

## Explaining The High Cost Of Books

A quick sampling of student opinion on the U.P.E.I.'s Bookstore's prices obtained comments such as, "Pretty high", "Too high", "Pretty outrageous". Indeed the bookstore prices would seem to be on the exorbitant side, but there are some very good reasons for this situation. Russel Stewart, Bookstore manager explained the details of the situation in a recent interview.

First of all, one is not going to make one's first million in the textbook trade. There is a very small and constantly shifted market being catered to. Some textbooks might sell as low as 400 or 500 copies. There is a shortage of paper products and the consequent demand has forced prices sky high. The paper product workers are paid high wages. etc.

Transportation from the producers to U.P.E.I. may cost anywhere from \$1.25 to

\$2.00 a book. The real crunch would seem to come at the border which most books traverse on the way from the American publishers. The exchange between American and Canadian currency tacks another \$.25 or so per dollar value on the book.

The Bookstore does not make a profit from the sales of textbooks. If the Bookstore did want to make a profit, it would have to charge 20 or 25% more on the book.

However the Bookstore does make a profit of between 15,00- and 25,000 dollars a year which goes to the university, says Mr. Stewart. The profit is made from the sale of cigarettes, candy, clothing, etc. All items which the Bookstore has been asked to stock by the students.

Some student feel that the store's clothing is excessively priced. The reason- The U.P.E.I. Bookstore only stocks top quality products. "The best you

can buy." claims Mr. Stewart. This quality results in orders coming in from all across Canada and the United States.

Is there any solution to the high price of books? Mr. Stewart suggested that his store could act as used book dealers if the circumstances allowed. The problem is that Professors are constantly changing and updating textbooks. Orders resulting in used books being outdated. This updating is supposedly necessary to keep pace with new advances.

Incidentally, there are some very good buys on some paperbacks, with prices running as low as 65¢ or 75¢ a copy.

Pat Moore.



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### OVER 90% OF TEXTBOOKS FOREIGN.

It's a sad state of affairs when a university such as U.P.E.I. must import over 90% of their textbooks from a foreign country. What happened to Canadian content?

You might ask what's the fuss about a Biology text, for example being published in a foreign country. The fact is that the student

studying the text gets the opinion of a foreigner- of a member of a foreign country. In this area we would like to think that we are dealing with matters of a scientific fact not opinion. Common sense would tell us that the percentage of proven knowledge would out weigh the percentage of opinion in this field. Probably true the amount of foreign opinion would be small.

What about areas of study in which opinion would seem to out weigh knowledge, take literature or psychology for example. Here, the amount of foreign opinion, often contrary to Canadian ideals is great.

What's wrong with foreign opinions? A university should be an arena for a whole world of knowledge, shouldn't it? Yes, it should. A Canadian university should obviously

be open to foreign opinions but it would seem logical that a good share of the opinion would be Canadian.

The truth is that the vast majority of U.P.E.I. imported textbooks are from the U.S. We don't get a mosaic of foreign opinions, we get American opinions. We are being bombarded by American views, views which are often contrary to the rest of the world's opinions.

It would seem that the Americans would have us cornered in every area of the media? Can Canadians possibly maintain a distinct identity under such a brutal attack? No!

Its time to resist. Canada needs to have its own media. Textbooks are of the utmost importance since they often shape our mode of thinking. We should use textbooks of varying opinions from around the world but Canadian textbooks should be prevalent.

We should urge book publishers to publish Canadian textbooks, the government to assist publishers, and Canadians to buy the textbooks.

- Pat Moore.