

Creating a Cycle of Giving: A Proposal for a Free Store at Allegheny College

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Abstract

Throughout the clothing production and eventual disposal processes, there are many practices that speak to the unsustainable nature of the clothing industry. These practices involve massive greenhouse gas emissions and heavy water consumption during production, and large amounts of waste when clothes are ultimately disposed of. These challenges are exacerbated by fast fashion, which ultimately speeds up these processes making them much harder to mitigate. This paper explores a possible means to mitigating these challenges on a local level in the city of Meadville, by way of implementing a free thrift store. The paper argues that a free store at Allegheny College offers the school, and the city of Meadville a reasonable solution to economic issues, as well as a sustainable way to engage community members. This paper looks to understand the lifespan of the previous free store at Allegheny College in an effort to understand what a free store may look like at Allegheny and what challenges it may face. Moreover, this paper will investigate the active free store at Oberlin college as a means to show how a working free store can operate. The paper concludes with a two-step proposal that will act as the foundation for a permanent free store at Allegheny College.

Introduction

Clothing is essential to human life. However, the processes in which these clothes are made, and later disposed of, are creating an enormous impact on the environment. Each year the fashion industry requires 342 million barrels of oil each year for polyester production, 43 million tons of chemicals like dyeing agents, and overall the industry is responsible for 8-10% of global emissions, with this number likely to increase (Stallard, 2022). The United States alone produces over 11 million tons of textile waste annually, averaging out to just under 3,000 articles of clothing being thrown away per second (Dottle and Gu, 2022). Even more waste is produced when used or imperfect clothes are shipped to nations like Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire, as they receive up to 15 million garments per week from the UK, Europe, North America, and Australia; a whopping majority of these clothes are never worn (Besser, 2021). These figures speak to the massive overproduction of the fashion industry, and while textile waste is arguably the largest problem, clothing production comes with its own hurdles and environmental impacts.

Fabric Production

Before any article of clothing can be stitched or sold, there are plenty of other processes that it must go through. The textile industry is segmented, as the fibers are prepared, transformed into a yarn, and then finally dyed and processed for consumption (EPA, 2022). While these processes are necessary in the production of these fabrics, each step results in the release of GHG emissions, as well as energy and water consumption, oftentimes at large rates (Dissanayake et al., 2021). The first step for an article of clothing (aside from the design itself) is the collection of resources or textiles and/or fabrics in this case.

The first stage in the production of these fully-fledged fabrics is the production of the fibers. First raw materials must be extracted in order to produce the fibers, this can come by way of agricultural cultivation in the case of cotton (Esteve-Turrillas and de la Guardia, 2016), or through the use of petrochemicals in the case of synthetic acrylic fibers (Yacout et al., 2016). One of the most common synthetic fibers being polyester, which requires the mining of petroleum (Sewport, 2023). Both of these types of fiber production produce severe challenges, as agricultural cultivation tends to be extremely water intensive (Esteve-Turrillas and de la Guardia, 2016), and synthetic fiber production is heavy on GHG emissions and energy consumption (Eryuruk, 2012; Yacout et al., 2016). After these fibers are produced, they are sent to the next segment of the textile industry in order to be spun and knitted into yarns and fabrics.

Moreover, this extraction of raw materials agriculturally and through mining, possesses a variety of challenges. As mentioned previously, cotton production is extremely water intensive, utilizing 2.6% of the global freshwater resources annually, and irrigating 53% of the world's cotton fields, the majority of which are in dryer nations, putting a massive strain on water resources (Chapagain et al., 2006). For the mining of polymers for the production of synthetic fabrics, the mining industry as a whole contributes to around 3% of total CO₂ emissions, with many of these emissions coming directly from the process of mining (Legge et al., 2021). On top of these emissions from extracting raw materials, both of these processes require the shipment of these raw materials to factories to be processed which alone account for around 50% of extraction emissions (Legge et al., 2021).

The weaving and knitting of these fibers takes 2 stages, yarn production and fabric production (Dissanayake et al., 2021). Raw fibers are spun into strands of yarn (Bevilacqua et al., 2014) that then goes through a series of scouring processes in order to remove imperfections (Terinte et al., 2014). The yarn required for one shirt needs 0.263 kWh of electrical energy and wastes 0.0464 kgs of cotton to produce (Liu et al., 2015). When clothing is produced in large quantities, these numbers are extremely high. When the yarn is deemed suitable, it is moved to the fabric production stage.

This next stage of fabric production is described as “the process of converting yarn into fabric by inter-looping yarns” (Textile Tutorials, 2017). This process can be performed by knitting or weaving the yarn (Dissanayake et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2015; L’Abbate et al., 2017). While these processes could be done by hand in theory, in practice this becomes impractical and impossible when looking to supply a global market. Therefore this sector, much like the yarn production sector, has a main concern with intensive electrical energy usage, however neither sector contributes significantly to the carbon footprint of clothing production (Liu et al., 2015). After these fabrics are finally produced, they then must be treated with dyes and chemicals before they can be used in clothing production. Can you find any numbers on pollution of waterways or waste?

This last stage of the fiber production process involves the dyeing of clothes into different colors. Clothes are usually dyed in a liquid solution known as a “dyebath”, and retain the dye by means of absorption; it is important to note that while this is the last stage of the fabric production, fabrics are dyed throughout their production before this stage occurs (Britannica,

2022). Dyeing is seen as the most resource intensive sector of fabric production, as dyeing the fabric required for just one t-shirt produces 28.4 kg of wastewater, releases 1.2 kg of CO₂ into the atmosphere, and utilizes .441 kg of coal, these being just a few alarming statistics (Liu et al., 2015). All of these factors contribute to the carbon footprint of fabric and fabric production, however this does not yet take into account the resources needed to actually create garments out of this fabric. The next, and final stage in the production is taking this fabric and utilizing it.

Fast Fashion

While the environmental challenges associated with clothing manufacturing are already drastic, the footprint is exacerbated when fast fashion enters the fold. The practice began in the 1980s and it refers to quickly made, often trendy clothing, that follows a short production cycle (Nguyen, 2018). Oftentimes, fast fashion companies like H&M, Shein, and Zara, will mimic trends set by high end brands, supplying customers with trendy clothes at an affordable price (Dottle and Gu, 2022). While these fast fashion companies aren't the main culprits for the fashion industry's unsustainable nature, the rapid production of clothes certainly speeds up the amount of emissions produced by the industry. In 2018, the fast fashion company H&M reported a \$4.3 billion stockpile of unsold inventory, largely due to consumer habits leading them to shop online instead of in store (Paton, 2018). Due to the nature of fast fashion, these clothes in the brick and mortar stores are only on the selling floor for a few months, or until they are out of trend. On top of this, even the clothes that consumers buy are quickly discarded, with the average person wearing an article of clothing just seven to ten times before they discard it (Dottle and Gu, 2022). These massive amounts of unworn clothes are sometimes burned, however they are oftentimes sent to poorer nations around the world.

While much of the clothing shipped overseas is brand new, 40% of the 15 million garments Ghana from nations around the world are of such poor quality that they cannot be used in any way (Besser, 2021). In Chile, it was found that of the 59,000 tons of garments that arrive there annually, at least 39,000 tons go straight to the landfill (Teh, 2021). While any landfill filled to the brim with clothing is an issue, this becomes compounded by the fact that these developing countries lack the infrastructure to deal with massive amounts of clothing waste. These massive, garment-filled landfills are detrimental to the people that live in these nations, as well as the environment, as the decomposing clothes emit methane gas (Wazir, 2021; McCarthy,

2018). As these practices continue, the amount of clothing sitting in these landfills will continue to grow.

Supply Chain Challenges in Meadville and at Allegheny

With these horribly unsustainable supply chain practices ongoing in the backdrop, Allegheny College and the city of Meadville holds host to its own set of challenges related to the local supply chain. These challenges come in a few forms, however, they each take a toll on the community and must be mitigated in some way.

One major challenge that is faced by the entire community is the large poverty rate, with over 19% of Meadville residents living below the poverty line in 2019. This is around 38% higher than the state average (CityData, 2019). A large portion of the community of Meadville may not be able to afford essential needs, such as clothing. . While there are a variety of thrift stores in Meadville that do serve the community, selling things at a discounted rate is sometimes not enough. Moreover, in 2021, the average household in the city of Meadville spent just over \$13,000 in the retail sector, drastically smaller than the national retail spending, landing just under \$20,000 (US Census Bureau, 2021). This places Meadville way below the national average and denotes just how little is able to be spent in each household.

On top of these economic based issues, the city of Meadville is historically cold, with residents routinely expecting temperatures of below freezing for at least five months out of the year. This brutal cold exacerbates the need for things like winter jackets, hats, and gloves. While these things could be seen as necessary given the temperatures in the city, they are fairly inaccessible for a large portion of the city. For example, an inexpensive jacket still retails for around \$60 (Columbia, 2023). With this large portion of the population unable to afford the basic necessities to stay warm through brutally cold Meadville winters, there has to be a way to mitigate these costs. The last challenge that Meadville, more specifically Allegheny College, faces is the fact that there are students from all over the world, many of which are not necessarily prepared for the challenges I've already touched on. For example, students who come from warmer climates may not have a suitable coat and may need a quick and cheap option for the city's colder months.

Thrifting

As mentioned briefly in the previous section, thrift stores and the act of thrift shopping or “thriftling”, allow for consumers to purchase second hand clothing at a discounted rate (Stokes,

2012). In recent years, there has been a massive boom for shopping second-hand, especially with the introduction of online storefronts like Depop and Etsy; the second-hand industry as a whole is projected to see a \$218 Billion market in 2026, a 127% increase from the \$96 Billion that the industry saw in 2021 (thredUP, 2021). If this projection is accurate, this uptick in second-hand shopping will be immensely valuable to combatting the challenges that have been previously laid out, as more demand for second-hand clothing means less demand for clothing production.

While thrift stores are shown to help mitigate some major supply chain challenges, the next progression are “free stores”. The free store movement began in San Francisco in the 1960s, and it is, as it sounds, a store where the items are free (Green America, 2023). Much like a thrift store, these free stores gather donations, however the major difference is that customers do not have to pay for the items they are taking. The idea of these free stores is that scarcity should never be an issue as there are more than enough goods to go around, evoking a sense of community by encouraging people to help their neighbors (Green America, 2023). In a place like Allegheny College, a free store would not only strengthen community ties on campus, but throughout the whole city of Meadville, as it gives incentive for people to help people.

Goals

The objective of this project is to develop a proposal for a free store at Allegheny College. Beyond just implementing the thrift shop however, I hope to establish it as a pillar of the community, allowing community members access to clothing and other necessities while also teaching them about sustainability. By establishing this thrift store in the community, I believe that it will fill community members with a sense of pride, knowing that their old things are being put to good use and helping out a fellow colleague. I believe that if I can achieve this goal, I will be able to positively impact local supply chains, as well as to provide the Allegheny community with a long-standing application of sustainability that works to assist students and their needs for years to come.

Stakeholders

Because of the ways in which thrift stores have been shown to benefit a community, I feel it will be important to connect the Allegheny community as my stakeholders for my proposed thrift shop. This includes administration, students, and professors as these would be the patrons, and possible workers at this on-campus store. The Allegheny community has historically been

open to sustainability measures on campus, as the school is a leader in sustainability, becoming just the eighth college in the nation to achieve net carbon neutrality (Allegheny College, 2020).

Beyond just sustainability, the Allegheny community has also been known to look for ways to help others within the community. While the college once did have a free thrift shop that is no longer in use, annual mutual aid closets are still available, supplying students in need with hygiene supplies, toiletries, and other dorm room necessities for free (K. Boulton & K. Hatcher, personal communication, November 17, 2022). This ability for Allegheny community members to look out for one another, as well as the incorporation of sustainable practices go hand in hand, and show how receptive the community could be to a new free thrift shop.

Approach

The development of the proposal for a new free store including thinking about Allegheny's previous free store that closed years ago. Therefore, I wanted to ask questions about how the previous free store came to be, how it was run, what the free store did well, how the campus felt about it, challenges that came up along the way, and how it ultimately ended, in an effort to gain information for writing my own proposal. Another key phase of this development was understanding what a working free store would look like, which required me to ask how a successful free store should be run, what challenges might face a successful free store, and most importantly how to create a successful community free store.

Interviews

Throughout my preliminary research I interviewed seven people, five of which are or were associated with Allegheny College in some aspect. These interviews were conducted between October of 2022 and December of 2022.

When giving these interviews, I asked X questions specific to the interviewee. All participants were asked the following: How did the previous free store operate? (in the case of Oberlin, How does the free store operate?) How did/does the campus feel about the free store? What were some challenges that the free store faced?

I began by speaking with Allegheny College Professor of Environmental Science and Sustainability, Rich Bowden, who worked in Carr Hall at the time that the previous free store was in operation. This meeting took place on October 18, 2022 in his office. While Bowden wasn't necessarily involved with Allegheny's previous free store, I wanted to speak with him to see what he remembered about its run. When emailing to set up our meeting, Bowden mentioned

a “lack of inter-annual continuity” that I felt would be important to speak about when we met. In specific, I asked Bowden: How did he and his colleagues feel about the free store? And finally, What did he mean by lack of inter-annual continuity?

My next interviewee was Professor Mark Neff, who formerly taught at Allegheny College. We spoke on October 21, 2022 through a Zoom video conference. I wanted to speak to Professor Neff because he taught the Junior Seminar class that spawned the previous free store at Allegheny College, and I thought that he would paint a good picture of how the free store came to be. Beyond this, I wanted to use this conversation as a way to understand the downfalls of the previous free store and why it eventually was closed down. Specifically, I asked: How did the previous free store come to be? Where did the idea for the free store come from? Was a free thrift store always the original plan? How did people know about the free store? Was the customer base mostly ESS students or was the whole campus involved? Besides major issues, what were some minor challenges the store faced? And finally, What happened to the free store as the creators matriculated?

I then interviewed Allegheny College Sustainability Coordinators, Kelly Boulton and Kurt Hatcher and this conversation was very similar to my conversation with Mark Neff, in that I gained valuable context for the previous store, while also being able to think about what a proposal for my own free store might look like. This interview took place on November 17, 2022 in the Office of Sustainability at Allegheny College. I used this conversation to garner information about how to follow through with implementing a sustainability initiative on Allegheny’s campus. I asked the same questions that I asked Mark Neff with a few additional questions: Have there been any similar initiatives by the college in between the previous free store closing and now? Would a free store work better as a “pop up clothing swap” or as a permanent institution? How would I go about institutionalizing a free store at Allegheny College?

After I spoke with representatives and former representatives of the college, I had a good grasp of how the previous free store worked and why it eventually failed. I then traveled to Oberlin College to visit their on campus free store and speak with two members of their Resource Conservation Team on November 18, 2022. The goal was to learn about their free store and understand some of the challenges (big or small) that they face managing the store. Specifically, I asked: How did this free store come to be? What kinds of things does the free

store take/serve? Does the free store just serve the campus of Oberlin College? How did the free store come to live in the basement of a residential hall? Are there any challenges associated with the store being located in a residential hall? How many people work in the free store? Are these employees paid? How does the campus feel about the free store? Are there any challenges associated with getting people to donate? Is there an administrator that the free store employees report to? How do the roles of more experienced employees differ from the roles of new employees?

My final conversation was with former Allegheny College student, Taylor Hinton. This meeting took place in person on December 3, 2022. Hinton was a member of the Junior Seminar class at Allegheny that established the original free store, and although she didn't directly work on it, she had many memories of the store. I wanted to speak with Hinton to see if she had any recollection of the free store in operation, as well as the general sentiment about the free store amongst students at the time. Specifically, I asked the same questions as my conversation with Mark Neff, however I asked a few additional questions as I was equipped with more knowledge from my other interviews. These additional questions were: Was there ever a plan for the previous free store to be open to the city of Meadville? Why or why not? Do you think that if a free store at Allegheny were open to residents of the city of Meadville, would this help to garner a relationship between the two parties? Did the previous free store ever host events in the hopes of teaching the community about why the free store exists? Did these events work to garner support for the free store?

Discussion/Results

Allegheny's Previous Free Store

Allegheny College has had a free store in the past, as it opened in the fall of 2012 and closed just five years later before school started in the fall of 2017. The previous free store was located in a classroom in Carr Hall that is now used as a computer lab in the current day (T. Hinton, personal communication, December 3, 2022). Thinking about this previous free store was crucial to this process as it allowed me to understand how a free store could exist at Allegheny and become a longstanding pillar of the campus community. To better understand the previous free store, I talked to individuals who were involved with or connected to the free store in some way.

The free store was created as a Junior Seminar project, taught by Mark Neff at Allegheny College. The store relied solely on donations from the student body, and they advertised the store through email announcements and fliers around the campus (T. Hinton, personal communication, December 3, 2022). Another important aspect of the previous free store was that it was completely student led, with Mark Neff stepping in as a liaison between the student workers and the faculty if need be (R. Bowden, personal communication, October 18, 2022).

While the previous free store was well received by the campus community, it did run into challenges that ultimately led to the store closing. One such challenge that came up throughout these interviews was that the free store had a hard time reaching students who were not ESS majors (K. Boulton & K. Hatcher, personal communication, November 17, 2022). Another important challenge that was mentioned throughout these interviews was the lack of inter-annual continuity that the store had, which eventually led to its closure (R. Bowden, personal communication, October 18, 2022). Each interviewee emphasized the importance of a committed team of student employees that are essential to keeping the store running smoothly.

One common theme that connected these conversations was the fact that the free store lent itself to the campus's sustainable culture, as every part of the store has something to offer in terms of sustainability. Not only is the store sustainable in the fact that it relies on a cycle of donations to stay in business, but the fact that new student workers must fill the roles of matriculating student workers also reflects the sustainability of the free store (M. Neff, personal communication, October 21, 2022). This was something that I used as inspiration for my own proposal, making sure to emphasize the sustainability of each aspect of the store.

Figure 1
Allegheny's Previous Free Store



Figure 1. Students preparing the free store to host a jewelry making event.

What Does a Working Free Store Look Like?

The free store at Oberlin was in the basement of a residence hall called the Asia House, and the store itself is housed in a room that is about 30 x 20 feet. The free store collects and gives away just about anything they can get their hands on, only turning away items that are unusable (ripped clothing, electronics that don't work, etc.). During this interview the student workers also allowed me to see the storage room that is just the next door down the hall. This room is immensely valuable to the operation of their free store, as it houses all of the excess donations, allowing for year round donation, as well as it acts as a space to sort items before eventually putting them on the shop floor.

Because the free store at Oberlin College is and has already established itself as an important institution on campus, the workers that I spoke to had little to say about major challenges and setbacks that barred the free store from operating. This question of major setbacks and challenges was on the forefront of my mind when attending the interview so it was disappointing to not get a clear answer, however I was able to learn about the workings of the free store and how the transfer of power occurs as students matriculate. As just stated, the free store at Oberlin is seen as a major institution on campus and because of this attracting members to join is relatively easy, as the groundwork is laid out for them and new workers can follow the directions of elders until they are comfortable on their own. The biggest challenge that was cited by the interviewees was being able to sort through items and keep their space tidy (Oberlin College RCT, in person interview, November 18 2022). The workers said that this was probably their biggest challenge day-to-day as it required the full force of the ten workers they have on staff, and even during the interview, when walking around the store, the student workers were picking up items that had fallen and placing them tidily back on their respective shelves.

This interview was crucial in the process of constructing a proposal as I learned valuable information necessary to operating and maintaining a free store as well as making a free store a long standing pillar of the campus community. One takeaway from this interview that served as inspiration for my own proposal was the strong sense of student leadership shown amongst workers at the store as it was entirely student led, with one administrator, with limited say about the store, that served to bridge the gap between faculty and the student body (Oberlin College RCT, in person interview, November 18 2022). This strong student leadership increases the connection of the store to the needs and wants of the student body, and allows it to make quick

adjustments based on the voices of their fellow students. Furthermore, it was evident after this interview that the strong student leadership was a driving force for the store's maintained relevance.

Figure 2
Oberlin Free Store Hours of Operation



Figure 2. Free store hours of operation and clothing racks inside the free store

Figure 3
Another view of Oberlin's Free Store



Figure 3. Shows the section of the free store that holds miscellaneous items

Proposal

I am proposing that a free store be instituted at Allegheny College. This free store should be available to the members of the Allegheny community, and ideally open (with some frequency) for the residents of the city of Meadville. The store should operate solely on donations and whatever is collected when dorms are cleaned at the end of each year, and these items will be available to shoppers at no cost. In order to fully achieve this goal, these are measures that must be taken.

Pop-Up

The first step in my proposal for creating a permanent free store at Allegheny College is to host an initial pop-up shop. This pop-up shop is essential in not only establishing a presence on campus for the free store, but it will also be useful as a tool to gauge student interest and possible engagement when the store would become permanently available on campus. Moreover, a one to two day pop-up shop would give student-workers a “dry run” of operating a permanent store, giving them the training they need to maintain the store through the year.

Before the pop-up can begin, there will be posters advertising the pop-up store, hung around the school in various academic buildings and dormitories. There will also be collection boxes located near these posters, giving students an easy incentive to donate things they may not need or want anymore. Collection will begin in two to three weeks of these posters being placed around academic buildings and dormitories. After collection wraps up, the pop-up store will ideally take place in the Campus Center at Allegheny College, as this building is a central location on campus and will therefore allow for the most possible engagement with the store.

The store will work exactly like the proposed free store, in that no money will be necessary as students will be able to take things as they please. The host volunteers will be walking around and engaging with the student customers and assisting them when necessary. Ideally, this pop-up store will give the general population of Allegheny College exposure to the free store, garnering a customer base as well as students who may be interested in seeking employment at the permanent free store.

Student Leaders

First and foremost, a free store at Allegheny College would need employees to work and maintain it. Furthermore, because of the nature of this store, it is essential that a team of students be in charge, as they have an ear to the ground when it comes to how the student body at

Allegheny College operates. This will allow this team of students to make changes as they see fit, working to accommodate the entire community, and providing them with anything they may need.

Ideally, the student-led free store that I am proposing would work like any other store, with more senior members of the team taking on leadership roles and showing new members how things are done within the store. While I feel that this is the best way to get all members up to speed on the workings of the free store, this passing down of leadership roles as students matriculate would go to promote a sustainable environment for the store to thrive. Moreover, this blend of workers from all classes would allow for productive collaboration, with the main goal being the betterment of the community.

Location

This permanent free store will be located in a meeting room on the third floor of the campus center at Allegheny College. Because of the large number of students and other community members that the campus center sees each day, this seems like the best possible choice for the free store to be located. While the third floor isn't front and center in the building, it allows for students to quickly browse the store whenever they happen to be inside the campus center. Moreover, these meeting rooms on the third floor are fairly large and would be suitable for a large array of items and room for multiple students to be in the store.

One thought throughout the process of thinking about a location was the basement of a dormitory, much like what was seen at Oberlin College. This would allow for donations to be easily washed as each dormitory has laundry equipment, however the campus center allows for members of the Meadville community to visit and utilize the store, as the building is always open during its working hours. Cleaning and transporting donations will be difficult in the campus center, however clothes can be cleaned at another location and then brought to the parking lot that sits next to the entrance to the third floor of the building.

Faculty Consultant

While students will be the ultimate proprietors of the store, managing the day-to-day operations, I feel that it is important for the store to have a member of the faculty as a consultant or advisor. While this faculty member wouldn't necessarily be involved in the way the store is being run, this position is crucial as a way to bridge the gap between the faculty and the student body. Basically, this faculty member would help to further legitimize the store on campus by

going to bat for the store if a situation arises in which it is received negatively by faculty. Having this faculty member would ultimately strengthen the stores' ties to the community and give it better footing to establish itself, as well as being a mediator between faculty and the student body.

Free-Store Events

Beyond just being used as a space to donate and receive items, the sustainable nature of thrifting lends itself to the store also being a useful educational tool. By educating people about the sustainability measures involved in thrifting, it will make it easier for them to understand who the shop is helping and why it is important to utilize it in order to create a more sustainable environment on campus. These events could be anything from a "jewelry making workshop" to a movie night featuring "The Lorax", and are ultimately designed to be a fun way to get the community involved in thrifting while also learning about why it is important.

Furthermore these events could be a good way to bridge the gap between the college and the community, inviting residents of Meadville to browse the store, and even hosting "pop-up" clothing swaps in the city. In addition to simply teaching, inviting residents of the city of Meadville to pop-up events would help to garner a relationship with the community that is frankly non-existent.

Used as a Prospective-Student Recruitment Tool

Allegheny College is always an innovator in sustainable development amongst other schools and a free store would be another one of these sustainability measures that add to the schools repertoire. Beyond being just another sustainability action taken by Allegheny College, the free store appeals to a wide variety of people, and prospective students of many interests, whether it be fashion, environmental science, or business. Moreover, a few schools in the same region as Allegheny have opened their own free stores, and a free store at Allegheny would allow the college to better compete for incoming students.

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