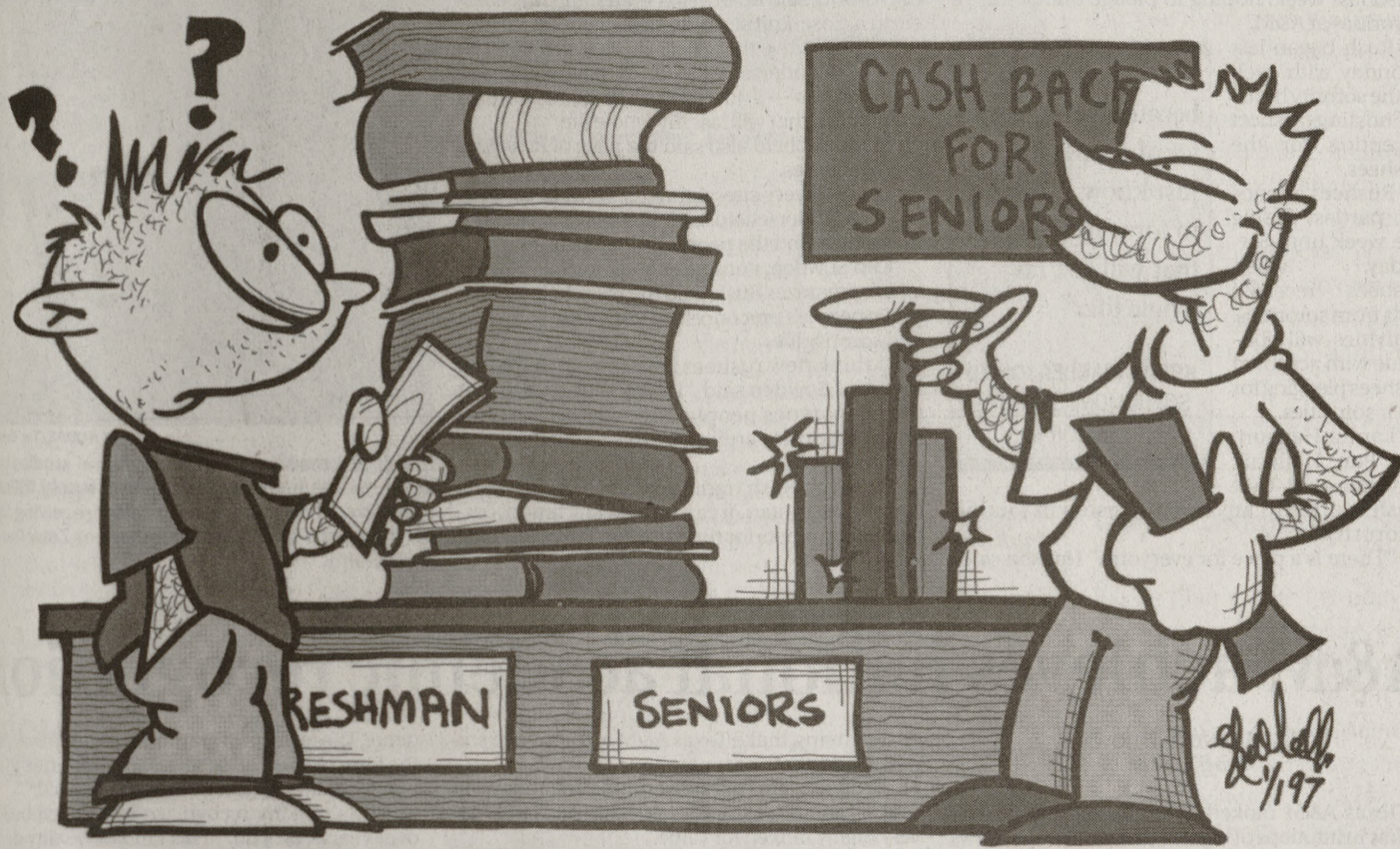


# Less book for more buck



Every semester, Aggies participate in book-buying, the costly tradition

By **STEPHEN WELLS**  
Staff writer

OK, everybody has just moved to Aggeland. They have taken care of tuition, cleaned up their new homes and gone to a few parties. Now they need books. Some may feel the need to sell a lot of plasma after they have left the bookstore.

College students need to accept that book prices are high. Shri Parchure, Loupot's book department manager, said running a bookstore is just like running any other business.

"Book prices are high when they come in here," Parchure said. "We have to pay more for our books than a normal bookstore."

He went on to say it is a matter of supply and demand, but College Station's abundance of bookstores creates competition that drives down the prices.

"[In] this town, people have a bookstore nearby wherever they live," Parchure said. "You have the bookstores on Northgate and Southgate. You also have the MSC Bookstore and the stores on Harvey road. It is very convenient for the students of A&M to have so many bookstores."

This reduces prices and increases accessibility; both are good for students.

"Even the on-campus bookstore is owned by a corporation in New York," Parchure said.

All of the off-campus bookstores are owned or were started by Aggie graduates. Since prices are so similar for books, buying them becomes a matter of convenience and style. How students like to shop is also a determining factor in where they shop.

"It's like going to Luby's," Parchure said. "Some people do not like to stand in line so they do not go. Some go because they like to see what it is they are getting before they pay for it. At the MSC, you see what you are getting. At Loupot's, we get your books for you. It is just a matter of taste."

To help curb some of the cost for school supplies, many students choose to buy only their books at bookstores and get other supplies elsewhere. Students who buy in bulk at Office Max or Office Depot save money by going out of their way to get essential supplies.

Another method of saving cash is buying used books. All used books are on average 25 percent cheaper than their new counterparts. Mack Paradowski, a junior environmental design ma-

ior, has a theory for book-buying.

"Just get somebody's books that they couldn't sell back," Paradowski said. "The only differences between the editions will be the practice problems."

Other students buy their outside of class reading books and read them quickly so they can turn them in for a full refund.

Still, books are an expensive investment. Some students spend \$200 for books. Others, like Nicole Brenneman, a freshman biology major, spent upwards of \$400, even with the used book discount.

Expectations for the cost of books vary from students to student.

"I spent \$415 on books and I still have another book to buy," Brenneman said, "I expected to pay a lot less than that."

Many freshmen are surprised when they see their first bill for books. Others are pessimistic at the outset to avoid the heartache of hundreds of their dollars spent in a manner of seconds. Travis Lott, freshman animal science major, summed up his feelings with a simple prediction.

"I haven't bought my books yet, but when I do I bet I'll get screwed," Lott said.

## Summer movies make impression

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The 1997 summer movie season was touted as the most competitive ever. It lived up to its billing.

When the Labor Day weekend's receipts are tallied, summer sales will be narrowly — perhaps no more than 1 percent — ahead of last year's summer record of \$2.38 billion, Exhibitor Relations Co. estimated.

But the results came at a high price: Production and marketing budgets were up as much as 25 percent from a year ago. Several wildly expensive summer movies, including *Batman and Robin* and *Speed 2: Cruise Control*, fared miserably.

Actual admissions were probably

down from a year ago; the record-breaking numbers are largely attributable to costlier movie tickets — now \$9 in some urban markets.

The five highest-grossing films between Memorial and Labor Day were, in order, *Men in Black*, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, *Air Force One*, *My Best Friend's Wedding* and *Face/Off* in their wake were dozens of also-rans, movies that barely made enough money to pay the caterer.

"It was absolutely the most competitive summer ever," said Robert Bucksbaum, publisher of *Reel Source*, a newsletter for industry insiders and movie theater owners.

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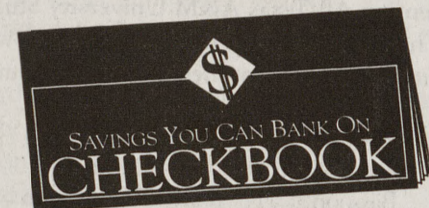
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