

# The Aletheia

VOLUME 12 NUMBER 4

MONTREAT-ANDERSON

DEC. 9, 1988

## M-AC BOOKSTORE PROFITS: COMPARATIVE SHOPPING IN BLACK MOUNTAIN

When one initially shops at the Montreat-Anderson College Bookstore, prices that tend to be higher are one aspect that draws attention. The selection is small in this store, and prices are higher on some items. Despite this fact, students continue to shop there because of the convenience and for the clothes that have the school's name and logo. Research conducted for this article includes comparative prices for selected items and an interview with the manager of the bookstore.

Comparative prices for some items:

| ITEM              | M-AC BOOKSTORE | ROSES          | ECKERDS   |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| POSTERBOARD       | \$.45          | \$.47          | \$.63     |
| LIQUID PAPER      | 1.69           | 1.69           | 1.69      |
| SCOTCH TAPE       | .85            | .78            | .99       |
| LARGE HIGHLIGHTER | .79            | .67            | .99       |
| ERASER            | .40 (no brand) | .37 (Pedigree) |           |
| CRAYOLA MARKERS   | 3.27           | 2.27           | 3.39      |
| BIC PENS          | .45 (apiece)   | 1.67 (for 10)  | 1.79 (10) |

Although the bookstore is not generally the lower priced place to shop, it is not excessively high in its prices. My initial opinion was one of anger that the school could use the bookstore, which is supposedly for the students, as a source of revenue. After reviewing comparative research and the interview conducted, one should be more aware of the situation that does cause prices to rise in certain areas.

The subject of my interview was Mrs. Andrews, the manager of the M-AC bookstore. According to Mrs. Andrews, the reason why the prices may be higher at times is "volume." Quantities of items at the bookstore are bought in four and six dozen, while a store such as Roses buys the items by the trainload. The bookstore generally follows guidelines for pricing by the National Association of College Bookstores. This association sets guidelines for pricing most merchandise, which are generally reasonable. The College may, however, adjust their prices at their own discretion.

### SHANNON HODGINS

Other factors which influence the prices of other stores are their season specials and "real deals." These stores are able to mark their price to a lower one because of the volume that is bought. Before each semester, Mrs. Andrews buys all of the items which are sold. So, items are not able to be on "special."

Concerning the topic of the schoolbooks which are NECESSARY for students to buy, yes, the books are somewhat higher in price. But again, the prices are due to volume.

Bookstores on large university campus are subsidized by the school. The school buys all of the books which are contained in the store, and generally they are all sold to the students. The M-AC bookstore, according to Mrs. Andrews, is not able to do that. The books are sold at twenty percent markup on the suggested retail price, and if there is not a given retail price, one is set. Out of this 20% profit, freight costs must be paid for the book to arrive at school, and if the book is not sold at the end of the year, freight cost must be paid for the return trip of the book.

Comments that Mrs. Andrews made concerning the bookstore were ones that were reasonable, and, I believe, accurate. Because of Montreat's small size, there are minimal higher costs to be paid by the students. Perhaps with new admission standards and larger enrollment of students--some of the higher priced items will drop. Mrs. Andrews commented that the store makes rock-bottom profits, and that

the store tries "not to be a detriment to the college and if anything, make a profit." She would "rather make less profit and serve the student" and does "listen to the comments of students concerning items they would like the store to carry".

Although I am not entirely convinced of the store's minimal profit, the reasons why the store contains higher priced items are sincere. In my personal opinion, I believe that the store should make no profit, and carry the items for the convenience of the students. But, what BUSINESSSES adhere to that policy?

## HUNGRY EYES

### PAULA JOHNSON

When I got back to Montreat from Jamaica is when the trip finally hit me in the face. The things we saw, the things we did, the people we met, the situations we were a part of were only in our memories. We can escape from the reality of Jamaica. I was ready to leave Jamaica when the time came for us to pack up but once I got back to Montreat and had time to reflect on the trip, I was sad. I was sad because I saw how blessed and how good we have it here in the United States. Eighty percent of Jamaica is in the poor class. We have poor sections in the United States too but we are a rich country compared to Jamaica, a third world country. We found a one room shack, maybe 10' by 10', housing twelve people; eight children and four women. The record one room house was occupied by twenty-one people! If any of these people came to my room at school, they would think I was rich. And you know what, I am rich and you are too! We have been made rich by God's love and grace. We can afford a 25 cent bar of soap. These people were begging for just a bar of soap. We can go to our closet on Sunday morning and choose what we are going to wear. One little girl said she didn't go to church because she didn't have anything to wear. There's not many people in this country that don't know what it's like to not have a bathroom and running water in your house. Well, most of the Jamaican people don't have the conveniences that we have and we take them for granted.

How many times do you complain about the food you have before you? These people were lucky to have one measly meal a day. Most of them ben

and steal to get what food they do eat. That I'm saying to you is probably going in one ear and out the other. You're probably thinking, "Oh, how sad." It's not just sad, it's real! Thirteen students from Montreat saw it and it made us sick. I wish all people could see something like we did in Jamaica because it would make you think and make you more appreciative. We were all teary-eyed when we came home because we really noticed all the food that people waste. Did you know that America produces enough food to feed the whole world? You are probably saying, "I can't do anything for this situation." Oh, yes you can! You can appreciate what has been provided for you and really thank our Lord for giving you food that you don't have to beg or steal for. And when I say thank God for your food, I mean thank Him from your heart with a real meaning in it. The next thing you can do is not waste your food. Don't get more than you are going to eat and eat all that you put on your plate. Another thing you can do is not

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## WHO GOOFED? SGA REACTION GETS REACTION GREG FERRELL

Just what happened the other day in convocation? I'm talking about the new policy regarding noise during convocation and chapel. I'm still not quite sure that anyone understands what's going on. If you're interested, here's the scoop.

First of all let the record show that convocation and chapel have been a part of the Montreat-Anderson College experience for a long time. There isn't much hope that this will change any time in the near future. There really shouldn't be any hope for changing it anyway. Convocation provides a time for communication and advertisement to take place between different groups on campus. It may not be of interest to you but it is to someone. Chapel is also a vital part of the Christian character of Montreat-Anderson College. Everyone knew that attendance was required before they entered this college.

Secondly, let me say that there is a lot of talk about the poor quality of the speakers that we've had this past semester. The SGA has approached the administration with a proposal that would allow more student input on selection of chapel/convocation speakers. The administration is very

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