

NEWS STAFF
(541) 346-5511

PARKER HOWELL
EDITOR IN CHIEF
SHADRA BEESLEY
MANAGING EDITOR
MEGHANN M. CUNIFF
JARED PABEN
NEWS EDITORS
EVA SYLWESTER
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER
KELLY BROWN
KATY GAGNON
CHRISTOPHER HAGAN
BRITNI MCCLENAHAN
NICHOLAS WILBUR
NEWS REPORTERS
JOE BAILEY
EMILY SMITH
PART-TIME NEWS REPORTERS
SHAWN MILLER
SPORTS EDITOR
SCOTT J. ADAMS
LIKE ANDREWS
JEFFREY DRANSFELDT
SPORTS REPORTERS
AMY LIGHTY
PULSE EDITOR
TREVOR DAVIS
KRISTEN GERHARD
ANDREW MCCOLLUM
PULSE REPORTERS
AILEE SLATER
COMMENTARY EDITOR
GABE BRADLEY
JESSICA DERLETH
ARMY FETH
COLUMNISTS
TIM BOBOSKY
PHOTO EDITOR
NICOLE BARKER
SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER
KATE HORTON
ZANE RITT
PHOTOGRAPHERS
KATIE GLEASON
PART-TIME PHOTOGRAPHER
JONAH SCHROGIN
DESIGN EDITOR
JOHN AYRES
JONNY BAGGS
MOLLY BEDFORD
KERI SPANGLER
DESIGNERS
CHRIS TODD
GRAPHIC ARTIST
AARON DUCHATEAU
ILLUSTRATOR
DAWN HELZER
REBECCA TAYLOR
COPY CHIEFS
JENNY DORNER
BRYN JANSSON
JOSH NORRIS
JENNA ROHRBACHER
MATT TIFFANY
COPY EDITORS
STEVEN NELMAN
ONLINE/SUPPLEMENTS EDITOR
TIMOTHY ROBINSON
WEBMASTER

BUSINESS
(541) 346-5511

JUDY RIEDL
GENERAL MANAGER
KATHY CARBONE
BUSINESS MANAGER
LAUNA DE GIUSTI
RECEPTIONIST
LUKE BELLOTTI
RYAN JOHNSON
RANDY RYMER
CORRIEN MUNDT
DISTRIBUTION

ADVERTISING
(541) 346-3712

MELISSA GUST
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
MIA LEIDEMEYER
SALES MANAGER
KELLEE KAUFFHEIL
JOHN KELLY
LINDSEY FERGUSON
WINTER GIBBS
KATE HIRONAKA
DESI MCCORMICK
STEPHEN MILLER
KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS
CODY WILSON
SALES REPRESENTATIVES
BONA LEE
AD ASSISTANT

CLASSIFIED
(541) 346-4343

TRINA SHANAMAN
CLASSIFIED MANAGER
LISA CLARK
AN DO
AMANDA KANTOR
KERI SPANGLER
KATIE STRINGER
CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING ASSOCIATES

PRODUCTION
(541) 346-4381

MICHELE ROSS
PRODUCTION MANAGER
KIRA PARK
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
JAMIE ACKERMAN
CAITLIN MCCURDY
ERIN MCKENZIE
JONAH SCHROGIN
TERRY STRONG
DESIGNERS

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Ore. The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices in Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union. The Emerald is private property. Unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

■ In my opinion

Have a happy COMMERCIAL holiday!

Last week, I bought my first gallon of eggnog for this year. Now that Halloween has come and gone, it's time for the more mushy holidays of the year. It's no longer a surprise to anyone that the winter holiday season begins earlier and earlier every year. Besides, it makes sense. Since the lion's share of retail business is done during the holiday season, those corporate bastards who run this country would be stupid not to milk the holiday season for everything it's worth.

Holiday movies come out in late summer/early fall. Stores put up holiday displays sometimes before Halloween is over. And, of course, there are the catalogs. The holiday season is the one time of year when the number of catalogs sent to my roommate "Current Resident" almost matches the number of credit card offers in my mailbox. You know it's just a matter of time before someone thinks to bundle catalogs with credit cards for our convenience.

I don't mind the commercialization of the holidays because I never really took it that seriously in the first place. I figure I have control over how commercial I allow the holidays to be. Since we live in a capitalist society, there are always going to be people around using whatever angle they can to make a buck. The choice we each have to make is how much of an influence that commercialization will become in our own celebrations.

Personally, I pick somewhere right about in the middle. I don't take a vow of poverty during the winter months, but neither do I max out my credit cards with goodies from a catalog. Besides, commercial holidays are just less



GABE BRADLEY
THE WRITING ON THE WALL

controversial than religious holidays. Every year around this time, a handful of controversies spring up about holiday displays containing religious iconography. From my job choice, it's obvious that I'm somewhat drawn to controversy. However, the types of controversies surrounding holiday displays never appealed to me.

These controversies take what's supposed to be a happy, celebratory time and turn it into a showdown between the forces of good and evil. Can't we all just go the mall instead of duking it out? There will always be another battle to fight. For now, can't we bring the troops to winter quarters and resume the culture wars when the weather is nicer? Maybe that's asking too much.

Another reason I don't mind holiday commercialization is precisely because it's the commercialization that stretches out the season. I know there are plenty of people who don't like the winter holidays. I can understand that. For someone dealing with loss or grief, the holidays can be a painful reminder of that loss. Add the dreary weather into the mix and you have a recipe for depression.

Some of the most traumatic events of my life are associated with the

winter holidays. However, instead of using the holidays to remind myself of it, I like to use the holidays to distract myself from the trauma — and there's never a shortage of distraction in this country. It's the same with the weather for me. I hate the winter weather — I absolutely hate it. However, during the holiday season, the terrible weather is romanticized and spun as a positive. I want to kiss the marketing geniuses who thought up the song "Winter Wonderland" or "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas." What kind of mind does it take to turn awful weather into something every kid wishes for? It's brilliant, I say.

So during November and December, we're idealizing the awful weather. Then, when the holidays are over, you look around and fall is gone while winter is already one-third over. In my case, my birthday is in February, so the only bad-weather month in which I don't have a celebration to look forward to is January. Unless of course you count New Year's Day, which I don't because it's only purpose is to give us a chance to recover from New Year's Eve.

Anyway, I guess my point is just that in addition to choosing which holidays to celebrate and which traditions to keep, families and individuals this year will also have to decide what level of commercialization they will allow into their holiday experience. Commercialization is a part of our shared culture — our collective traditions. You can have a lot or a little, but you can't avoid it completely. So make your choice and be happy with it.

gbradley@dailyemerald.com

■ Editorial

State should recognize civil rights of everyone

It has been more than a year since Oregon voters passed Measure 36, which changed the Oregon Constitution so that only marriage between a man and a woman is legal. Since then, advocacy groups such as Basic Rights Oregon have continued the fight to end discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Most recently, BRO sued the State of Oregon on the grounds that the measure is unconstitutional because it made multiple changes to the constitution and was therefore a revision, not an amendment. Marion County Circuit Court Judge Joseph Guimond upheld the measure Friday, ruling that the changes instated by the measure are "substantive" but not enough to overturn the law.

Although we don't dispute Guimond's legal decision, we are disheartened that Oregon continues to deny equal rights to gay couples. BRO plans to appeal the decision, but this group alone shouldn't bear the burden of mounting legal challenges against Oregon's law.

Rebekah Kassell, communications director for BRO, said, "Although this is a necessary part of a long-term movement, it's tough when you realize discrimination will stay for some time to come." ("Legality of Measure 36 upheld by Circuit Court," ODE Nov. 7).

We are confident that one day — possibly within our lifetimes, possibly in a hundred years — people will look back on the era when same-sex marriage was illegal the same way they now look back on the time when women were not legally recognized as citizens who could vote. Banning the privileges and rights bestowed by civil contracts to gay couples is an infringement upon human rights and contradicts the values inherent in the concept of freedom in the United States.

Opponents of gay marriage don't appear to understand the meaning of a "civil right." After the court upheld the measure, Tim Nashif, political director for the Defense of Marriage Coalition, said, "They're saying Oregonians don't have the right to determine what is a civil right and what isn't. They assume it's a civil right, but we would disagree."

On its Web site, the Legal Information Institute at Cornell University Law School defines a civil right as "an enforceable right or privilege, which if interfered with by another gives rise to an action for injury."

If marriage can be defined as legal or illegal, it falls into the category of being an enforceable right or privilege.

The LII continues its discussion of civil rights, saying, "Discrimination occurs when the civil rights of an individual are denied or interfered with because of their membership in a particular group or class."

If the right to marry can be defined as a civil right, which we believe it can, and gays and lesbians are a particular group or class, Measure 36 is discriminatory. Eventually, people will be able to see the effort to legalize same-sex marriage for what it is: a civil rights movement.

BRO's Web site states that in 2006, "the organization will launch a three-year campaign ... to achieve long-term gains in the fight for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality in Oregon."

We applaud BRO for continuing the fight against discrimination despite the setbacks it has encountered in the Legislature and the courts. Yet even Oregonians who oppose gay marriage for religious reasons should acknowledge that all adults in consenting, long-term relationships should be awarded the same status under the law. We encourage BRO and all people who oppose discrimination to continue their efforts to give gay couples legal protection in Oregon.

Jonathan Irwin is a University student.

■ Guest commentary

Police hostility toward bicyclists hinders progressive movement

Last Friday represented for most a particularly exciting party night, given Halloween's approach. For those who chose to participate in Critical Mass, the monthly event in which bikes, tricycles, recumbents and tandems take the streets, greater excitement was more felt than planned. After 25 minutes of collective riding, two police cars pulled up and attempted to disband the peaceful demonstration. When riders refused to discontinue, more cop cars pulled up ahead of the group and proceeded to yank bicyclists from their mounts without any verbal or physical provocation, and write out a number of tickets — many exceeding \$200.

On Friday, I rode near the front of our bike "flotilla," which caused a brief, though certainly frustrating, wait for drivers unlucky enough to be caught at an intersection as our group crossed. That said, I always find the number of supportive drivers we encounter surprising and heartening. At the first police car's approach, I was admittedly dismayed because I did not want a clash with city authorities. I see it as being in the city's interest to be open to non-violent critique of local, national and international decisions. Furthermore, it would add to Eugene's image as a progressive and bike-friendly town, where its police and citizens are more than willing to permit (if not

respect) the infrequent impairment of traffic flow in order to make a statement and maintain a now well-established bicyclist's tradition.

My nervousness increased when the loud and demanding tone of sirens rang out and more cop cars pulled up directly ahead. After swerving around this rather dramatic blockade, I proceeded to (and I am slightly ashamed of it) hurry for the immediate premises. Later I heard that a girl with whom I am acquainted and who rode several paces behind me, was forcibly torn from her bicycle by an angry policeman. After the greater part of the mass reassembled and continued on its way, the decision to leave was reconsidered in light of the need for solidarity with those receiving heavy fines and threats of arrest for nebulous charges of "disorderly conduct," or noncooperation with the police's arbitrary demands. Some of those who returned in smaller groups to the "scene of the crime," I am told, were fined and handcuffed merely for being present — without any evidence of wrongdoing.

While on the road, a friend and I were very nearly run down by an enraged and impatient driver who then proceeded to weave between other cars up ahead, driving above the speed limit. This "gentleman" certainly received no interest from the police. Instead, numerous cyclists were

heavy fines for traffic violations that caused nothing but a two-minute wait or detour.

Critical Mass means something different and unique among its many participants. As there is no specific charter or organization, riders use the opportunity for a variety of reasons — commonly to protest the use of cars and other causes of environmental damage, but also to oppose the Iraq War and other questionable aspects of U.S. foreign and domestic policy. Most also ride for fun. For many, Critical Mass is a matter of pride — an opportunity for bike riders to claim dignity for their chosen or only option for transportation. Whether they ride for pleasure or to commute, all are welcome, and Critical Mass draws participants from all ages and backgrounds.

I am familiar with the arguments against bicyclist activism — "bike lanes should be enough," "bicyclists can obstruct urgent commute and/or emergency vehicles," etc. However, bicyclists can make room for ambulances with far greater ease than a car, and many roads (even here in Eugene) lack bike lanes. Road disputes should be discussed and resolved in appropriate venues — not through police hostility played out as "cop-and-robber" melodrama in the streets.