

Because money for books is tight...

by Simon Chung and staff

Lies my university told me: 1) an arts degree means something in the real world; 2) taking a science course you aren't interested in will make you a better person; 3) your education will cost you about \$2,200 this year.

Even if you don't live in residence, a university education will cost you more than just tuition. Everybody needs books, for instance, and textbooks for some individual courses can cost more than \$200.

A used bookstore will be opening in the Student Centre. If you can't find what you're looking for there, Toronto, being a two-university town, has a number of used bookstores you might want to look at.

Abbey Books

For a different book-buying experience, you might want to try Abbey Books (89 Harbord Street), which sells muffins, fruit juices, espresso and other refreshments on the premises. There are a lot of tables and, to benefit needy students (or those mean enough to pretend they are), bottled water and coffee are free.

Abbey Books has extensive sections on Canadian literature, history, politics and foreign affairs, as well as a better than average selection of books on psychology, anthropology, political science and theology. It even sells classical music scores.

Seekers

Even more unique is Seekers (509 Bloor Street West); few bookstores reflect the personality of their owners as distinctly. Upon stepping into this basement store, one is immediately surrounded by the sweet smell of incense, as well as an abundance of books on mysticism, the occult and Eastern and native religions.

There's even a section on Carlos Castaneda.

The rest of the collection, including literature, history, philosophy and classical studies are of general, rather than academic, interest. Science fiction buffs should appreciate the growing collection in the back.

For music lovers, Seekers has a roomful of groovy records and CDs, where you can find anything from new age to world beat.

Its central location and late hours (it doesn't seem to close before midnight) make Seekers well worth a visit. Around March, watch out for what its owner affectionately calls his Half Price Income Tax Sale.

Atticus Books

Atticus Books (84 Harbord Street) is the best academic bookstore in the city, with an excellent selection of new and used philosophical texts and an extensive economics section. Its other strengths include a wide range of history books (including African and Asian), art, anthropology, literary criticism, Judaica and classical studies.

The store's section on literature tends towards hardcovers (including rare and first editions), with few paperbacks. If you're interested in literature, a better bet would be Abelard Books (519 Queen Street West).

Abelard Books

Abelard has a strong literature section, which includes some French, German and Russian selections. As you might expect from a store named after a 12th century philosopher and theologian, it has a lot of works on philosophy, theology and church history.

Although Abelard's medieval and Renaissance sections are quite good,

its history section seems to be mostly popular and coffee table books. Its stocks of archeology, anthropology, science, women's studies and psychology also seem poor.

Village Bookstore

Canadian literature is abundant at the Village Bookstore (239 Queen Street West), which also boasts an art section which contains both quality and quantity and a lot of books on history (although they tend to be Eurocentric). You can also find shelves of books on politics, including theory, international relations and, in the Women's section, sexual politics.

The Village Bookstore displays its books with the cover out (not the spine), which makes them hard to leaf through. If you can hold out until December or January, it has an annual half-price sale.

About Books

Finally, situated in a lovely two story semi-detached house, About Books (83 Harbord Street) possesses an air of cosy hominess. Walking



among its rooms, you can easily imagine being in the library of a bookish friend or relative.

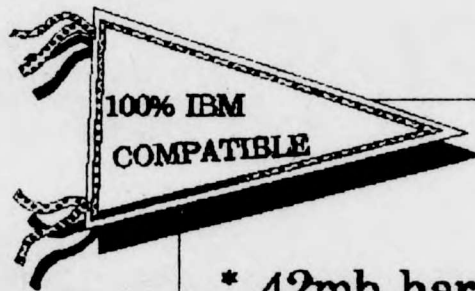
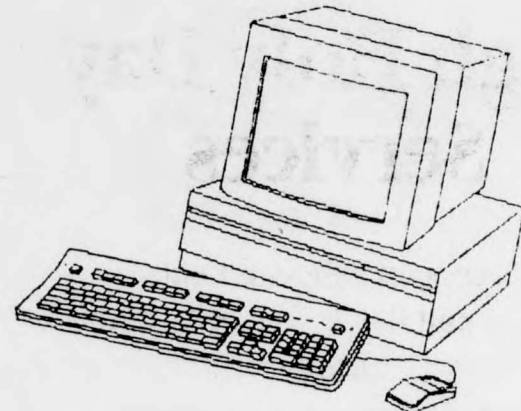
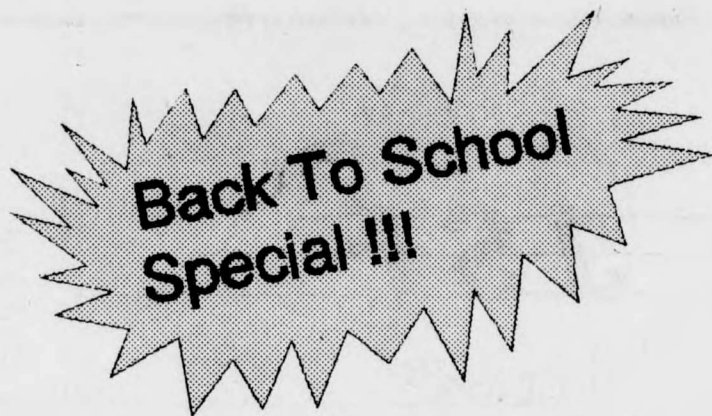
Having moved to its present location only a year ago, About Books

still has a great deal of Queen Street West in it, as attested to by its strong literature and fine arts collections. Also of note are its history and drama sections, and you will be able to find

a large number of computer manuals. In terms of academic texts in general, though, About Books pales in comparison to its two neighbours, Atticus and Abbey.



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