

No to Barnes and Noble

The [Durham] Herald Sun (Editorial/Opinion, 28 Mar 2006).

I am disturbed by the ambiguity surrounding Duke's plans for Central Campus and the possibility that a Barnes and Noble store may be moving in, with the assistance of President Broadhead and Duke University at large. I don't see that the sale of merchandise pertaining primarily to Duke University classes and paraphernalia, which was the original claim of President Broadhead and Peter Lange, would be in the market plan of a big franchise like Barnes and Noble and its stock holders--certainly not in the long term. In addition to the monetary advantages that a big public franchise like Barnes and Noble has over an independent bookstore like "the Regulator," the fact that a University-based Barnes and Noble would be exempt from property taxes, thereby giving them an additional financial advantage while relieving them of the social responsibility of giving money back to the city from which they profit, is criminal in principle, whether or not it is technically illegal. I implore those higher minds at Duke to consult their social consciences and their obligations to their community.

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