

# Iowa seems a good place to buy books

Des Moines has secluded shops with big sales



By Bryan Peterson  
Staff Reporter

This time it is Des Moines, Iowa, and yes, I have been there before as well. Twice, in fact, and both prior trips were substantially more exciting than my third and most recent voyage.

The first trip was, like that to Sioux City, to see a punk concert. I rode out in the back of a pickup truck belonging to a guy who borrowed my "Mr. Zog's Sex Wax" T-shirt and never gave it back.

Justice was mine, though, because eight miles outside of Des Moines, his engine spontaneously combusted.

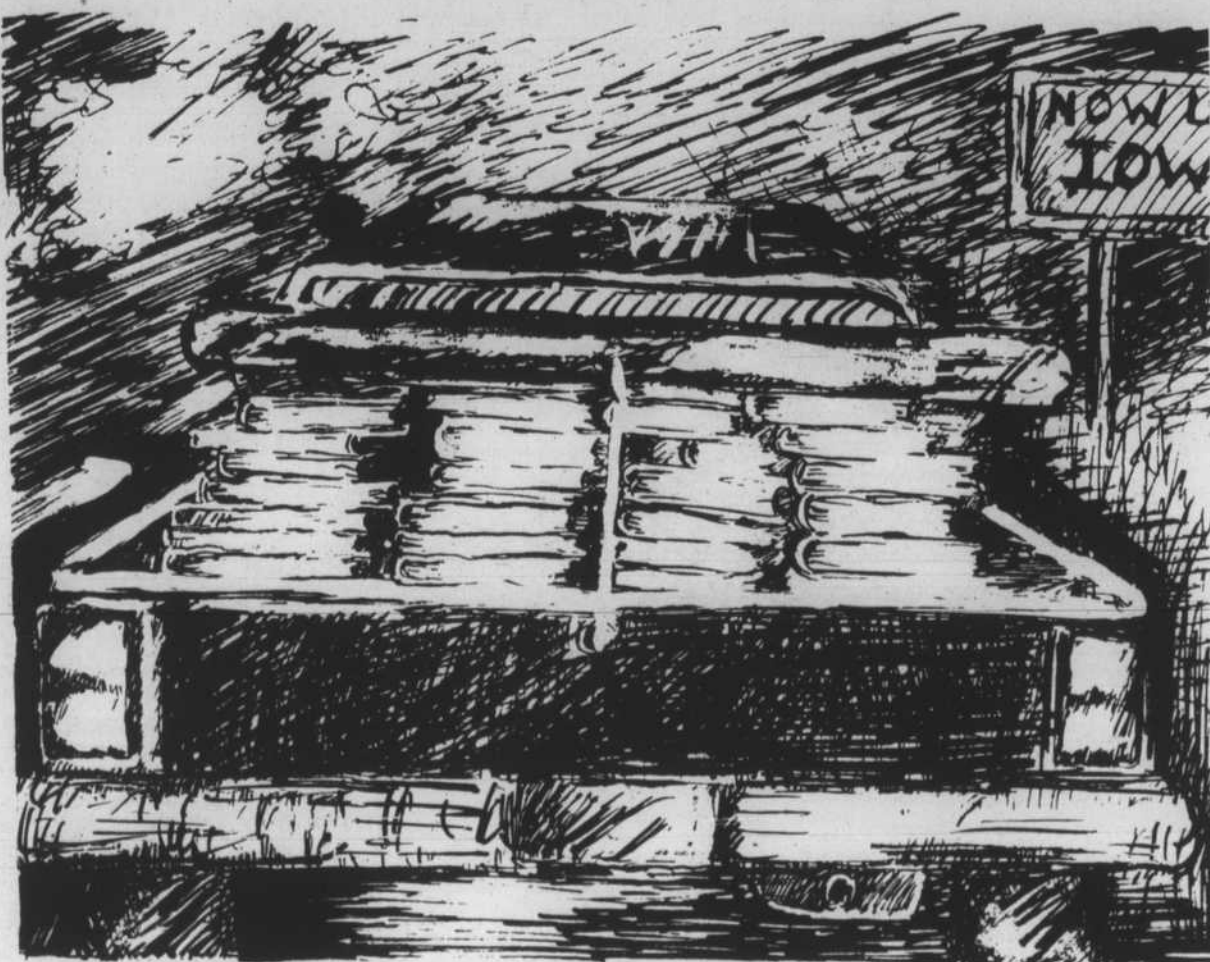
Well, not exactly. It turned out the oil light had been on for weeks before the trip, but he thought we might make it.

Since it was raining and I was huddled under a blanket, I did not think much of the fog I saw behind the truck. Then the fog became a swirling funnel of smoke pouring from behind.

The driver pulled off onto the shoulder and began coasting to a stop, since the engine had quit running. I saw a pair of headlights approaching through the smoke and wondered why anyone would follow a smoking vehicle off the interstate and onto the shoulder.

They did not stop coming. This guy just drove straight into the rear end of the truck and lurched us forward a few more final, shuddering yards.

The guy got out, looked kind of dazed and stupid, and whined about the damage to his vehicle. Then about six leather-clad people stepped out of



Robert Borzekowski/DN

the front of our truck, and he was quiet.

Then the police came. They were very nice and even drove some of us to the concert a few miles ahead.

People at the concert were milling about a parking lot and ran for cover when a string of police cars pulled in. Then we stepped out of the cars and laughed at everyone when the police pulled out.

There must be something about Iowa and oil, because my second trip to Des Moines was in a bitchin' Camaro with a severe oil leak. We blasted Dead Milkmen tunes and

stopped every 30 minutes to add a quart of oil.

A friend and I were driving to see an Italian punk band called Raw Power that was playing somewhere in Des Moines. After driving all over the town, we found that the building we were seeking was a bar.

We were still in high school at the time, but we decided that after driving so far, they had to let us in. They just had to.

Once we knew the name, the bar was easy to find. Alas, the bouncer did not see things our way. I called to punk brethren within, hoping to incite

a demonstration or a riot, but they just looked at me and ordered more beer.

Things got quiet as the people inside moved upstairs to hear the first band. My friend and I milled about then moved behind the building. After falling only a few times, we managed to climb up the side of the building and slide through a decrepit window that had not been closed in months.

We did not get any beer, but the bands were great and people even talked to us once we were inside. We had to dive into the thrash pit to hide from the bouncer when he came up

stairs, but we had no other real problems in the bar or on the drive home.

So last week I drove to Des Moines looking for books. The main event was the annual Planned Parenthood book sale, boasting a half-million volumes filling Agriculture Hall on the Iowa State Fairgrounds.

But once in Des Moines, I made several other stops. I walked up and down University Avenue, which hosts Drake University, several bookstores and other funky little shops.

I was reminded of the serenity I feel on the Wesleyan campus or on UNL East Campus until suddenly jarred by a familiar, garish sight.

Right next to a Rastafarian market sat a glaring Kinko's copy shop in all its brightly lit, 24-hour glory. The copies never fade in the Kinko's empire.

Not far away was Ron's Bookstore. There also was a Jim's Books and a Bob's Books, though the latter had moved to New Hampshire. Geez, I could come up with better names for bookstores than these.

Ron's was OK but I could not understand how he had been in business for six years. There were few customers, some books and prices that were far too low.

While making one last circuit around the store, I peeked behind a curtain and found the secret: Ron sells pornos in the back room.

Jim had more and better books. They were far more expensive, but I bought more there. It was a good thing, too, because he did not like it when I commented upon his comments about Jews and "Japs."

Before getting to the fairgrounds, I pulled into a DAV thrift store and was startled to find that their books were six times more expensive than those in Lincoln.

This was, incidentally, also the first thrift store I have visited that sold used pornos. Maybe there is something about Iowa and pornos.

The Ag Building had neither oil nor pornos but plenty of books. I spent far too much money and not enough time but loaded my car down and worried about the axles snapping.

# Madonna book packed with gossip, not proof



"Madonna Unauthorized"  
Christopher Andersen  
Island Books

By Stacey McKenzie  
Senior Reporter

Any literature about the most famous woman in the world today has got to be gripping — and hard to put down.

"Madonna Unauthorized" is just this — not because of its prose — but for its simple information.

The biography that traces Madonna's life through nearly every source in Madonna's life except Madonna herself was written by Christopher Andersen, author of 13 books, including biographies of Susan Hayward, Katherine Hepburn and Jane Fonda.

Surprises for this Madonna fan were:

- She was a straight-A student in high school.
- She is a highly trained dancer who studied with Pearl Lang in New York City.
- She practically starved to death while she tried to make it in New York. Cheese popcorn was one of her favorite meals.
- Nearly every cause Madonna pushes publicly makes her a hypocrite if one checks out her private life.

The problem with Andersen's book is that it taunts the reader with opin-

ions, personal accounts and spliced interview quotes, leaving one to continually say, "Yeah, that's a really great story, but what does Madonna have to say about it?"

Andersen did his best to keep up with the charisma chameleon Madonna by including updates about her life in his author's postscript.

He even provides an account how the idea for Madonna's new sexual-fantasy book, "Sex," came to fruition.

Apparently, Madonna was approached by Judith Regan, a editor for Simon & Schuster Pocket Books with the idea for "Madonna's Book of Erotica and Sexual Fantasies."

Madonna asked Regan if she'd approached any one else to do the project.

"I won't do it if anybody else turned it down," Madonna told Regan.

After asking many pointed business questions, Madonna agreed to do the project.

"The next thing I know," Regan said in the book, "I hear that Madonna has brought my proposal to Time Warner, which owns Madonna's record company."

Andersen sums up the self-made wonder woman in his epilogue:

"She is, in truth, a Gordian knot of contradictions; the straight-A student from an affluent Midwestern suburb vixen; the high school cheerleader who ridicules traditional America values; the thrift-shop reject who becomes the single greatest influence on fashion; the feminist who flaunts her body outrageously, publicly declares she likes to be spanked during sex . . ."

At least, that's what Andersen says.



Courtesy of Gamma Liaison/Island Books

"Madonna Unauthorized," by Christopher Andersen, gives startling information about the superpop queen "that Madonna would give anything to keep unpublished."