amazon.com's financial results is included in Amazon.com's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003, and all subsequent filings.