

## Reselling Used Textbooks A Good Way To Save Money

by Bette Billington

In the midst of the budget cuts and threatened higher tuition and boarding rates, some feel that there are many ways in which the college could save money. One way is to purchase and re-sell used textbooks.

Currently, Potsdam State's bookstore does not repurchase used books. This, according to bookstore employees, is a local policy. This policy, however, is not SUNY mandated, nor is it consistent with neighboring branches of the SUNY system. In fact, at Canton ATC, the

bookstore does repurchase books.

Essentially, re-selling used books, is a money making proposition. Students who buy used books find that they can better balance their finances. The college, which sells used books at a higher market value than it purchased them, also makes money. This is one of those rare occasions, apparently, where everyone benefits. Students save and the bookstore (and the college) earn.

At Kent State University in Ohio, for example, each campus bookstore must realize its own

expenses from year to year. At Kent a significant portion of the bookstore's income is realized from the resale of textbooks says Kent State's bookstore manager, Irene Bent. New books, ordered quarterly by professors, do not sell as well as used books because of the escalating costs of textbooks.

New editions are frequently bypassed in favor of either the utilization of the library's copy or through a sharing arrangement which often finds as many as four students purchasing a

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## Consumer Group Being Organized In Potsdam

S.U.C. Potsdam will soon see the establishment of a local chapter of the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG).

NYPIRG is a statewide research and advocacy organization of college students whose goal is to effectuate reform in the areas of consumer affairs, the environment, government and corporate accountability, and civil rights and liberties.

Ralph Nader originally conceived of the PIRG concept and helped to establish the 22 statewide PIRGS located around the nation. PIRG's have since achieved their independence around the nation. PIRG's have since achieved their independence from the Nader empire and each operates autonomously with elected students making the decisions. In addition, there are a small number of hired staff people who provide the organization with legal and technical expertise at minimal salaries.

Elsewhere, NYPIRG has begun investigating ETS, Educational Testing Service whose SAT's, GRE's, LSAT's and entire array of computerized tests control the destinies of millions of students while ETS operates in a aura of unregulated, biased secrecy while reaping in millions of student dollars. We will continue to inform the public about the dangers of a reliance on nuclear power for future U.S. energy needs.

Another continuing project

involves an effort to ban throw-away beverage containers - that is, non-returnable bottles and cans and replace them with returnable bottles which not only will be cheaper, but will also conserve large amounts of energy.

Some local chapters are also working on marijuana reform and are lobbying for the decriminalization of up to two ounces of marijuana, which incidentally has a decent chance of passing the NYS legislature this session even though mail coming into Albany has been 80 - 1 against decriminalization.

It should be pointed out that NYPIRG also does lobbying and litigation on a statewide level and is by most estimates the largest and most vocal consumer lobbying force in New York. There are schools in N.Y.S. who support a statewide staff of 28 and maintain a budget of \$380,000. Perhaps its most noteworthy statewide victory of late was our lawsuit challenging the legality of legislative lusus. As a result of winning this action, all but two members of the NYS legislature must return their illegal gratuities which will save the taxpayers \$850.00

Anyone interested in more information about NYPIRG or in helping start a Potsdam chapter, contact Dr. Miles Wolpin in the Political Science department or Mary Jo Kitchen (265-5615) or John Booth at 268-4729

## NORML Files Lawsuits On Right To Smoke Pot In Privacy

by Allan Rabinowitz

(CPS) -- The joint you are smoking may soon be protected by the US Constitution, if a number of suits being filed in state and federal courts around the country are successful. Alaska has already given constitutional protection to pot use in the home.

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML), the nation's most successful pot lobby, has filed suits claiming that the use of marijuana in the home falls under the protection of the constitutional right to privacy. NORML has filed suits in California, Illinois, Tennessee and the District of Columbia.

The suits mark a major shift in NORML's strategy, which has formerly concentrated its resources on lobbying efforts in Congress and various state legislatures. NORML was instrumental in getting marijuana decriminalized in six states.

But the decision of the Alaska Supreme Court broke the ice on the constitutional issue and set a strong precedent that will be used in the other suits. NORML will now devote a much greater proportion of its resources to court battles than it had earlier, but will continue to lobby in legislatures as well.

The Alaska Supreme Court, in its unanimous ruling, stated that there was no firm evidence that marijuana use was harmful to the user or would "constitute a public health problem of any significant dimension... Mere scientific doubts," said the court, "did not warrant government intrusion into the privacy of the home."

Since the Alaska decision was based on a privacy clause in the state constitution rather than the US Constitution, it cannot be appealed to the US Supreme Court.

That aspect is one of the advantages of pursuing marijuana reform through the courts rather than legislative bodies, ac-

cording to Keith Stroup, director of NORML. The court decision is not subject to the whimsy of politicians. Once the decision is made in a state supreme court, based on the state constitution, it has fundamental protection that can only be changed by that court itself or by a constitutional amendment.

A decision putting marijuana use under the protection of the right of privacy would also allow someone to cultivate the weed for personal use and to transport it as well. Under the Alaska decision, there is no constitutional protection for amounts of marijuana for sale rather than for personal use.

But at the same time, there is no maximum quantity explicitly set for personal use and the court generally assumed that amounts of pot ranging from eight ounces to one pound are for personal use. This amount is much greater than that set in even the most liberal laws passed by state legislatures, which generally designate an ounce or less for personal use.

In addition to the principle argument of the right of privacy, the suits also claim that current marijuana laws constitute cruel and unusual punishment for the offense involved, and that the laws deny equal treatment under law, since alcohol and tobacco are not treated the same even though there is definite proof that they can pose health hazards.

Some of the arguments opposing constitutional protection for the private use of marijuana state that the substance has indeed proven to be dangerous and that constitutional protection would open the door for similar rulings for more dangerous drugs such as heroin.

Peter Meyer, legal counsel for NORML, counters these arguments on the grounds that the suit deals only with marijuana, that there is no positive

proof of harm and that the burden of proof is on the state to prove that pot "poses some significant threat to the individual or danger to the public welfare"-- a threat that has not been proven.

In addition, Meyers said, even if a substance were to prove dangerous to an individual, it would still violate his constitutional right to use it personally: "Why don't we have laws against skydiving? That's dangerous."

Until the Alaska decision, courts would not rule on the constitutional question, but rather take "an easy out" by claiming that marijuana was an

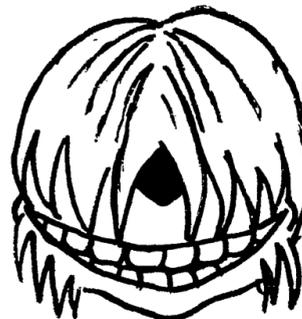
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### Potsdam's Alternative Bar The Smiling Dog Tavern

presents

## The Bigfoot Jazz Quartet

9 pm Sunday nite



Where the jigger's bigger

Located in the Arlington Hotel