

Parking permit forgeries on the rise

by Dean Bennett

Forged parking permits, always a problem at the U of A, are on the rise this year. As a result Campus Security and Parking Services are cracking down on those who seek to park without payment.

"There seems to have been a rash of them (violations) lately," said Director of Campus Security Doug Langevin. "We just caught our second one in the last three weeks and 15 to 20 have been caught over the past year."

These forgeries come in many forms says Manager of Parking Services Allan Mah.

"To avoid lineups for parking permits in the first week of September Parking Services issued temporary parking passes through the mail with instructions to come pick up full-time permits anytime in September. As a result students would come pick up their full time permit on, say, September 10 and then sell the temporary permit to someone else," he said.

"For the whole month of September every park was full, full, full," he continued. "We caught a few dozen (violators) there."

The other forger problem has to do with temporary permits. "They either xerox them or change the (expiry) date on them," said Mah. "We use a date stamp so they just white it out and stamp over it."

Full time permits, the ones you stick on the side window of your car, are also counterfeited. "You'd be surprised at how much talent we have out there," said Mah. "Some (permits) look like the real McCoy."



photo Stephen Pandke

Unfortunately even the best forgeries will have flaws and Parking Services has staff members that do nothing else except go around and check stickers on cars.

"Some of the students think once they get past the kiosk operator they're in the clear," said Mah. "But we have guys checking cars in every parkade every day."

Being caught with a forged permit can prove to be a costly proposition.

"We make them pay for the park-

ing obtained by the permit; we recommend a fine of \$100 to \$200 and they have to pay to get their car back from the towing firm," said Langevin.

"We do recommend people who are caught to DIE Board for disciplinary action," added Mah. "A lot of students are surprised that something like this could damage their university careers."

Langevin feels this increase in forgeries is due to mounting frustration on the part of students who

can not get parking spots. Right now Parking Services has 1,000 applicants waiting to get spots. At this time last year the number was about 200.

To rectify this problem the university has hired a consultant to study the whole university area and recommend an area to be used as another parking structure.

"It will be a joint venture between us and the Jubilee or us and the University Hospital," said Mah.



Dean Bennett

Something that never ceases to amaze me about newspaper readers is their reaction to film and theatre reviews. How many times have you been out with a friend and have recommended a movie because the critics liked it and he or she responded, "Oh, critics. What do they know?"

You never hear these comments when some writer reviews a hockey game or an editorial questions some new governmental policy decision. Only in the area of arts reviews is the general public quick to dismiss an article based not on points raised in the article but on the general perception of the author.

Why is that?

I think it's because arts is one of the few areas where the analysis is totally subjective and therefore subject to unlimited number of defensible interpretations. This is unlike other review articles. If you write the Detroit Red Wings are a totally useless hockey team, and the team has won only two of twenty games, nobody can really dispute your analysis because the futility is right there in black and white. The same goes for news. You can call some new budget unfair because it slashed X amount of dollars to social programs and that can't be disputed because the figures are there in black and white.

In arts it's different. Saying the acting is good in a play is a subjective comment. It's an impression the reviewer has received and it's hard to break the acting down into components to figure out how they come together to produce an effective work.

The problem arises reading a review you don't agree with; and because it is subjective there is nothing tangible to refer to to discern who is "right" and who is "wrong". Also, you don't usually remember the times you agree with a reviewer because he or she is then confirming what you already believe. But you tend to remember when you disagree and over time this seems to build up into an impression that the critic doesn't know his rear end from third base.

In defense of the critic it's wrong to dismiss the article because "it's just his opinion." It is his opinion but it's an opinion that is usually based on years of analysis of the field. In film for example, there appears to be a general correlation between what film critics and film professors like and dislike. Although they may disagree on minor points (and sometimes major ones) they generally agree on whether a film is good, bad, or *Shanghai Surprise*.

There are, of course, egregious exceptions.

Like when Leonard Maltin gave *Spies Like Us* a nine (out of a possible ten). Is he kidding? Ah, what does he know?

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