

Student Poll: Pop or soda?

What do you call your carbonated beverage?



"It's soda. I just call it soda."

Joshua Springer



"It's pop. I've never used the word 'soda.'"

Sarah Abbott



"I call it soda. 'Pop' sounds weird to me."

Mike Patelzick



"I call everything coke because I'm from the South."

Nathan Young



"It's pop. 'Soda' is too sophisticated for me."

Anna Hoesly



"I call it sugar. If I had to choose, I'd call it soda."

Nicole Goodson



"I've grown up calling it pop."

Max Allen

This week's poll compiled by Kimberly Maier

Of textbooks and profits

Gabe Stone

The Clackamas Print

On the shifting sea of life, our education is that dependable vessel that carries us through the storm. And on our way to a degree, we can view textbooks as the boat anchor.

Book pricing causes righteous indignation on campuses, and it could be argued that it is widely viewed as a racket.

We all remember Oregon Congressman David Wu, right? He's that Democrat representing the First Congressional District. Many of us remember him mentioning something about wanting to remedy the depressing situation.

Last year, he introduced a House bill that directed the General Accounting Office to investigate whether textbook prices were justifiable under current conditions.

Wu announced the findings back in August. They are insightful and worth a read. Textbook prices have grown an average of five percent per year. College tuition and fees have risen at an average of seven percent per year.

Understandably, the price of books eats up a greater percentage of tuition and fees at the two-year than at the four-year level (about 72 percent).

According to the report, the primary factor contributing to textbook price increases is "the increased investment publishers have made in new products to enhance instruction and learning."

More specifically, industry executives cite the grow-

ing role publishers are being asked to play in providing materials to overworked part-time instructors. Usually these materials are not available separately. In addition, it mentions frequent textbook revisions as a factor as well, along with the increasing prevalence of custom textbooks for institutions.

Demand for used books far outpaces supply, driving up prices in that market. However, increasing consolidation in the publishing and wholesale markets has worsened the problem. Publishers deny this, saying competition is still fierce. They also assert that extra supplements are required because they must diversify in order to compete. Although the quality of the materials is not in question, like a student if they'd like to save 50 bucks or get a CD with 3-D models of the human spleen.

Publishers also contend that instructors are driving revision cycles, and although the GAO agrees with that statement, it certainly is not uniform across disciplines. One publisher even said that their revision cycles were directly tied to sales patterns!

It is certainly a complex business, with many paths a book takes as it goes from publisher to student, and from new to used. After reading the report, one gets a sense that publishers are either disconnected from reality, or are quite simply businessmen.

PUBLISHERS

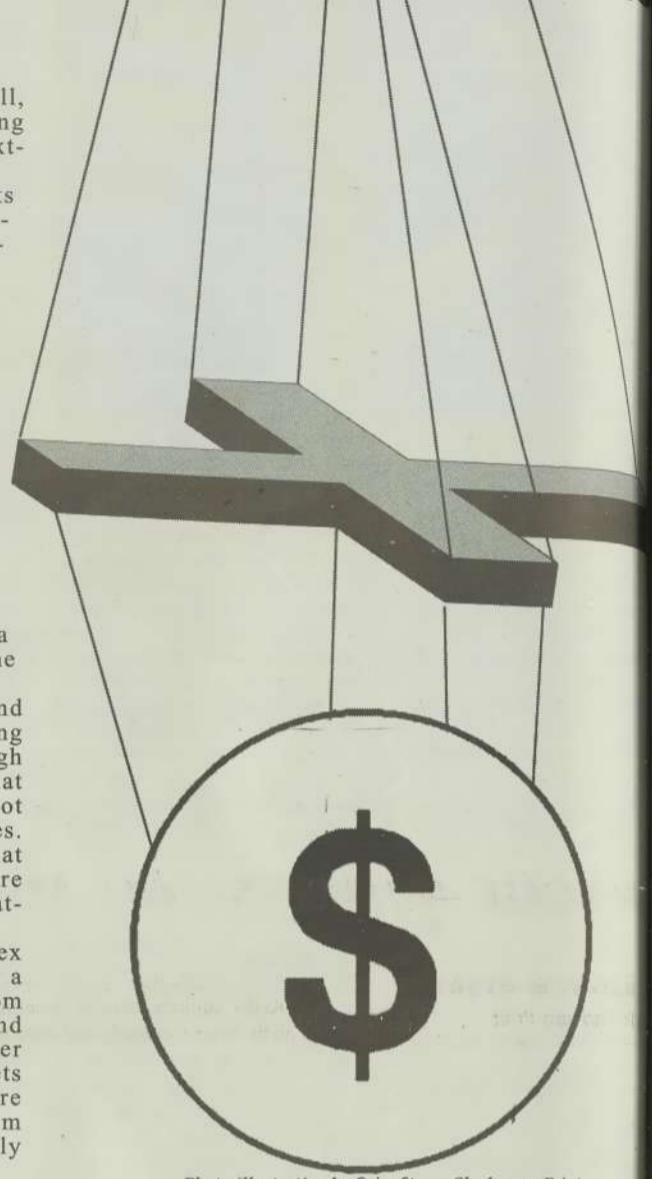


Photo illustration by Gabe Stone Clackamas Print

Charlie FM: interesting, but not in a good way

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"Random is good," intones the voice of Charlie FM, one of the newest radio stations in Portland. Well, I'm here to say random is not good.

I remember the day I was driving to school and I turned the radio to 97.1 expecting to hear the soothing sounds of KISN, only to find myself asking:

"Who is Charlie, and why is he playing David Bowie on the oldies station?"

I, like many people that day, soon learned the truth. Charlie was in town, and he was planning on staying.

The idea behind this new station is fairly revolutionary, to tell the truth. Normal radio stations only have playlists a few hundred songs deep, which means you're guaranteed to hear the same songs everyday. Charlie's playlist, on the other hand, contains thousands of songs.

It's an experiment (or more precisely a gamble) in radio. As of late, the biggest

concern in radio-land is how to compete with the rise of the iPod, and Charlie FM is one of the first attempts at combating the dreaded "iPod Shuffle." This means a non-genre-specific station that plays more music than you can shake a stick at. Sounds good, right?

Well, like any first-time experiment, Charlie gets almost as many things wrong

as it gets right. One of the first things you'll notice when you tune in to the station is the lack of DJs.

I've always been a strong proponent of "less talk, more rock," but, for me, it takes something vital away from radio when you know there's no actual person spinning the songs. It just sounds profoundly "canned."

It's a shame, because

helped by some com DJs. It's true that it's the station in town that will James Taylor, Metallica Tears for Fears back-to-back, you know, there's probably a good reason why the only one.

Even Charlie's touted list isn't all it's cracked to be. The station claims "play everything," but not really accurate,

you consider "thing" to be the Billboard pop of the past 25 years.

If I want radio actual DJs who truly eclectic (not random; the difference), I can't to NPR's fantastic programming or the community radio 90.7 KBOO, both of expect more out of listeners than drooling reception. Perhaps of all, there is not a Tears for Fears to be.

For my closing guess I could blather how Charlie FM is a Clear Channel station, a tentacle of the great monster, corporate blah, but that argument overdone that I will simply say that Channel sucks, so by extension Charlie sucks as well.



Internet Graphic

Charlie FM's variety of music could really be