

Books empty pockets, fill mind

By Joshua Baird
Arts & Culture Editor

One question is asked more than anything in the college hallways: "Why are my books so expensive?"

In the past, students would buy a textbook and if it was in good enough condition they would sell it back to the bookstore at the end of the term, losing money in the process. However, even \$20 is good for most students when it means the difference between dinner and going without.

These days, however, this is not as easy as it once was. The problem comes in the form of book publishers packaging books with online pass codes required for a number of classes on campus, for example business computing, accounting and science classes. The bookstore cannot buy these books back once the wrapper is removed.

"The publishers want to sell the books new with access codes, and when they sell the book with an access code they will add ten dollars to the cost for the access code when you buy the new book," said Carol DeSau, the manager of the bookstore at Clackamas Community College's campus.

"If you buy the access code separately, they jack the price way up and it, a lot of times, makes it more expensive for a student to buy a used textbook with a separate access code than to buy the package from the publisher."

Most students aren't aware of the new style of books available at the bookstore in the form of loose leaf pages in a three-ring binder called customized textbooks. These books cannot be bought back either.

"I think perhaps the dilemma that I see in customized books is the inability to sell back. That's not because of us," said Kelly Brennan, speech instructor and contributor to "The Power of Words: Public Speaking."

According to Brennan, the reason for using this new style of book is actually to keep the cost down from what the complete textbook costs.

"The main concern was cost and the lack of being able to sell them back. We find that with most custom books, even though you can't sell them back, they tend to be a little bit cheaper. So when you do all of the calculations it ends up being about the same," said Brennan.

When books are sold brand new, the bookstore receives a portion of the profit, accounting for approximately 25 percent of which they use to pay shipping, salaries for employees, custodial services and reimbursing the college for the cost of electricity.

The other 75 percent is received by the publisher who then goes about paying the authors and co-authors of the textbook. This is not to say that the 75 percent received goes to the author.

Instead this is split up among several areas of the publishing world, everything from printing prices to paying the academics that test out the various chapters of each book to ensure that all of the data is correct and all of the answers to problems and

exercises are correct. In the case of anatomy and physiology texts, the authors have to pay for cadavers for illustrations.

So after paying for printing costs, models, dummies, academics and photography, the share that the authors receive is fairly miniscule. What happens to the royalties for books in required classes that are written by instructors on campus?

This brings up a matter of ethics. Is it ethical for the author to receive money for a book that he wrote and then requires for his required courses to use? According to math instructor Stefan Barrato, it is not. Barrato is the co-author of "Elementary and Intermediate Algebra," which he wrote with Don Hutchison. They donate all of the royalties from books sold at CCC to the foundation to avoid a conflict of interest.

According to Brennan, who co-authored a customized book by entering pertinent information and his PowerPoints into a set of pre-existing text, indicated that all royalties are being exchanged for a two gigabyte USB drive that comes packaged in the public speaking textbook from the publisher. The USB drive is a required asset for his classroom.

Students don't always have to buy the book, in some cases rentals are available at the bookstore, as

long as the books aren't damaged, you do not have to pay the full price of the book at the end of the term. The library also has several copies of textbooks on reserve, though in the case of "The Power of Words," very few of them are checked out.

So who is the bad guy here? The author who writes the book and uses his royalties to benefit the student body? Or the bookstore who, though owned by the college, acts as a separate entity? Or the publishers who pay for the whole process from design to printing?

Unfortunately nobody is to blame for the cost of textbooks; this isn't a novel that sells for \$7.99 at Fred Meyer and sells a million copies a year, is your education, so which would you prefer: a cheap textbook or a higher standard of education?

"We try to find the best textbooks, and what happens, in my opinion, was they raised the price to become as they are. That makes us have to find a book that may be a little cheaper to help those costs down. The problem is that we are lessening the quality of the books now, but we are going to be at the cost of the student's education. So that is the dilemma that we are finding ourselves in," Brennan.



Students buy textbooks for their classes for Fall term. Students' wallets are being strained as book publishers release new editions and increased costs for buying access codes separate from the package.

21+: Celebrate the new school term with bacon infused vodka



By Joshua Baird
Arts & Culture Editor

Welcome to "21+"; a column for you, the drinking class, as Oscar Wilde would call you. We will be discussing bar reviews, beer, wine, liquor and other aspects of being of age.

The last time I went to a liquor store, I found that there are literally dozens, if not hundreds, of different companies making new and creative products. Flavored gin, rum, tequila, even whiskey are available on the market at a surprising rate. One such product that has possibly the most variance is vodka.

Vodka is one of the first of the five main spirits most people go for when they reach their 21st birthday, so it is no surprise that vodka companies have begun to market so many new flavors to the public. Everything from citrus flavoring to acai berry to the most surprising of all, bacon flavored vodka.

With hundreds of thousands of cocktail recipes available both in books and on the Internet, one has to wonder what kind of drink one would make with bacon flavored vodka. In my pursuit of a perfect bacon cocktail, I had to go no further than the homepage for Bakon Vodka.

Bakon Vodka has an aroma similar to imitation bacon bits that can be found in just about every salad bar.

I felt that in order to get the overall effect of this interesting concoction, I should try it straight the first time. While it did have an undertone of peppered bacon, the majority of the flavor was that smooth and slightly sweet flavor that can be expected from good potato vodka.

Bakon's website, www.bakonvodka.com, has compiled a list of 13 different cocktails and one recipe for a "Bakon Vodka Marinated Steak." Included in this list are a "Bakon Chocolate Martini" and a "Prosciutto Wrapped Melon Shot."

These two strange cocktails went head to head in a taste test. In my years as a bartender, I have come across a number of recipes that sounded strange, even terrible, yet they turned

out to be a unique and sometimes wonderful experience.

The melon shot coming from two very different gravity alcohols had to be poured just right in order to get that fantastic appearance found in layered shots, first by adding the Midori, a Japanese melon liqueur, and then layering the vodka on top to make the fantastic visual.

The flavor was both sweet and savory and provided an interesting overall taste. It legitimately tasted like the name indicates. Whether that is a good thing or not is up to you. I personally enjoy that combination.

After the shot of fruit and Bakon, I decided it is now time to experiment with the Bakon Chocolate Martini, I have never been more afraid of a cocktail in my life. The only thing I kept thinking was, "If I dial 911 and I'm too busy lurching to talk, will they be able to find me from my cell signal?"

Surprisingly, the cocktail didn't taste half bad. The chocolate flavor was a bit weak so I felt inclined to add a bit of chocolate sauce that I keep in my desk drawer for just such emergencies. Okay, so maybe it was in the refrigerator not the drawer, but it saved my "Bakon" none the less.

While this is not the type of thing I will probably ever order in a bar for fear of being ostracized, unless I have had a few already and the "need food" region of my brain takes over, I have to say that all in all this is a pretty versa-

tile and enjoyable drink. People really love bacon on or in anything these days.

Disclaimer: *The Clackamas Print* does not support underage drinking of any kind. Drink responsibly.



This chocolate and bacon vodka martini is the perfect mix of sweet and savory.