

# Opinion

## Editorial

### No parking fee increase

Eight dollars a month for parking is too much on a college campus.

Yet this is the very amount the administration is presently considering to charge next year. The rate hike will affect not only students, but faculty and staff as well.

This is a huge increase over the \$25 currently being charged for an entire school year. The concept at work here is since there is such a huge demand for parking, it is more valuable. Since parking is more valuable, people will pay more for it. Therefore, raise the price. This is a very capitalistic idea.

It is not, however, logical on a college campus for a number of reasons.

First, it is true that if things are in large demand, the price can be raised and people will still pay it if they want the product or service. But this campus is not a free market economy and commuter students do not have the option of refusing to park. They absolutely have to pay the fee.

Second, things are generally cheaper in bulk when there is cooperation involved. This is the theory behind mass public transportation, cooperative buying and community living. If this campus is a community, then we should be working together. If more people are parking than there should be a bigger pool of money from which to make expansions and improvements.

It is true that the extra money will go to improvements (after a trip down to University Park, and at their discretion), but we all know that once something goes up, it never comes back down. In fact, it usually keeps going up. Long after the planned improvements are paid for, Behrend students will still be paying the outrageous fee.

Is this just a way to hide yet another tuition increase? Is it possible that if no one paid their fee the administration would see the error in their theory?

## The Collegian

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# Mike Royko

## Free Expression's Truly a Work of Art

by Mike Royko

I'm basically simple-minded when it comes to visual art. My tastes run toward sunsets, desert scenes, sailing ships and that sort of lowbrow stuff, although I draw the line at clown portraits.

So as a lowbrow, I'll take the word of the experts and critics that the late Robert Mapplethorpe's controversial photography is brilliant art.

On the other hand, even someone ignorant of the finer points of art has a right to an opinion. And you don't have to be Archie Bunker to think that at least a few of Mapplethorpe's creations are revolting and disgusting.

If an art expert spent a week trying to persuade me that there is artistic merit in one particular Mapplethorpe photograph, I would listen and try to be open-minded.

But at the end of the week, I would say: "I still think that a photo of one man making wee-wee in the mouth of another man is real sicko. Go hang it on your own living room wall, if you wish. I'd rather have a travel poster."

So I can understand why some people in Cincinnati are in an uproar because Mapplethorpe's work is being shown at that city's Contemporary Art Center.

There's nothing really wrong with an occasional uproar over an art exhibit. If nothing else, the publicity increases attendance at art galleries and gets protesters out into the fresh air, waving signs and shouting for the TV cameras.

If the right of artistic expression allows an art center to show a few revolting photographs, people have the right to march outside and shout: "That's really icky."

But I think the prosecutors in Cincinnati are being a bit silly to haul a grand jury to cluck-cluck at the exhibit and bring criminal charges against the director of the museum.

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In fact, I'm amazed. The same exhibit was shown in Chicago, which is much bigger than Cincinnati, and surely has even more self-appointed art censors. But there wasn't even a minor fuss here.

I don't understand Chicago's indifference. When a white art student displayed a painting of the late Mayor Harold Washington wearing a lady's undergarments, several Chicago aldermen were so offended that they illegally seized the painting. And there was picketing, chanting, racial jibes and all the other elements of an entertaining uproar.

Later, a black art student put up a display that included an American flag on the floor -- sort of like a throw rug -- which brought out white



Mike Royko

politicians, military veterans and other instant censors who put on fine performance for the TV news shows.

What made Chicago's two artistic furors so satisfying was that they sort of offset each other and showed that no one group has a lock on foolishness.

The black aldermen and their followers are great believers in freedom. Except when freedom applies to the right of an art student to create a painting that offends them.

And the white politicians and their followers also say they believe in what the flag represents -- including freedom of artistic expression -- except when another art student's form of artistic expression offends them.

That's why I find a certain malicious justice in the reaction of the Cincinnati censors.

Mapplethorpe was gay, and much of his work had homosexual themes, including some that is kind of kinky. (The critics describe it as homoerotic or sadomasochistic, but I prefer the word "kinky" because it's easier to spell.)

Because he was gay, many gays view the protests and censorship efforts as an attack on all of them, their community, their lifestyles, etc.

And I'm sure that figures into the motives of some of the protesters, and maybe some of Cincinnati's politicians. As kinky as some of Mapplethorpe's work is, they can turn to their cable movie channels almost any night and see or hear all sorts of behavior that is more bizarre than those photos. But nobody is arresting the cable company owners.

On the other hand, many gay organizations and individuals, who defend the right to display Mapplethorpe's work, were after Andy Rooney's hide for expressing a few opinions they didn't like.

In another case, their organized pressure brought about changes in a planned TV script that involved gays. Because they didn't want to see it aired, they didn't want anyone else to see it. They succeeded.

And if they don't like something they read, they don't hesitate to organize letter and phone campaigns to the writer's boss. Which is just another form of attempted censorship.

Ah, but that's what makes this such a great nation. Eventually, everybody's ox gets gored.