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Nixon's Book Just Sits There

Copies of the memoirs of former President Richard Nixon went on display at many Bay Area bookstores yesterday and drew little interest and fewer sales from customers.

"Frankly, it's shaping up to be one of the most publicized and expensive turkeys in the history of the book business," said one dealer contacted for an informal survey of the prospects for the \$19.95 item, "RN: The Memoirs of Richard M. Nixon."

"The price may be scaring people off," said John Richmond of Books Inc. at 140 Powell street.

"It's not the price, it's the subject matter," said Tim Bryson, assistant manager of Paperback Traffic, 535 Castro street.

Other high-priced books — "Gnomes," all about dwarfs, at \$17.50 and "Fellini's Films" at \$45 — are big sellers, he said.

"The Nixon book isn't going at all. We haven't sold one yet... Actually, we haven't done well with any of the books by the Watergate figures. The only one

that did fairly well was the John Dean book."

The Nixon tome, which reportedly earned its author a \$2 million advance from Grosset and Dunlap, the publisher, has 1090 pages. It went on sale this week and is also available for \$250 in a deluxe signed edition.

Many readers are just bored by anything to do with Watergate and irked by Nixon, according to Kathy Peterson of The Cottage Bookshop in San Rafael, one of Marin county's largest bookstores.

"We've had a big display but people just walk by as if it's not there. If they say anything, it's something like, 'I'd never give that man my money.'"

William Martinelli of Hink's book department in Berkeley said that the store has all of three orders for the book. "It just isn't going to do well in Berkeley," he said.

The book lined shelf after shelf at The Emporium downtown store in San Francisco, but there were few customers — or even browsers — reaching for copies.



By Clem Albers

The book was prominently displayed in The Emporium and other Bay Area stores, but there were few browsers