

Forum

Holidays plagued with fake cheer, phony traditions

CALLEY LATHROP

Christmas is a sham. A holiday originally developed in the worship of pagan gods, the holiday now revolves around gluttony, pretend familial love and a fat man in red. Holiday celebrations have turned into a time full of misconceptions and blatant stupidity. Let's stop the nonsense and recognize the holidays for what they are...seems impossible, but trust me, true meaning CAN be derived amidst all the mistletoe, sugar-plum fairies and candy canes.

Around 200 BCE, ancients began celebrating the sun god Elah-Gabal and Mithras, a soldier's god. These festivities took place in the month of December, during the winter solstice, which was very important in many cultures of the time. Why and how did we go from pagans to a baby messiah?

Jesus' birth was actually late in the month of May (according to biblelight.

net)! It was in the middle ages that Europeans began celebrating the nativity in December, a month many kings were crowned. William I, Charlemagne, Edmund the Martyr and Richard II all chose to be

including that of Jesus' birth.

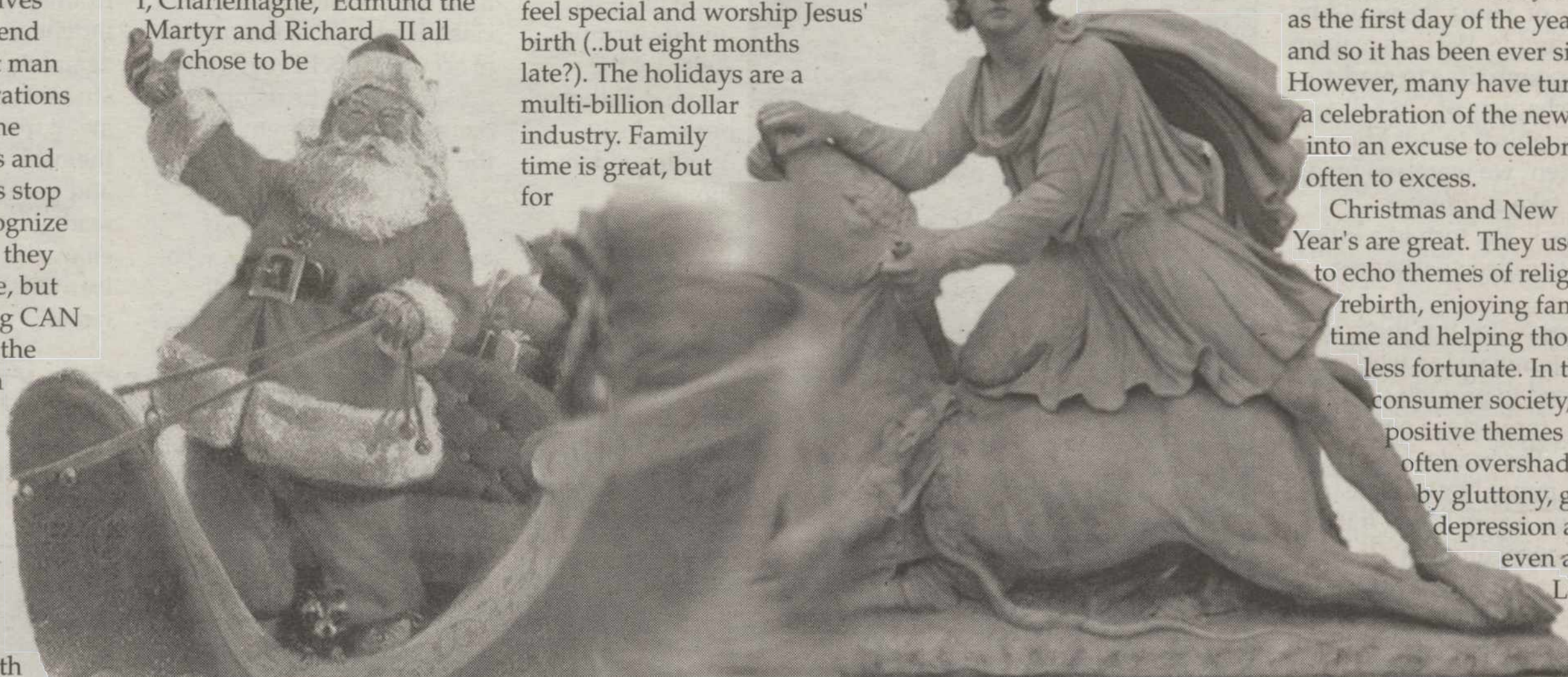
Now Christmas has become a time when people the world over give each other gifts, attempt to make little children feel special and worship Jesus' birth (..but eight months late?). The holidays are a multi-billion dollar industry. Family time is great, but for

promise themselves they'll lose those last 10 lbs., or radically change their lifestyle.

New Year's was

first celebrated in 2000 BCE, around the time of the vernal equinox (the first day of spring) in March. In 153 BCE, the Romans declared Jan. 1 as the first day of the year, and so it has been ever since. However, many have turned a celebration of the new year into an excuse to celebrate, often to excess.

Christmas and New Year's are great. They used to echo themes of religion, rebirth, enjoying family time and helping those less fortunate. In this consumer society, these positive themes are often overshadowed by gluttony, greed, depression and even anger. Let's



Christmas Day, throwing huge parties afterward. Beginning in the 1600s, Christmas Day became a time when all major yearly festivities became one,

some, all the holiday cheer in the world cannot fix family feuds or tension that really destroys the fun.

And then, there's New Year's—last big bash of the year before many wake up with a nasty hangover, or

Santa Claus, the iconic American symbol of holiday celebration rides in his sleigh whilst Mithras, an ancient war god, slaughters a Bull. Over the following centuries, Christmas went from a celebration of Mithras' birth (Dec. 25) to the crowning of new kings to the modern day Jesus.

remember why the holidays are here, and celebrate them by helping others and enjoying them ourselves (even if it means breaking the stereotypical mold for how these days are supposed to be spent). Happy holidays!

Slow walkers and crowds blow nerves of students in a rush

CHRISANN KIM

The first bell blasts. "Oh no! I have to get to class!" Stumbling and rushing to ready your materials, it's already a minute into the passing time. In such a large school, walking from the music building all the way to the other side of the science room in just six minutes sounds impossible. Have to visit your locker, perhaps?

But that's not even the half of it.

In the midst of trying to hurry class, a notorious

obstacle looms—slow walkers and crowds. A typical passing time in high school is much the equivalent to rush hour in modern day traffic. Whenever I've tried to speed walk through the halls, there's always a group of obnoxious students who tend to walk ridiculously slow. And often enough, crowds ranging from five to ten students form in the middle of hallways, making it virtually impossible for a small freshman like me (or anyone else for that matter) to get through.

I remember many days

when people would just place themselves smack in the middle of the hallway either talking to a friend or engaging in public displays of affection—move over or get a room. Another day, the library

and crowded penguins, I wondered—exactly WHY do students take so long to walk from here to there and WHY do they crowd in the middle of the hallways?

I can't see a solid benefit

attendance status.

People aren't penguins. They do not huddle into immense groups to circulate warmth. Is it just an emotional or psychological feeling teenagers have that make

them want to be super close to their friends? It isn't necessary to be five inches from your best friend when you can easily talk to them from five feet away. If people spread out just a couple feet (or five), rushing students would be more than able to move through the hallways without any delay.



Photo by Mark Poppert

Busy students rush through the hallways during passing time. Slow walkers and clusters of students often block passage, inhibiting others from making it to class on time.

hallways were crowded with bunches of upperclassmen. Obviously, it was intimidating to have to squeeze through a bunch of tall football players and just try to reach the other side—alive. It's time consuming to have to find another route around a crowd and no one these days has the time to do that and beat the six minute limit.

As I stereotyped these slow walkers as turtles

to walking slowly other than the fact that you don't have to use much energy. But isn't walking healthy for you? Plenty of students have more time because they are taking more relaxed classes, or they have passive teachers who don't mind their students being a minute late or two. I don't think any of them realize that some students are in a critical rush to their classes in order to save their

day and age, education is at risk and students require success for their futures. High school is just the beginning. With cramming and harsh studying, just getting to classes on time is key to focusing in class. So the next time you run across a group of turtles or cuddling penguins, don't let them inhibit you from reaching your destinations—SHOVE them if you have to.

Amplifier

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The *Amplifier* is published approximately every four weeks by the West Linn High School Advanced Journalism class. Opinions expressed in commentaries and editorials represent only those of the writer, and are not necessarily the opinions of West Linn High School, its administration, faculty, staff, or student body.

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