

# velodrama

welcome to winnipeg critical mass



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# One Page Must-Read

**If you read only one page, READ THIS ONE!**

Critical Mass belongs to all the riders. Have fun, be nice, and don't get others into trouble.

Don't touch a cop. Ever. Unless they tell you to. Then you have to touch them.

Bring a camera and/or a video camera. Use it. These are the moments of your life.

Don't antagonize drivers or cops. Some of them are just looking for an excuse to be violent assholes.

Stick together. Critical Mass is safer when the pack is, well, a pack. If the group threatens to break up, do your best to keep it together.

Communicate. Talk with other cyclists before the ride begins and try to form a game plan in case of driver aggression, arrests, or injuries. During the ride, let the rest of the Mass know if bad things are happening around you.

If a cop car or ambulance flashes its emergency lights, get out of the way.

Encourage slower cyclists and riders with small children to stay in the middle of the pack where it's safer.

This handbook is not meant to be definitive, but to give new participants some background on how the ride works and how to get the most out of it. Some of the information may be redundant or contradictory; after all, we all have differing philosophies, but we come together around Critical Mass.

Things seem weighed heavily toward interaction with the police, which might be daunting. This is because this document was created as a response to the police violence on the May 2006 rides. Critical Mass shouldn't be about confronting the police, we hope that they'll let us ride peacefully from now on. Until then, we need to be prepared.

Any advice that might cross boundaries of the law is provided for informational purposes only. We would never encourage anyone to violate laws, no matter how unjust! After all, civil disobedience never gets you anywhere, right?

Got suggestions, recommendations? This is a work in progress, so please email [velodrama@criticalmasswinnipeg.net](mailto:velodrama@criticalmasswinnipeg.net). Contributions are welcome, especially regarding bicycle culture in Winnipeg to balance the current negativity.

# Critical Mass

## About

Critical Mass is a monthly celebration of human powered transportation where cyclists, skateboarders, and rollerbladers take to the streets showing that they are traffic. People participate for all kinds of reasons, from the enjoyment of riding in a group, to environmental concerns, to fears about car culture's contribution to oil wars. Critical Mass has no leader, and so everyone has to decide for themselves how and why they want to ride.

## History

The first Critical Mass ride took place in San Francisco in 1992.

## What's in a name?

The term 'critical mass' comes from George Bliss, who used it to describe the behaviour of traffic in China. Motorists and bicyclists coexisted on roads; at uncontrolled intersections, traffic would accumulate until it reached a backup of sufficient 'critical mass' that it could proceed.

An additional meaning comes from the idea that radical social change grows out of a movement that has achieved a critical mass.

## Growth

Immediately after the first ride in San Francisco, the name quickly began to be used for informally-connected rides in other cities. Over 300 rides of the form exist worldwide.

Most rides proceed unmolested, but police and motorist interference has periodically marred them in many cities. The mayor of San Francisco declared war on Critical Mass in 1997, but all charges were eventually dropped. There have been occasional skirmishes between police and Massers in Winnipeg for at least seven years.

## On Your Critical Mass Ride

Here are some Critical Mass tips (not rules, remember, we don't have a leader?). First and foremost...

### Have Fun!

Without a leader, everyone has to make sure we have a kick-ass ride. If you think we should have a costume theme (we usually seem to), try to convince people the month before, if you think we should have music, strap

At St. Helen's School in Newbury, Ohio, unicycling is a mandatory subject. The students are allowed to ride their unicycles in the halls between classes.

# Critical Mass

## On Your Critical Mass Ride

a boombox to your bike and crank it up, if you think people should have decorated bikes, bring art supplies for people. I'm sure you will think of way wackier stuff than that, though, right?

And for Critical Mass to grow, which makes things safer for everyone, it's nice if you can go out of your way to be friendly to folks who might show up for the first time, looking shy, and who might not know anyone else in the Mass. You could even just hand them this copy of the zine when you're done with it, if you're too shy to talk.

## Pace

Critical Mass is a festive community bike ride, not a competitive race. No need to show off by speeding away from the crowd. Once in a while someone might shout "Mass Up!" to remind people ahead to slow down, since we're safest when we're together.

On the other hand, it's not smart to bike as slowly as you can in front of cars. That doesn't show people that we're traffic, and it makes the ride less safe by almost guaranteeing altercations with motorists and/or police. You might be okay with that altercation, but others won't be, so if that's your strategy, please do it on your daily commute instead of at Critical Mass.

## Lanes and such

The Highway Traffic Act basically says that bicycles have to stay as far to the right as possible, unless they're passing another vehicle (including a bike), or trying to make a turn. Keep in mind what is possible (the actual word they use is practicable) is vague, and since potholes, sewer grates, broken glass, puddles, and grit all seem to accumulate near the curb, it's really often that it's not possible.

At Critical Mass, people usually bike alongside each other, taking up at least one full lane. The police seem to have indicated that they won't give out tickets for this at a meeting with Critical Massers on June 16th, 2006, but they have sometimes given out tickets for this in the past. Everyone (including the police) seem to agree that this is the safest way for people to ride.

People don't all agree about whether Critical Mass should take up all of the lanes in one direction, or leave one or more open. Some people think it just makes cars and cops angrier for no good reason, other people say that people speeding by, sometimes throwing them at Critical Mass riders makes leaving a lane open unsafe. Feel free to take up this debate, but keep respectful of other cyclists no matter what side they're on.

## Red lights

If you're at the start of the Mass, it's probably better to stop at red lights to let people keep up and keep a tight Mass. If people in the Mass have already gone through an

# Critical Mass

## On Your Critical Mass Ride

intersection and the light turns red, it's safer to keep going through than to wait and get cars trapped inside the Mass. Sometimes police let this slide, other times they have gone so far as to give the impression they would allow it and then ticket folks.

### “Corking”

Usually when the Mass is going through an intersection, especially against a red light, a few cyclists will get off their bikes and hold them facing the oncoming traffic, making the ride safer for everyone else. Corkers! Thank them as you go by, or cork for safety yourself. It's also a good opportunity to talk with motorists about what we're doing, and to hand out flyers, pamphlets, zines, or whatever. The police have targetted a corker on one occasion we know of in Winnipeg.

### Emergency Vehicles

All vehicles, including bicycles of course, are required to pull over when an emergency vehicle has lights and/or sirens on coming up from behind. Even if it's just cops doing this to be jackasses and disrupt the mass! Probably the best strategy is to just pull over and let them pass. They may turn off their sirens and let you pass again, only to turn on their sirens again, but just let them. Then they're blocking traffic, and we're being responsible.

### Parade Permits

Critical Mass almost never applies for or receives a parade permit in any city, for the simple reason that it's not a parade, it's a group of vehicles using the road. Cars don't apply for a parade permit for rush hour, enthusiasts don't apply for a permit for the cruise night spectacle on Portage Avenue every Sunday. We are traffic, so why would we?

### Looking out for each other

There's no leader, but that doesn't mean everyone should behave randomly. If you see someone acting in a manner you consider unsafe or unwise, like not moving over for emergency vehicles, talk to them about it. We can show society at large that we can function without authorities.

### Those crazy bikes

Tall bikes and freak bikes can be a way to add more fun to rides. Riding a tall bike is easy, but keep in mind that folks might have trouble stopping, starting, or going really slow in a crowd. Give them a little room at these points, and you can offer your hand for support if they have to stop in the middle of the street.

# Critical Mass

## On Your Critical Mass Ride

### Masks

It's not illegal to wear a mask as a part of your costume, but if the police decide to arrest you for something, it can be a more serious offence if you're wearing a mask. You may also be targetted for wearing a mask. Then again, you may be targetted for being seen as a leader, for not being white, for being poor, for being an anarchist, or any number of other reasons.

### Police

The police are the main safety concern at Critical Mass rides in Winnipeg. The smoothest, most festive, and least confrontational rides all happened when the police stayed home. They have tackled people off their bikes, sent plainclothes officers to instigate violence and confusion, and after arresting a Critical Mass rider in May 2006, beat him up in his cell.

The media and some members of city council were somewhat outraged, so the police will probably be more reluctant to be heavy handed again in the summer of 2006, but you never really know.

### Cameras

Bring them! Video or still! They're nice to have photos to promote how fun Critical Mass is, but they can also be used to document any police repression. Try to stay far enough away that you're less likely to get arrested, to avoid losing the photos while in custody. Do your best to get badge numbers and car numbers in the frame.

The police will likely tell you that it's illegal to take pictures of them, but this is not true. Make sure you're not right up in their face, take a step back. Reassure them that you're not trying to interfere with what they're doing or intimidate them in any way.

### Pepper Spray

Critical Massers have been led to believe the police may use pepper spray at the next Mass. We hope this isn't true, but when we met with the police they didn't do much to decrease our fears. It doesn't hurt to bring a pair of shatterproof swimming goggles to keep around your neck just in case, and maybe a broad brimmed hat. A full water bottle and clean squares of fabric can do damage-control by flushing out and soaking up the spray.



### Puppy Piling

It really sucks to see our friends get arrested for no good reason. Puppy piling is a de-arresting technique. Whatever you do, never in any way touch a police officer. If you are lucky that will just get you beat up and an 'assault police' charge, but it could be worse. De-arresting techniques make you guilty of a somewhat less serious offence, 'obstruct police', and have somewhat less of a chance of getting you beat up. The general idea is, when someone is being grabbed by the police, everyone else jumps on top of them, being careful not to hurt the potential arrestee or anyone else, and not to touch any police officer in any way. This way the person they were trying to arrest is totally inaccessible, and they will often just give up rather than try to deal with your tangled mess of bodies. If you don't think you can get away with it or pull it off safely, do not use this or any other de-arresting technique. But it can be fun to get together with your friends and practice!

At the May 26th, 2006 Mass, a huge puppy pile including bikes succeeded in getting one Masser de-arrested and in the confusion the cyclists negotiated with police that no one would get arrested. As people were leaving, one person shouted "Everybody stick together" and then for some reason the cops freaked out and arrested a bunch of people. So I guess... don't shout that out?

Keep in mind also, that the more of our tactics the police become aware of and used to, the less effective they'll be.

### Jail Solidarity

In some mass demonstrations in big cities, people practice a jail solidarity tactic where no one brings any I.D. to the demo, and if everyone is arrested, they refuse to identify themselves. This clogs up the system, and can help people who are vulnerable due to their citizenship or other invisible factors. Generally, there is no way to hold or process the hundreds of people and they are all just released.

Critical Mass doesn't usually have this number of arrestees (or even participants), so if you refuse to identify yourself you'll probably just be held until you do. Then again, we don't think this tactic has ever been tried in Winnipeg before, Critical Mass is growing, and if people got organized...

If you haven't been arrested and others have, taking badge numbers, witness's phone numbers, going en masse to the place they're held can be good ways to be supportive. The best is being visible from the window of the cell they're held in, or singing or chanting loud enough for them to hear you. The police's goal is to dehumanize and demoralize arrestees, and remembering there's others on your side can be really encouraging.

Critical Mass has recently been met with violent repression from the Winnipeg Police Force. This began during Exercise Charging Bison, the largest urban warfare training exercises in Canadian history. Held in Winnipeg from April 30 to May 6, 2006, these exercises were to prepare soldiers for the conditions and situations that they will face in the operations that Canada is involved in across the globe.

To protest the exercises, approximately 50 concerned residents of Winnipeg saddled up on their bikes on May 3 and headed for the Pioneer Arena, where some of these exercises were being conducted. Shortly after the ride began, three people were taken into custody by the Winnipeg Police, one a photographer simply documenting an arrest. After a brief discussion between the cyclists and the police, the bike ride continued. Later, a bicycle officer stole a flag from one of the cyclists in an attempt to provoke them. After another exchange of words, the police returned the flag (minus the stick it was attached to) and the cyclists continued.

When the cyclists arrived at the Pioneer Arena, they were met by a number of police. The officers lined up and began advancing on the cyclists, telling and forcing them to move onto sidewalk. A few minutes later, they grabbed four more cyclists off the sidewalk and arrested and detained them. Seven people were arrested in all: two facing possible criminal charges, the others ticketed under the Highway Traffic Act.

23 days later, on the last Friday of May, the monthly Critical Mass bike ride left Central Park at 4:30pm. The police continued and escalated their violent tactics. Nine people were arrested or detained in this bike ride. The police used excessive force in arresting many of these cyclists, tackling them from behind, pressing their faces into the street with their knees, and even punching one in the face as he was being arrested.

In the paddy wagon, one cyclist was punched in the face, another was thrown into the side wall while handcuffed. While in custody at the Public Safety Building, another cyclist was beaten in his holding room by an officer. The officers told him that they had been watching him at the Charging Bison demonstration. They then made a thinly veiled threat, telling him that he'd see them again if he were to launch a formal complaint regarding the beating. They then threatened him outright telling him he'd be "eating his meals with a cast" if they ever caught him walking downtown with a particular political patch on his backpack again.

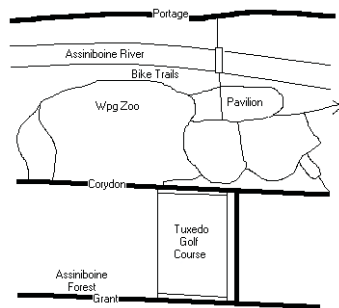
Since these events, people perceived as being Critical Mass supporters and/or political activists have been the subject of increased police intimidation. Some have been followed by police as they walk throughout the downtown area. Others have been dangerously cut-off by police cruisers while riding their bikes.

This campaign of violent repression against political consciousness and cyclists rights under the guise of Highway Traffic Act enforcement is despicable and must be exposed and opposed. Winnipeggers (and people everywhere) deserve basic political freedoms and equal rights to the roads.

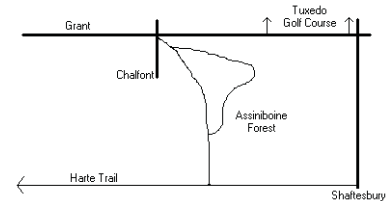
# Cycling

## I Want To Ride My Bicycle: Places to ride

**Assiniboine Park:** Here there are trails all around, leading to and around the park. You can follow the crazy bike trails by the river, cycle the many avenues through the park, continue south to Assiniboine Forest, or continue east down Wellington Crescent. Strangely, there's also a zoo to visit.

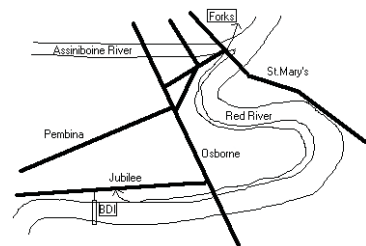
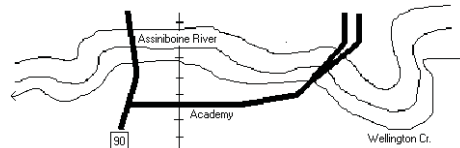


**Assiniboine Forest:** This is a very peaceful and quiet area, so don't mug people. There are a few trails stretching around forest and marshland, and



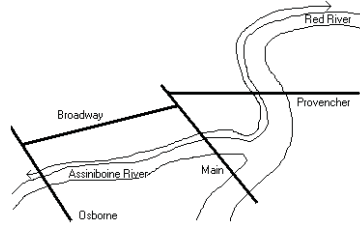
if you continue to the south end of the trail, it connects to the Harte Trail. This is a very long pathway stretching from the Assiniboine Forest to Beaudry Park in Headingly. It's a very nice bike pathway, but recommended mainly for off-road bikes.

**Wellington Crescent:** This street has amazing greenery and over-the-top houses filled with mafia to look at, going from Assiniboine Park to River Avenue. It is well travelled, and commonly known as one of the city's recreational biking routes. From May to early October, this street, as well as Wolseley Ave, Lyndale Drive, and Scotia Ave. are closed to vehicular traffic on Sundays and holiday Mondays, so take over the streets.



**Churchill Drive Park:** Following the Red River just east of Osborne, this park trail can get you from the BDI on Jubilee to the Forks. It is a nice, quiet park, which follows beside train tracks closer to the Forks, and is awesome. You can also extend this trip by crossing the BDI bridge and skirting along the picturesque Kingston Row community. Don't eat the mushrooms along here.

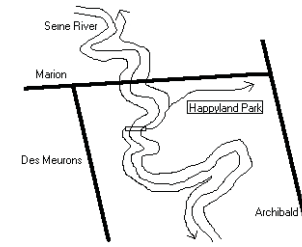
**Forks River Paths:** Everyone knows about these pathways. Although flooded usually until mid-June, swimming isn't recommended. This calm, shaded trail right on the river begins around the Osborne bridge and continues to L'esplanade Riel. However, you can keep going on higher ground to try and reach Beacon's Field park a fair ways further.



# Cycling

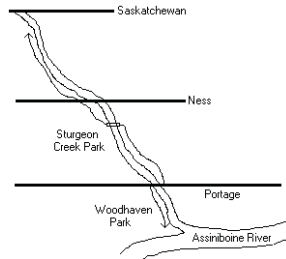
## I Want To Ride My Bicycle: Places to ride

**Seine River "Monkey Trails":** This is an easily forgotten and well-hidden river in Winnipeg. However, there are very nice and very serene pathways along the banks. One of the pathways extends from Happyland Park on Marion, just about to Morier Park further south. The other pathway extends from Bishop Grandin down along the river and leading out onto St. Anne's Road.

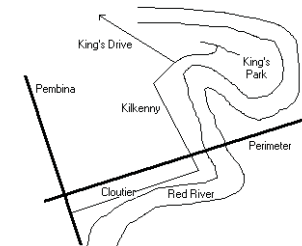


### Sturgeon Creek Park Trail:

This park is a long path beginning from Woodhaven Park along the Assiniboine River. Following the creek will cross Portage Avenue. It will eventually lead you north to Saskatchewan Ave., near the airport.

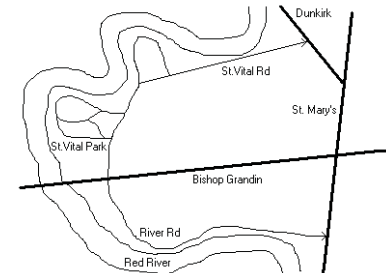


**King's Drive:** A very scenic route leading south from the University of Manitoba. It stretches from Freedman Drive, south to Pembina and Cloutier past the perimeter. The best part about this is you feel like a king along this road. Along the path you can take a detour into King's Park, a popular skiing area in the winter, and a nice park almost completely surrounded by the Red



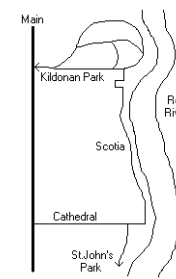
River.

**River Road:** This is a St. Vital scenic road that rides from St. Vital Road along to St. Mary's Road. Along the way there are a few parks, including St. Vital Park, a great place to have a picnic or visit some ducks at the duck ponds. It's also an amazing park to visit at night, although it's technically closed then.



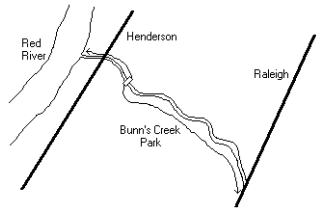
### Kildonan Park:

A great place to bike to or bike around in. The pathways around the park lead to gardens and trees galore, or you can continue south along Scotia St. (closed to cars on Sundays from May to October), then follow Cross Street to St. John's Park. This is the scenic way to get to the park from downtown, although watch out for the clowns.



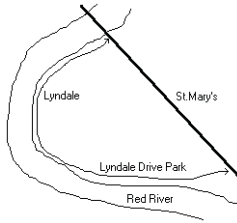
# Cycling

## I Want To Ride My Bicycle: Places to ride



**Bunn's Creek Trail:** At the northern end of the city, near the perimeter, there is an interesting park following Bunn's Creek. Pathways travel through the park from Raleigh, past Henderson Highway, and ends where the creek meets the Red River. If you want to follow Henderson Highway north of the park, it will lead you to River Road (a nice scenic route), and then to Lockport, where the Red River meets the floodway.

**Lyndale Drive:** A St. Boniface road, that begins just to the right after crossing the Norwood Bridge. A parkway follows most of the way down it, which is a great place to visit and see the river. Some parts of the park drop off of what I call the "cliffs of insanity", a great place to climb off to get a better view of the river. It's a good recreational jaunt, just minutes from the Forks.



# Cycling

## Bike safety

Like oral hygiene, riding safely is a virtue often preached and rarely practiced. It's your life, and you can do with it whatever you damn well please, but think about the children.

If you're one of those helmetless, lightless riders with questionable brakes and a deeply ingrained indifference toward your own mortality, perform this little test: While riding your bicycle at average cruising speed, have an able-bodied friend jump-kick you in the ribs. Assess your feelings. Now picture something 1000x more painful.

Don't do what Donny Don't does

- Don't ride in the blind spot of a car. Anywhere but there.
- Watch out for cars turning right. If you're stopped at an intersection, don't stop beside a vehicle. Get well in front, or directly behind it.
- Watch out for cars turning left. Be prepared to stop if they floor it. If your brakes don't work well, fix them.
- Watch out for cars going straight. That means taking a line and maintaining it. Dipping into traffic to avoid a pothole is not a good practice.
- Watch out for cars not going at all. Ride with a good amount of room between you and parked cars to avoid winning a doorprize.
- At intersections with two right-turn lanes, get into the first lane that goes straight through, and **take that lane**. Don't stay in the curb lane and try to sneak through a gap in the traffic.
- Stay off the damn sidewalk. Yes, it may seem safer, but it really isn't. Neither vehicles nor pedestrians expect people to be biking on the sidewalk, so you're much more likely to have a collision there. Never underestimate the power of expectation.
- Not that we endorse this, but if you're going to run red lights and stop signs, don't dawdle. Get through quickly.
- Go easy on the front brake, especially when turning, and when the road is slippery (i.e. rainy, gravelly, snowy, or painted).
- Scan your surroundings. Look for things like major potholes, clueless jaywalkers, cars turning onto your road space, sidewalk cyclists, etc. Avoid, avoid, avoid.
- Stop being invisible. Most drivers will make *some* effort to avoid hitting you, that is, if they can see you. So get yourself some lights. Do crafty things with reflective tape. And spruce up that wardrobe with the season's hottest colours.

Now go ride your bike!

# Cycling

## Rat Patrol

so, you're walking down the street, going to the corner store to get a cola. as you're crossing the street, you see something you've never seen before...a two frame tall tall bike with a rubbermaid container being carried under it. that's right, you've just had a rat sighting.

Rat Patrol is a new group in winnipeg of kids(old and young alike) who are completely enthused with freak bikes. we aren't some elitist group that demands people spend loads of cash making their bikes fancy and stylish. most of our bikes are made from used or scavenged parts, so even if you're dirt poor like us, you can still ride with us, in fact, we encourage it!

In almost every back lane or riverbank, you can find discarded old junk bikes. it's up to you to reclaim it and turn it into a freakbike. Don't worry about not knowing anything about bikes, there are plenty of resources available, like the Bike Dump, that can help you with your creation. besides building bikes, another thing that we love to do is go on Ratrides. we'll usually be pumping some rad tunes and ride all over the city.

...however, there is one problem... on may 26th at the last critical mass, several kids from rat partol were arrested for various bogus charges. the worst part about it is that due to their conditions of release, they can no longer talk to each other or ride their bikes in the downtown area. this is a complete violation of basic right like communication and association. on top of that, it is an attack on the poor, as all Rat Patrol kids rely on their bikes for the main mode of transportation (even though if we could afford cars, we wouldn't drive 'em).

If you want to talk about the crazy situation that these bike enthusiasts are in, come talk to us. we're pretty easy to spot in a loose crown of critically massin' bikes. we usually wear our vests with Rat Patrol written on the back. anyway, next time you see a rat, think about how much fun YOU could have on a RatRide.



# Cycling

## The Revolution Will Not Be Motorised!

A new spectre is haunting the world – the spectre of Bike Punks.

Two things result from this fact:

- Bike Punks are already acknowledged by all world powers to be itself a world power.
- It is high time that Bike Punks openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this burgeoning nursery tale with a manifesto.

For too long city biking has been associated with ideas of physical fitness and tight, brightly colored spandex. Merging from various subgenres of punk rock, Bike Punks have hit the streets with the fire of revolution in their hearts, this time armed with the most effective machine known to human kind, the bicycle.

From the D.I.Y. attitude of building your own bike (Tallbikes, Lowriders, Artbikes), to its aggressive “&#x26; OFF!” attitude (a fitting response to those riding fixed gear track bikes at dangerous speeds throughout the city), the bicycle has fit itself into the punk rock world beautifully.

But what is it that these bike punks actually want? To answer this question, local bike punks have come up with a list of demands in no particular order.

- All roads and highways are to be converted into “Bikeways” with one narrow “Car lane” in the centre. The Bikeways will include many roundabouts, water stations, and benches for “chillin”.
- Critical Mass will be declared Canada’s national pastime.
- All SUV drivers will be sent to ideological realignment camps on Ellesmere Island.
- Their SUVs will then be converted into temporary housing for the homeless.
- All pro-car (and therefore anti-cyclist) MP’s and MLA’s be purged from government positions and sent to the above realignment camps.
- The term “car” be abolished and replaced with “personal isolation and pollution spewing transport pods.”
- The Governor General awards immediately open a category for “Cyclist Literature.”
- Bike puns should become a regular and encouraged part of speech. ie. Revolution/Veloration: Spinning the wheels of change. Etc.
- Bikes on car-racks are being held hostage from their full revolutionary/social potential, and should be liberated immediately.

Bike Punks of the world unite and take over (the street)!





# Rights and Responsibilities

## Bicycle laws (lovingly collected from the Highway Traffic Act)

“bicycle” means a device having any number of wheels upon which a person sits astride and which is propelled solely by human muscular power through the use of pedals

### DIVISION IV - BICYCLES

General rules: bicycles and power-assisted bicycles 145(1) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (5) and (6), a person operating a bicycle or power-assisted bicycle on a highway or bicycle facility has the same rights and duties as a person driving a motor vehicle on a highway and shall obey all signs and traffic control devices, and all directions of a peace officer.

### Operation next to curb

145(5) A person operating a bicycle or power-assisted bicycle on a highway shall operate it as closely as practicable [whatever that is] to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway, unless the highway is designated for traffic in one direction and has three or more traffic lanes; or as closely as practicable to the right- or left-hand edge or curb of the roadway, if the highway is designated for traffic in one direction and has three or more traffic lanes.



### Operation in single file

145(6) No person shall operate a bicycle or power-assisted bicycle on a highway beside a moped, mobility vehicle, bicycle or power-assisted bicycle that is operating in the same traffic lane. Except in making or attempting to make a turn on the highway; or overtaking or passing a moped, mobility vehicle, bicycle or power-assisted bicycle.

### Bicycles on sidewalks

145(8) no person shall operate on a sidewalk a bicycle with a rear wheel the diameter of which exceeds 410 mm. This does not apply to a sidewalk that is marked by a traffic control device permitting the operation of a bicycle on the sidewalk.



# Rights and Responsibilities

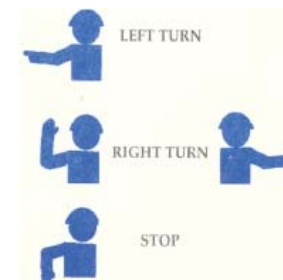
## Bicycle laws (lovingly collected from the Highway Traffic Act)

### Inspection

150(2) A peace officer may at any time stop and inspect, or cause to be inspected, any equipment on a bicycle or power-assisted bicycle on a highway or bicycle facility; and if the equipment does not comply with this Act or the regulations, require the operator to have the equipment made to comply. Operator must comply

### Section 66(1), Removal of unsafe vehicle on order of peace officer

Where a vehicle is, in the opinion of a peace officer, in such a condition that it cannot safely be driven on a highway, the peace officer may require the owner or the driver to remove it, or cause it to be removed, from the highway, either under its own power or by being towed or carried or otherwise removed, as the peace officer may direct; and the owner or driver, as the case may be, shall comply with the requisition of the peace officer.



### Hand signals!



# Rights and Responsibilities

## Rights as a demonstrator

### ID

Canadian Law does not require you to carry ID. You don't ever have to identify yourself to the police unless you are under arrest, being charged or ticketed, and even then you don't have to show them any papers. As long as you provide your name and address, you have fulfilled your obligations. Not carrying ID with you means that the police do not have access to your personal information, but it also means that if you are arrested, you may be detained for longer until they are satisfied that you have correctly identified yourself. Providing a false name may result in a charge of "obstruct police", "public mischief", or "obstruct justice", so it's better to say nothing at all than to lie.

### Under Arrest

For the most part, in a demonstration, the cop's main objective is to disperse the crowd. As a result, most arrested demonstrators will be issued minor offences. You have no obligation to go anywhere with the police unless you have been told you are "under arrest", or are being "detained". If they try to bring you in for "questioning" or anything of that sort, clearly inform them that "you are not consenting to go anywhere with them." If you are arrested, the police must tell you what you are being charged with and inform you of your rights. While under arrest, you must provide your full name, address and date of birth, but beyond that you don't have to say a single word. They know all the tricks in the books to try and extract information from you, but it's best to be firm in telling them "I have a right to remain silent, and I want to speak to a lawyer". They legally are obliged to provide you with a phone number for a lawyer, but this doesn't mean they will. While in custody, it is important to try and memorize all badge numbers and physical descriptions of any officers you're in contact with in case you become the victim of severe intimidation or police brutality.

Did you know that the roads weren't made for cars? The first paved roads in North America were built because of pressure from cycling enthusiasts. Look up the Good Roads Movement for more information.

### Searching You and Your Belongings

Police do NOT have a right to search you unless you clearly agree to a search or have been legally arrested. They are only allowed to search you after you have been arrested in order to search for weapons or evidence relating to the charge. On top of that, they must have reasonable grounds to suspect that you are carrying weapons, drugs or evidence. In any event, remember: **never consent to a search**. That doesn't mean that you should try to physically stop the police from searching you, just keep repeating "I do not consent to this search" if they do.

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Rights as a demonstrator

### Protecting Yourself

Wearing a mask is a good way to protect your identity and protect yourself from teargas and pepper spray. It is common for officers to take pictures of demonstrators; recently, Winnipeg police have been targeting people on the streets who they recognize as Critical Mass participants. Officers have also recently been talking about "bringing out the pepper spray" for future rides, so a bandana dipped in vinegar may be important. The problem with masking up is that it will likely attract unwanted attention from police and undercover officers. At the May 3rd critical mass, 3 of the 7 people arrested were wearing masks and were likely targeted because of this. Covering your face is not illegal, but to do so with intent to commit a crime is, so there is chance of having the police use it as an excuse to charge you. On top of this, masking up may frighten people wanting to join the cause. They may be turned off either because they are afraid of you, or are afraid of the things that have caused you to mask up. You have to weigh out the pros and cons for yourself, and decide whether or not masking up is important to you.

### Take It or Leave It

#### TAKE IT:

**Pens and paper** to write down names of arrested persons and their condition before being taken into custody, names of any witnesses, words spoken by police during their arrest, police badge numbers, numbers of the cars or wagons the arrested are put into, physical descriptions of any officers involved in the arrests or who are aggressive.

**Cameras** - including video, photographic or any device able to document the events. recording devices may make the officers think twice before acting out, on the other hand, it may make them target you in order to prevent you from documenting. it's best to stay off to the side and keep your back covered if you choose to document at an event.

**A Lawyer's Phone Number** - it's good to have the name and number of a lawyer you can trust and who is available, should you be arrested.

#### LEAVE IT:

Do not bring anything with you that can be incriminating. leave behind any drugs, weapons, sensitive information (such as phone numbers and addresses), and make a decision before hand on what ID (if any) you want to bring with you. The police are looking for anything that they can use against you.

### Remember

it's best to stay calm and in control of your words, body language and emotion. Keep your hands where police can see them, and don't touch an officer.

# Rights and Responsibilities

## How to play by their rules

Simply put, you are likely to get arrested if you don't comply with an officer's orders. The cops will probably be looking for people to ticket, arrest, question, and generally intimidate, so be careful.

Things to watch out for:

- If a police car (or any other emergency vehicle) flashes its emergency lights, pull to your right and get out of the way.
- If an officer asks/tells you to do something, you may want to comply. You might want to ask them to clarify their orders before you do anything, but the cops may not be in the mood to engage in a lengthy debate.
- You are allowed to photograph or videotape the action, so long as you aren't impeding an officer. However, cops have been known to deny photographers this right, sometimes going so far as to arrest them. If you feel that the cops may be targeting you for taking pictures or video, you could snap a few shots, then subtly pass off your camera to a comrade. The more cameras there are, the better the odds of getting good shots and avoiding suppression, so bring your cameras.
- There may be undercover, out-of-uniform cops. These guys may be looking to instigate a confrontation in order to arrest/beat up a cyclist. An undercover may yell at you, insult you, shove you, or even worse. If you can, just walk away. Fight the instinct to retaliate. This is a fight you can't win.,

Ultimately, you have the right to do exactly what they tell you. Sorry.



# Rights and Responsibilities

## If you are in custody

If you have been arrested or detained, you can expect the police to use many tricks on you. Depending on your particular situation, you may encounter some or all of the following tactics. The overall thing to remember is **cops always lie**.

Some of the things you may hear from them are:

- “we can do this the easy way or the hard way”
- “if you don't talk, you'll go to jail”
- “if you give us his/her name or information, you can leave”

These are tactics used to get information from you, and make it seem that it is in your best interest to inform on friends and comrades.

You can expect the police to talk loudly outside of your holding room/cell/paddy wagon with the hope that you'll be listening. You'll probably hear things like:

- “this is going to take all night”
- “hope there's enough room, otherwise they'll have to be taken to the jail”
- exaggerations of the number of people they've taken in

Ignore these tactics, they are meant to aggritate you.

The police are also known for their homophobic rhetoric, and may suggest that you'll be raped in prison. You may expect to hear:

- “they'll love you at the Remand Centre”
- “are you gay? 'cause you may be going to jail, so...”

If you are facing bogus charges, like Assault PO for example, you can expect the police to try and get you to admit to the crime. They'll keep reiterating to you that you committed the crime, often during a seemingly harmless conversation. What they want is confirmation from you in the form of “yes”, “yeah”, and the like, even a head nod. The best thing to do is stay silent and even still.

They may even try to provoke a fight, telling you that “we can settle this like men”, and that it won't be held against you. **NEVER FALL FOR THIS!!!** It will always be used against you! In fact that's why they do it, because they know they have nothing on you and they need justification for the charges. They may even physically assault you, trying to provoke a violent response. Keep in mind, that if you fight back, they will use it against you.

Lipping off to the police isn't a good idea, simply for your own safety. Again, prob-

A human on a bicycle is more efficient in terms of energy used over a specific distance than any other animal or machine on earth.

# Rights and Responsibilities

## If you are in custody

ably the best thing to do is remain silent. They may get angry at your silence. Every situation is unique, so you should handle it accordingly, but generally, silence is best.

You can expect to have fingerprints taken, and mug shots, as well as photos of injuries and identifying marks (i.e. scars and tattoos). You can expect to have to sign papers before you leave custody. **ALWAYS READ FULLY WHAT YOU ARE SIGNING!** They'll probably discourage you from reading it, or hurry you along. Make sure you know what you're signing.

## Legal Aid

Having a lawyer's number handy may be important when in custody. Even if you don't expect to be arrested, it may be a good idea. It is best to have the number of a lawyer you trust and who you know is available, but if you don't have access to anyone, there is always legal aid. The cops are legally obliged to give you the number for legal aid, but this doesn't mean they will. so, write it on your arm beforehand, and demand to call them. Here's where you can reach them...

985-8500



# Copwatch

## Observing the police

Over the past little while, cyclists and activists in Winnipeg have had troubles with the Winnipeg Police. Peaceful Critical Mass bike rides have been violently broken up, and political demonstrations have been met with similar repression. Winnipeg police have engaged in a campaign of intimidation directed at cyclist/activist types. Tactics involve thinly veiled threats, following people known to have participated in Critical Mass and political demonstrations, detaining photographers who document police abuses, detaining people for several hours on Highway Traffic Act violations and questioning them on their political views and the views of other individuals, and even beating people while in custody.

This must stop! We must protect our right to consciousness and political dissent. To that end we must familiarize ourselves with the principles of copwatching, to keep ourselves safe(r) at demonstrations and actions.

### Copwatching Basics:

- If you are copwatching, just observe, don't become involved in the situation you are observing.
- You are legally allowed to observe the police from a reasonable distance (approx. 10ft)
- **DON'T LET THEM FORCE YOU AWAY!**
- For the safety of the victim, do not provoke the police verbally or physically.
- Remember that if you are photographing the incident, that your film or video may be used against the person you are looking out for.
- Record badge numbers, and names of the officers involved. **LEGALLY, THEY MUST SUPPLY YOU WITH THIS.** Vehicle numbers, and officer's physical description are also valuable.
- Record contact information of witnesses to the incident (name, phone number, etc.)
- Have them write down what they witnessed as soon as possible, while it is still fresh in their memory. You should do the same.

From the Winnipeg Transit Bus Operators Training Manual (emphasis added): "When passing a cyclist, slow down, make sure the cyclist is aware of your presence (light tap on the horn) and leave plenty of room between the cyclist and your bus. If there is no room to pass because traffic is approaching, wait until the traffic has gone by, and then pass." If you are passed too closely, try to remember the three digit bus number and the time and place and call in this unacceptable behaviour.

# Copwatch

## Observing the police

- **DO NOT TOUCH AN OFFICER!** No matter how much you want to help your comrade, touching an officer in the slightest way may land you with Obstruct PO or Assault PO charges.
- Listen to the things the officer is saying to the victim(threats, etc.), or not saying to the victim (reading rights, informing them that they are under arrest, etc.).

If observing the police at a Critical Mass, you may want to make sure your bike is street legal. In Winnipeg, this means a front lamp (white light, visible to 90 metres) and a rear reflector or lamp (red, visible to 60 metres).

Ultimately, you decide what actions are appropriate as situations arise. However, if you are a designated copwatcher for your group of friends/comrades, it is probably best that you do not get yourself arrested, so that you can help your mates who are in custody.



# Copwatch

## LERA

LERA, the Law Enforcement Review Agency/Act, the process by which complaints against police are handled, sucks.

### History

The Law Enforcement Review Agency was the result of a 1979 recommendation by the Manitoba Police Commission after the police allegedly beat a rape suspect. It started operating in 1985. It was understaffed and overburdened for years; the situation has improved somewhat, but it is still widely held to be ineffective.

### How to file

To launch a formal complaint against individual officers, you must fill out a complaint form for the Law Enforcement Review Agency (LERA). These forms are available at the Public Safety Building (151 Princess st.), on-line at LERA's website, and one is included as the centre page of this zine.

You'll need to provide some personal information on the sheet (name, date of birth, etc.), as well as a statement regarding the particular misdeeds of the officer(s) in question. There is space to provide the name, address, and telephone numbers of witnesses to the incident, so make sure to get this information from them, and have them write down their statement as soon as possible, so they don't forget important details. The more witnesses, the better!

If you sustained injuries in the incident, you should document them on film. Also, you should see a doctor as soon as possible. There is space on the LERA complaint form to provide your doctor's contact information, so be prepared for this.

Complaints must be filed within 30 days of the incident, and don't forget to sign it. Even though the process is totally bunk, we still really recommend it.

### Why it sucks

The 2004 Annual Report efficiently reveals LERA's weaknesses. In that year, 54% of claims were abandoned or withdrawn. While no reasons are given, we can guess some.

The City of Winnipeg has commissioned a bunch of studies on how to make the city more bicycle-friendly, notably in 1993 and 2005, but has followed virtually none of the recommendations. (Kind of reminds you of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, other environmental studies, and basically every other progressive issue in existence, eh?)

### Police intimidation

At a hearing in December 2005 for a beating that took place in May 2002 (!), nearly 65 officers showed up to support the accused; the men making the claim were followed around during breaks.

Some cyclists in the May 2006 rides in Winnipeg have experienced intimidation by the police, including warnings to “watch [their] back[s]”. One, who was beaten in his cell at the Public Safety Building, was warned that if he did file a complaint with LERA, it would mean he would have to see the offending officers again.

### Exhaustion

The average time to complete an investigation was 13 months; that’s a lot of waiting and worrying. Many people have jobs that don’t permit the time off necessary to fully participate in the drawn out investigation and hearing process.

### Lack of confidence in the process

The outcomes of hearings are outside LERA’s mandate, but never has an officer been dismissed as a result. One of the worst ‘punishments’ an officer can get is “suspension with pay”.

Never has an officer admitted guilt. How can the service change without acknowledging it has a problem? How can healing begin when one party refuses to face its fault?

### No tracking of repeat offenders

Each LERA complaint is examined separately. Because of this, there is no tracking of whether an officer has multiple complaints against them. Such a pattern must be examined by the police service rather than the oversight body, which would obviously be reluctant to do so.

### No looking into systemic issues

The police system is outside the scope of what LERA deals with. They only look at individual acts by individual officers. No independent organization exists to make systemic suggestions, let alone demands, of the Winnipeg Police Service

## Discipline code

A cop commits a “disciplinary default” when they do any of the following:

- a. abuse of authority, including
  - i. making an arrest without reasonable or probable grounds,
  - ii. using unnecessary violence or excessive force,
  - iii. using oppressive or abusive conduct or language,
  - iv. being discourteous or uncivil,
  - v. seeking improper pecuniary or personal advantage, [pecuniary means a bribe]
  - vi. without authorization, serving or executing documents in a civil process, [what the hell does that mean?] and
  - vii. differential treatment without reasonable cause on the basis of any characteristic set out in subsection 9(2) of The Human Rights Code;
- b. making a false statement, or destroying, concealing, or altering any official document or record;
- c. improperly disclosing any information acquired as a member of the police department;
- d. failing to exercise discretion or restraint in the use and care of firearms;
- e. damaging property or failing to report the damage;
- f. being present and failing to assist any person in circumstances where there is a clear danger to the safety of that person or the security of that person’s property;
- g. violating the privacy of any person within the meaning of The Privacy Act;
- h. contravening this Act or any regulation under this Act [which act?], except where the Act or regulation provides a separate penalty for the contravention;
- i. assisting any person in committing a disciplinary default, or counselling or procuring another person to commit a disciplinary default.

The smallest bicycle that an adult can ride has wheels made from silver dollars.

Any of the above are grounds for filing complaints. Make sure you take note of badge numbers of any officers abusing this code.

# Media

## Working with the media

### Disclaimer

There is much debate regarding how we should interact with the media, especially the corporate media. “You don’t use the media, the media use you” is a mantra to keep in mind when doing media work. There are techniques to undermine the media but you’ll have to discover them on your own.

### The Message Track: Old Faithful

Reporters are a crafty bunch. They can and will take anything you say, and edit it to suit their own purposes. Your best defense against having your own words used against you (and the cause) is to say only what you wish to say, and nothing more.

For most subjects, that means picking a few key points, i.e. your “message track”, and sticking to them. Do not stray. Limiting your comments to the message tract will shelter you from the loaded questions and rapidfire commentary of the sneakiest, dirtiest, reporters. The bush administration is a sterling example of this.

In the case of Critical Mass, two useful points to remember are:

1. Bicycles are good.
2. Cops and motorists who threaten the rights and safety of cyclists are bad.

Of course, there are myriad subtopics and nuances relevant to the two overarching points, but your comments should stay on topic.

### Bad Dog!

Sometimes reporters will be belligerent and try to get a rise out of you, in the hopes of getting you to give them a juicy quote. As when dealing with a begging dog at the dinner table, your best option is to ignore them. Reporters need the story, and therefore, need you, so don’t reward their bad behaviour. Give them nothing unless they behave.

Some useful tactics:

- Stare at the camera blankly as though you didn’t hear the question
- That’s an interesting question, but I think the REAL issue is...
- Could you repeat the question?
- If I understand you correctly, you’re saying that \_\_\_(insert own comments here)
- I don’t believe that’s accurate or relevant.
- What everyone is talking about is...

# Resources

The Bike Dump’s Critical Mass Defense site  
[http://bike-dump.ca/critical\\_mass/](http://bike-dump.ca/critical_mass/)

A first-hand account of 26 May 2006  
<http://tearitdown.ca/archives/176/>

A Critical Mass Winnipeg site  
<http://criticalmasswinnipeg.net>

An older Critical Mass Winnipeg site; less current, but more history  
<http://members.shaw.ca/nomalathionplease/critical.htm>

Wikipedia’s article on Critical Mass  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical\\_Mass](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_Mass)

A directory of worldwide rides and information on history and ethics  
<http://critical-mass.info>





