

## Is a parking fee really a good idea?

With the exception of the scalding 110-degree heat in the summer, students grumble more about parking availability than anything else. We all whine on occasion (some of us daily) about our morning hikes to the classroom. But at least we can find solace in the fact that we don't have to pay for parking.

UNR has a parking fee and now some university officials at UNLV would like to follow suit and use the proceeds from a proposed fee to build two parking garages to cut down on the parking crunch.

At UNR students pay \$40 per year, the faculty pays \$60, and reserved parking costs \$300.

Although we all may be guilty (those of us with cars, that is) of complaining about the parking situation, are parking garages built with increased student fees truly the best solution to our problems?

First, let's ask ourselves, "How bad is the parking problem?" The biggest complaint is, "I couldn't find a spot today," which translates into, "I got to school late and all the close spaces were taken." The key word is close.

We are all fairly familiar with the rush hour scramble for spaces, but living in Las Vegas makes everyone a gambler. We pass up literally hundreds of parking spaces at the Thomas & Mack Center to cruise the other aisles at five mph looking for a vacant spot. Sometimes we luck out and sometimes we crap out.

It's frustrating at times, but ask yourselves does this minor inconvenience warrant a \$40 per year fee? Probably not. Besides we'd lose a perfectly good excuse for coming late to class.

The two proposed 1,000-car garages will take at least five years to fund and construct if the fee is enacted. How many of us plan to still be here in five years? Sure it will be a benefit to the school. It'll look great in those recruitment folders, but in the meantime our money might as well be spent buying more sushi for the snack bar. During construction at least 500 spaces will be blocked off which will only add to our parking woes.

This is not intended to be selfish. After all, in the age of recycling, everyone is dedicated to creating a better tomorrow that we may, or may not, be around to see. The thing is, recycling doesn't cost anything.

Even with construction of new facilities on campus taking a small bite out of the T & M lot, parking will not be a genuine problem for a long time to come. If anything, we should look into expanding our existing shuttle system to make those spots near the Fletcher Jones Tent Sale extravaganza not seem so far away.

Comparatively speaking, universities of similar size to UNLV not only pay for parking but usually have less available parking. We have it easy. Forty dollars a year is a high price to pay for the class of 2000 to have closer parking.

## The right film, the wrong reasons

by Debra D. Bass

At long last the film industry is producing a number of motion pictures that depict African-American culture in a positive light. For years, African-American roles have been restricted to secondary roles and, most times, stereotypical roles.

Finally, there has been a swell of support for films written by African-American writers, directed by African-American directors and starring African-American actors — *Boys in the Hood*, *Boomerang*, *Sarafina*, and the much awaited *Malcolm X*.

Spike Lee's latest endeavor will chronicle the life of one of the most controversial, hated and revered leaders in the African-American community during this century. Lee's history of box office successes has allowed him the liberty to engage in such bold productions.

From the variety of films by black artists being put out on the market, one would assume that the society was at last opening up and a cultural evolution was following; meaning more films on Native American, African, and European cultures, but this couldn't be further from the truth.

Lee performed an amazing feat in funding his first film *She's Gotta Have It*. Not only did he receive praise from critics, but made money at the theater and allowed him to make his later string of successes *School Daze*, *Do The Right Thing* and

*Jungle Fever*. Now he is making high budget films and hopes to be rewarded with more dollars at the box office.

Nobody faults him for wanting a success. If he can attract people who might never listen to the philosophies of Malcolm X otherwise, he is obviously creating a greater atmosphere of acceptance by making the movie. However, in the process of

making this feature with a genuine desire to attract a diverse audience, his efforts are being exploited.

Lee has launched a campaign urging students, professionals, and workers in all occupations to take the day off and see the movie. Why? So that it will make big, big bucks causing the dollar signs in the eyes of studio executives to light up. This will lead to more films in this genre and more African-Americans on the scene. In an interview, Lee commented that "It all comes down to the almighty dollar," which is truly a sad commentary on our times.

This is not a plea to boycott the movie out of protest for the system, but rather a request that if you do choose to see *Malcolm X*, please appreciate the uniqueness of the subject matter and presentation. If we start supporting films out of the mainstream, one

day we'll see a change at the theaters. Despite Lee's request to abandon your studies and call in sick to your jobs, (unlike other less publicized presentations) this movie will be around for a while. Don't use the opening as an excuse to skip class.

### 'Malcolm X'



Denzel Washington plays Malcolm X in the Spike Lee film opening tomorrow.

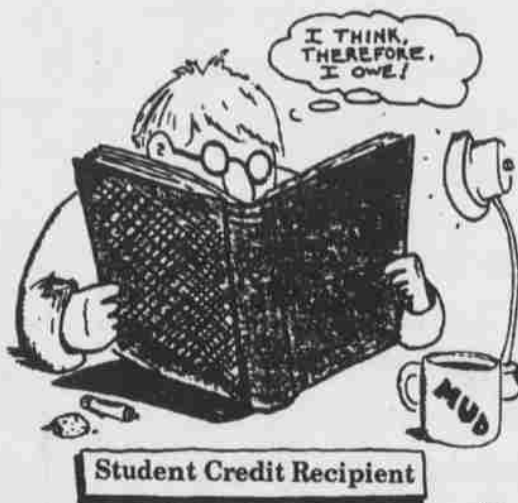
## Are students being sold into debt?

by Debra D. Bass

Classrooms used to be sacred ground—just a teacher, a lesson plan, some books, and a few students. Then politics entered the classroom—no Darwinism, no religion, no silent prayer. But since when did company advertising become an integral facet of our educational system? It corrupts the learning process and often performs a disservice to students.

From kindergarten to high school, the only posters on the walls were maps or variations of those corny do-your-best-and-you-will-succeed posters, and the only thing students were asked to do was learn. However, most UNLV classrooms are devoid of educational or inspirational wall hangings. Unless, of course, you consider pencil and pen graffiti (about who sucks what and who was here last) educational.

Even before students have been formally introduced to their teacher, they have encountered an array of strategically placed ads for Visa, Mastercard, AT&T,



Student Credit Recipient

Chase Manhattan, Bank of America, Sprint, and the list goes on.

Not only do these ads line the halls and the doors, they sit on display during our classes. Unfortunately, not even the most enthusiastic instructor can retain full student attention at all times. It's only a matter of time before a student is tempted to take a look and pick up one of the attractive colorful brochures. That is the whole point of the display isn't it, to rope distracted students in as a promotional campaign (the advertising agent who came up with this gimmick was probably promoted for this display of genius).

And the best thing—or the worst thing—is that these ads

don't discriminate. Everybody's eligible, as long as they are students; and who else would be in a classroom? Some of them offer travel discounts or special long distance phone rates as an added incentive. And guess what? We sign up in droves and they approve us thousands of dollars in credit—limits that are higher than our monthly incomes, sometimes higher than our yearly incomes. But that is what credit is all about (or so we think), buying something that you don't have the money to buy for a modest interest fee and low monthly payments—\$15 on a thousand dollar debt. It's like trying throwing peas at a gluttonous monster who won't be settled until he's eaten your first born, but most of us have to learn our lesson the hard way.

Maybe that's the connection with our school system, learning life's cynical theory that you don't get something for nothing, because there is always a catch.