

Book-buying

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buying books that only Donald Trump or Bill Cosby could realistically afford.

However, the hindsight solution (and foresight for next year) to all this mess is to consult the course professors directly. They should have been notified of any possible availability trouble and would know if alternates are required. From them, get a list of all, repeat all, (the books and the editions) you will need for the coming year and prepare thyself for a mighty long quest.

The first step is ye olde second hand bookstore in the Dal SUB. Although the selection is not the greatest and the markup is horrendous (15%), buying books there can still be far less expensive than at Billy-Bob's Boffo Bucks Bookstore in the basement.

As an alternative, the various second hand bookstores around town often contain materials that would be useful to English, history and poli-sci majors, among others. Back Pages on Queen Street, Schooner Books on Inglis, JWD on Granville, Attic Owl on South, and the The Book Rack in the Woodlawn Mall are good places to start. Their prices are usu-

ally quite reasonable and the selection is varied, especially for popular and classic novels.

Should these options fail, there are numerous retail bookstores around town that would be likely to hold a fair number of texts, with the exception of certain science and medical books, of course.

Another possibility is to locate the desired texts through friends or advertising. Be warned, though! The success of either method depends greatly on the materials used. Choose carefully!

After trying the above suggestions with little or no success, the only remaining option is to attack the bookstore itself. Therefore, walk softly and carry a big stick. That way, it is much easier to sneak up and beat senseless that student ahead of you who is stealing the last copy of *Wuthering Heights*. Seriously though folks, shop carefully in the bookstore. Many classes, particularly English, will place a classic piece of literature on the book list that has been printed by several different companies. Invariably, the prices on each edition will be different. For example, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is on at least three different class lists this year and each class has its own 'special' edition to suit the needs of

that particular class: Granted, some of the editorial stuff might be interesting but, judging by the prices, the students' best interests are not at heart. One edition sold for \$6.95, one for \$3.95 and one, a Penguin Classics version, for \$2.50. Guess what? The Penguin edition was not only cheaper but it was far better in terms of editorial content. Of course, far be it for a lowly student to question the almighty wisdom of the departments, professors, bookstore as to why 3 different versions, in sets of 35 copies each, were ordered instead of 105 copies of the single cheap edition.

Another thing to watch out for is different prices on the same book. Supposedly, the differences in shipping times cause the price increase. Ha! More likely a plot to keep escalating the prices of books without anyone noticing it. A student walks in, picks up a book and finds one copy, left over from last weeks shipment, that is

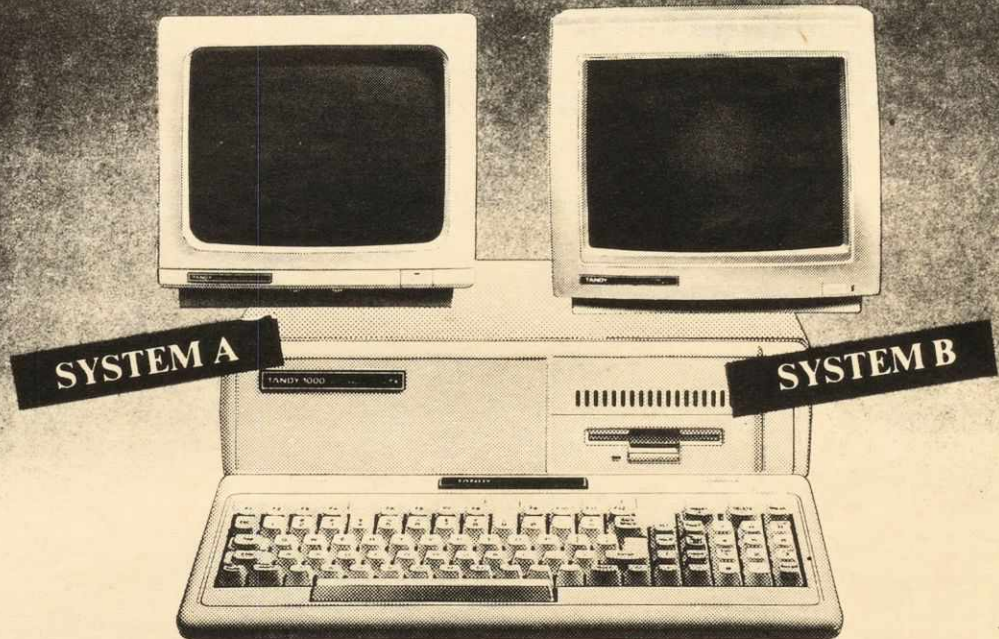
cheaper than the newest order (which is purposely too small). Feeling pleased that he is getting the better end of a bookstore mistake, he buys his book and walks off all happy and smug. What he does not realize is that as soon as the current copies dwindle to non-existence (causing a re-order and a justifiable price hike) the new copies will be placed on the shelf with no-one the wiser that the price has increased.

Granted, the above ideas are only theories. Unfortunately, the only thing that would get the truth out of the bookstore is a Spanish Inquisition. Changes are needed... and soon. With increasing tuition and living costs, many students may not have to worry about buying books from Dalhousie University Bookstore ever again. Yes indeed, Canada has instilled the true spirit of capitalism in her entrepreneurs: steal from the young and poor and pay alms to the rich and powerful.

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