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THE CAMPUS BOOKSTORE, A LIVE-ACTION TOUR

By Steven Elwell

Hey freshman, welcome to the bookstore portion of our campus tour! My name is Corky, part-time student employee. For the next few minutes I'll be showing you the smartest, most efficient way to get everything you need for class. So stay close, and try not to get lost in the magic!

First, take a look over here at our collection of school-logo emblazoned stationary. Let's face it, some of you just aren't getting a degree, but at least you can buy this paper and write CHAMP on it. Everyone wants to hire a champ!

And over here we've got the Top Ten Bestsellers, displayed on classy little shelves, just like you'd find at Barnes & Noble. What's that? *Frog and Toad Hit the Vegas Strip* was never a bestseller? Well, maybe you don't understand how we work around here. This is our head manager *Rudy's* bestseller list. And Rudy let me keep this job after my little student-code infraction, so I'm not going to tolerate any more lip about him on my tour.

All right, moving on. As you can see, there are plenty of textbooks in stock for the beginning of classes, and you can find just what you're looking for by following our simple three-step system. One: Find the age of your professor's oldest living relative and divide that by the number of pages in the textbook you seek. Two: Translate this number into Demotic Egyptian using the Rosetta Stone, and then translate *that* message into binary computer code. Three: Travel over a lake of fire and punch your binary code into the main computer. It'll tell you exactly what aisle your book is on! How's *that* for efficiency?

Now, here's, everyone's favorite part of the bookstore — the school apparel section. We pride ourselves in having a wide variety of XXXL and XXXS clothes stamped with the school name. There's no changing room, but who said school-spirit needed to fit?

Who makes the sweatshirts? That's a good question. I guess all these tags *do* say "Made in Indonesia." But hey, listen, don't get bent out of shape about sweatshops. I just

read that it's all some big misunderstanding. Apparently they're supposed to be pronounced "sweet" shops, because it's such a sweet deal to get a job in one! OK, don't start preaching to me about Christian social ethics; I've been through Moral Theology three times now.

There's another thing I meant to point out. We've left behind traditional school colors in favor of brighter, cheerier clothing. Purple and beige are *so* 1955. Tangerine sunset and medium sea green are much more versatile, and you should have seen the Internet sales skyrocket when we started carrying those puppies! Rudy is seriously considering changing the school colors with every issue of *Vogue*, just to stay chic. The guy's a genius!

Come on, we're reaching the final part of the tour. Ladies and gents, I give you the Useless Knickknack Section! I mean, uh, Gift Section! Don't worry about Christmas presents this year; grandma gets a snow-globe of the student center, and uncle Dave gets a golf club sock with the school mascot! But hey, as a word of advice, ignore those shot glasses that say "Welcome Freshman" on them—take a page out of old Corky's book: you don't want to go there.

Well, that's the end of the formal tour, so I'd like to open the floor to questions. Yes, you in the back. You found a used copy of *Emma* that costs more than your car? Ha, look at this guy, he must drive a bicycle! Oh, it says \$4,000. Well, um, it's a pretty nice copy, isn't it? I mean, sure it's missing a few pages and it's still wet from someone's coffee spill, but the main story is intact. And you claim you found the same book on the Internet for three bucks?

OK, I've had enough of you kids. Unless you were going to buy that book. ■

Steven Elwell is a recent graduate of Saint Joseph's University.