

# Rating Bookstore prices

by Randal Smathers

According to a small scale survey done on behalf of the Gateway, the U of A has the highest prices for texts of three campuses surveyed.

Basic texts in six science courses were compared with NAIT prices on similar books. The cost at the university store was \$17.45 higher than those at the NAIT store, a difference of just over six per cent on \$279 worth of texts.

It must be noted that only two of the books corresponded exactly between the institutions. *Economics, Principles, Problems and Policies* was \$37.95 at both places, but the other, *Physics* by Giancoli, was \$44.25 at NAIT and \$48.70 at the university.

The rest of the books used in the survey are approximate equivalents. Due to varying course material, it is rare for the same textbook to be used in the two schools.

The other school in the comparison is Okanagan College in Kelowna, B.C. Nine textbooks were used in this part of the study, with a more varied selection due to the wider range of courses at the non-technical school.

The total cost at the B.C. institution was \$382.20, while in Edmonton, the price was \$394.65, a difference of \$12.45.

This works out to slightly over three per cent more money for books at a larger institution in a province where the cost of living is substantially lower.

A comparison was also done between our own bookstore and three downtown booksellers on dictionary prices. This is where the university store gets its highest marks.

Not only did the campus facility offer the largest selection of any of the stores surveyed, but with a single exception, the U of A store had as low or lower prices than anyone else.

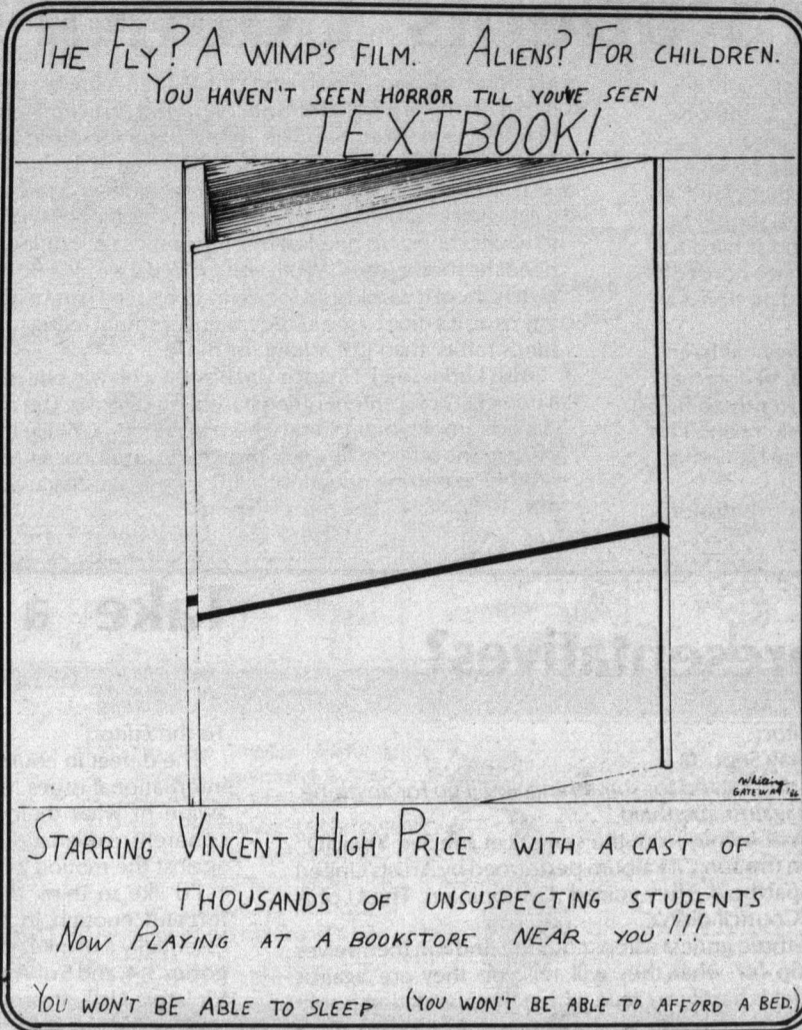
The downtown Eaton's had Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary on sale for \$19.95, two dollars less than on campus. Every other dictionary found was at least as expensive, if not more so, off-campus, and no store was found that had the selection of the university's.

The Students' Union is doing a comprehensive study of the situation, with a survey involving twelve titles and eighteen campuses across Canada. The survey will have no practical application until next semester, however, as October 1 was the cutoff for textbook refunds.

Prices on non-curricular materials imported from the United States will soon be going up as well, due to a new tariff on imported books which is to take effect this fall. For further details on the tariff and efforts to repeal it, refer to last Tuesday's Gateway.

One fact becomes clear from the research done for this article. Even if textbook prices were to be rolled back to the level of the cheapest school we surveyed, books would still be expensive.

The good news here of course, is that you should be able to sell that pricey text for a decent buck next fall. After all, someone has to make a profit, right?



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If you are interested in participating on any of these committees, please come to Room 259 SUB and fill in an application form. They are available from the receptionist.

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS:**  
Monday, October 6, 4:00 P.M.

### STAFF MEETING

Thurs. Oct. 2nd

4:30 p.m.

everyone welcome!