

December, 2009

Dear family, friends, colleagues, and strangers who've intercepted this communiqué:

We hope this letter finds you happy, healthy, and enjoying a restful and restorative holiday season with loved ones. As I've promised in years past, I will continue to use that opening line until someone forcibly stops me. This year's holiday letter features **less content than ever** but, at the same time, **distracting colors** and a **confusing watermark!**

Long-time readers will recall that at this time last year, Ayelet was pregnant with the child-to-be that we were tentatively calling **Blasty**. The due date was officially February 22, and we calculated the actual due date to be 5-6 days later. To our great surprise, Blasty arrived on **January 31!** Not to worry, he was in excellent health, just eager to get started on...well, I don't know, I guess his life. Despite what was, frankly, an alarming degree of support for actually naming him Blasty, we chose **Maximilian Meron Ruscio** instead. Even with Ayelet's maiden name in the middle and John's unusual surname, we didn't think it would be sufficiently **challenging to spell** without a first name of 10 letters of more. We hope that Max will be able to write his full name before filling out college applications.

Ayelet passed her licensing examinations and is now a professional psychologist. John continues his work license-free. OK, I hear you already—enough about the adults, tell us more about Max...

- Max was born with **more hair** than his dad has left. See the next page to admire Max's **stunningly attractive hair**.
- Max is, at present, nearly **20 lbs** and **some number of inches** tall. Sorry for the ambiguity, but at present he's also **sleeping**, and I'm on a deadline down here, so I don't have an exact measurement for you.
- Max has **never consumed formula**. We're not fanatics about this, I'll say only that if you or anyone you know was not exclusively breast-fed, **mental and physical defects** are inevitable. Don't blame me, I'm only the messenger.
- Max is developing well, and so far his milestones include sitting up, **babbling**, crawling, standing, cruising, sprouting teeth, saying "**Da-da!**", running a 4 minute mile, and playing the cello (chamber music only, no solos). This holiday letter writer has been rather **sleep deprived** for much of the year, so I may be confusing reality and **dreamlike visions** in some instances. But no matter what others will tell you, I hear Max say "Da-da!" all the time.

In case you haven't done your **holiday shopping**, I recommend a book. Actually, I recommend **a specific book**—that's even more helpful, isn't it?—co-authored by yours truly. "**50 Great Myths of Popular Psychology**" will be racing toward the top of the **best-seller list** once you purchase copies for everyone you truly love. Seriously, look this one up on Amazon (or the APS web site, www.psychologicalscience.org), it's pretty good. OK, OK, back to Max...

Attentive readers will have noticed that you received this letter either electronically (by **email**) or in hard copy (delivered by **carrier pigeons**). If you're not sure which format you received, check very carefully to see whether you're holding a piece of paper. The **electronic version** is in full (and distracting) color at www.tcnj.edu/~ruscio/holidays.html, along with the past few letters. (If we do not have your email address and you trust us not to **steal your identity**, please send it to us.) While you're online, you can access all of the photos on the next page at www.tcnj.edu/~ruscio/max.html. For those who still aren't satisfied, either **seek professional help** (Ayelet is now licensed) or view our complete set of Max pics on Google (instructions appear at the bottom of this message in **tiny print** to see if you're **up to the challenge**).

We hope that you and your loved ones have a joyful holiday season and a wonderful new year.

Wishing you all the very...yeah, yeah, yeah, **just give us the instructions on how to get to Max's pictures!**

Go to www.google.com; sign in as email = max.ruscio@yahoo.com, password = m01m31r09; under the "more" heading at the top of the screen, choose "Photos"; choose the "Favorites" tab; this brings you to an unattractive listing, so click on any week's pics and then, at right side of screen, click on "John and Ayelet Ruscio" to view all of the weekly albums in an attractive format

Ayelet & John, 204 Aspen Rd., Yardley, PA 19067

Ayelet: 267-229-7858, ruscio@psych.upenn.edu John: 267-229-7857, ruscio@tcnj.edu

MAXIMILIAN MERON RUSCIO

A Picture for Each Week, 2009



January 31, 2009.
Max is born at 5 lbs 12.8 oz, and promptly cited for indecent exposure. Fittingly, Max slept in his inmate-style pajamas in week #2.



December 11, 2009.
In week (and picture) #45, Max celebrates his first Hannukah. Go ahead, count the pictures, you know you want to see if I missed a week...

