

## Campus bookstore bilking buyers?

Megan Martinez  
Staff Writer

Students must have textbooks. This is a truth widely acknowledged, but the difficult task of book buying never seems to get any easier. Why doesn't the University of West Florida bookstore make it easier on the checkbook and the students?

Since it's rare that a student takes a class where a textbook isn't required, the campus bookstore is a mandatory stop for students. But what to do when the bookstore does not have the book you need? Or better yet, if they only have the \$80 new version and you just bought a Cure CD?

High prices and long lines are enough to make even the most loyal student wish that they had taken their business elsewhere or that they had ordered their books online.

More and more students are turning to the Internet to find their books for class with less hassle and cheaper prices. With sites like Amazon.com providing free shipping on larger orders, there seems no point in braving the crowded bookstore when with the click of a button you can get more books at a better price. You didn't want to spend an enormous sum on textbooks in the first place, but at least you get to skip getting dressed or waiting in a long line

with an armload of books.

Buying the textbooks is just phase one of the textbook experience.

At the end of the semester, after weeks of reading and tests, it is finally time to sell your book back!

Finally you can get rid of that cumbersome advanced economics book and all those other textbooks that have been breaking your back all semester, and in return, you get money for a shopping spree.

But before you run to the mall, there is one problem. It turns out that the bookstore isn't going to buy back that \$80 "History of the World" book. They don't need it, so it is your problem.

Maybe you will buy it for the next term. Regardless, it will have to remain in your room as part of the décor, probably the most expensive piece of furniture in your room.

If you are lucky, the bookstore will offer to buy back the rest of its books, but at a ridiculously small fraction of the price that you originally paid. Most students will opt for the cash and ditch the book.

For those with more time and patience, there are a slew of sites online where books can be sold to other students for more than the bookstore would pay.

The bookstore isn't the only culprit in the high-

priced book enterprise. There are also publishers at fault who are charging the bookstore high prices—directly reflected in student's costs. With tuition on the rise, it would only seem that at the very least, the school could provide us with better deals on textbooks.

Professors in turn need to do their part, keeping textbooks in use for more than one semester so that they will be bought back by the school.

Who better would understand our dilemma than those professionals who are the product of countless years at a university?

Why all of this pain and effort for such a basic necessity?

Instead of high prices and not enough books, shouldn't the UWF bookstore try to compete with the prices of other stores?

The hand baskets are a nice touch, but it takes more than that and free soda to patronize their store. The UWF bookstore needs to realize that it has a commitment to the students. It needs to provide students with textbooks at an economical price and provide a fair buyback policy that doesn't leave students with an expensive drink coaster.

Paying for college is hard enough with the recent rise in tuition, let alone buying textbooks while losing money on previously purchased books the school won't buy back.

## The RIAA has taken it too far

William Bolen  
Commentary Editor

Downloading music from the Internet violates copyright laws and deprives artists of revenue. While that may be true, the Recording Industry Association of America has taken their war against copyright infringement to a perilous level.

The RIAA announced last week it would pursue lawsuits against 261 music file-sharers. The litigants include a 71-year-old grandfather, whose grandchildren used his computer to download songs and a 12-year-old girl whose family lives in a housing project on New York's Upper West Side.

According to a study by Forrester Research in Cambridge about two-thirds of American 18 and 19-year-olds surveyed download music. Although they do not represent the majority of file-sharers, college students have been at the forefront of the trend since the beginning.

The heavy-handed actions by the RIAA will only further antagonize the fan base it so desperately needs. RIAA statistics show there has been a 31 percent drop in sales of recorded music since file sharing became popular more than three years ago. The music companies need to bring customers back not push them away.

"When labels didn't come through, consumers built it themselves," says Lee Black, an analyst for Jupiter Research.

For every Napster the RIAA shuts down, a Kazaa is born. As time passes the software to download music and other files will become more sophisticated and secure from the eyes of the RIAA.

The recording industry has to embrace the new technology. The door has already been opened. By opposing the download trend rather than accepting it, the music industry has placed themselves in this position.

Legal download sites have begun appearing. With the availability of more songs on these sites, and a consumer-friendly pricing scale, the recording industry can begin slowly turning the focus towards legitimate downloading. Improved access and the fear of prosecution favor the expansion of these legitimate outlets.

"Labels are making some pretty big concessions," Black says. "One thing (free) file-sharing sites don't do well is customer service. The paid path was always the future. Even Napster was going to have to build a business to support itself."

The cost of compact disks is another factor that helps spur on the downloading movement. Some companies are taking notice and have made moves to react to the drop in sales. Universal Music's recent move to reduce prices, by as much as 30 percent, is an example that other companies need to follow. Prices could drop as low as \$9.98 from its present \$16 to \$18 plateau.

Even though the price cuts have received positive consumer response so far, the rest of the top music companies (Warner, Sony, BMG and EMI) have yet to follow suit with similar cuts. They are taking a wait-and-see attitude to gauge customer feedback. The cuts may be too little, too late. The convenience of downloading only the songs wanted and the ease by which CDs can be burned overshadow the price cuts. "We think this will be the most painful year," said Richard Doherty, director of The Environmental Group, a technology assessment firm in Seaford, N.Y.

"It's frustrating that it is taking the music industry this long to listen to the desires of consumers, but it is getting better."

It's about time.



William Bolen

## Lady Justice listed in critical condition

Travis Huisken  
Contributing Writer

Few justice systems are as admirable as ours. In some countries, a defendant is considered guilty until proven innocent. In other countries, the defendant's punishment is the trial, i.e. trial by ordeal. In a trial by ordeal, what determines innocence or guilt is whether the defendant survives or perishes. Many Middle Eastern countries are considered Muslim nations, not because their people are convinced of the Islamic faith, but because people caught practicing another religion are quickly put to death.

This is in stark contrast with our own justice system. Lady Justice used to be recognized as being blind. She believed that "all men are created equal," and anyone who was tested by her enjoyed the presumption of innocence. What your ethnicity, gender or creed was did not matter. Lady Justice, at least in theory, could not see these things. The rights granted to defendants were granted equally to any and every defendant.

In time, the Left would use new statutes to perform a sort of surgery on Lady Justice. This surgery was intended to grant her the ability to see. These statutes made it so that your ethnicity, gender and creed make a difference in



how you are to be judged.

For example, if you are in the right minority group, you are "entitled" to be admitted to positions that you otherwise would not be considered qualified to hold (e.g. Jayson Blair's position with the New York Times, and The University of Michigan's affirmative racism practices).

Another example is in the harsher punishments that are now given to people who hatefully kill a homosexual,

black, etc., than to people who hatefully kill someone from the majority people group.

What is the "majority people group" if it is not defined as the melting pot of minority groups that are excluded from this racist special treatment?

German-Americans, Samoan-Americans, Peruvian-Americans, white Americans from South Africa and a plethora of others who could legitimately consider themselves "minorities" are not protected by hate crime legislation. Today it is a "hate crime" if you hatefully kill someone from an anointed minority group.

It is only a murder if you hatefully kill anyone else.

As a final example, consider the attacks the Left makes on our freedom of religion. Today we are allowed to display a cross in a public environment, but only so long as it is upside down in a jar of urine and labeled as "art." For Christian symbols to be used legally, they must be used in a fashion that is hostile to Christianity.

Rather than uphold the principle of all men being created equal, it is now in the hands of the legislature to determine which superficial traits or ideas might make someone more worthy of protections, or more "entitled" to higher education and desirable occupations.

As in George Orwell's book "Animal Farm," we are discovering that some people are more equal than others.

Today, the more you are able to portray yourself as a victim, the more "entitled" you are to get the education or the occupation you want, or special legislation that grants greater protections to you.

Sympathy is a form of currency today, and if you get enough sympathy, it relieves you of such inconveniences as personal accountability and responsibility.

Lady Justice was in her prime when she was blind.

By gifting her with sight, the Left made her deaf and dumb. They have committed astonishing injustices, and ironically, they did it in the name of justice.

Her blindness served to promote the most perfect of ideals. In attempting to give her sight, the Left has destroyed everything she has ever stood for.

All people are worthy of equal protection under the law, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation or creed.

Today's political Left seems to disagree. Without our help, Lady Justice won't make it out of the operating room. In her place we will be ruled by the tyranny of the minority.

## Cartoons aren't bad, but people are

Peter Chase  
Staff Writer

Since the dawn of time, violence has been around. Even in the earliest pages of the Bible, murder is found.

Yet recently the blame for violent behavior has switched from the perpetrators themselves to their living and social habits, whether it is the games they play or the shows they watch.

So can watching cartoons turn people violent? Say it isn't so, Bugs. Say it isn't so.

Creating violent Americans was hardly on the minds of animators when cartoons first gained huge popularity.

Early cartoons were meant as a diversion from the present time that America was going through.

Many cartoons were developed in response to World War II not only boost morale on the home front, but to demonstrate some animator's responses to the war and just war in general.

The cartoons that gained heaviest airtime and

popularity were the "Looney Tunes" and "Merrie Melodies."

Developed by Warner Bros. with nearly all characters voiced by Mel Blanc, "Looney Tunes" created an entertaining and morale-lifting way to keep the folks back home smiling despite the rough time.

The "Looney Tunes" have since grown out of that role, but still provide a great laugh to those of all ages.

From the target audience of families of wartime soldiers to the children of today, "Looney Tunes" have proved to be a timeless classic.

Yet, due to the increasing rate of violence in this present age, even cartoons have become a scapegoat for the problems in society.

From the music we listen to, to the games we play, nothing is truly safe anymore.

Who is to say whether the music we listen to, the games we play or the television we watch is to blame for the violence in America?

Violent video games, television and music have been out for years, but the rebirth of this

controversy has only just begun. Countless hours of debate have been staged in order to understand how cartoon violence can translate into real violence.

Give me a break. Cartoon violence is not truly violence at all.

This writer does not remember the last time that cartoon violence seemed realistic enough to be imitated.

Whether it is the tremendous falls taken by "Looney Tunes" characters or the beatings inflicted upon Goofy, the rules that govern cartoons are hardly the rules that govern our society. If children can understand that rabbits don't really talk and stand on their hind legs, why does the press continue to present contemporary shows as being degrading?

"Looney Tunes" have been around for a long time and will continue to live on as a part of our American history.

Our children will watch "Looney Tunes" and their children will watch them. Violence is just a part of society and is by no means dictated by the cartoons we watch.

## VOYAGER

The *Voyager* is produced weekly by students of the University of West Florida and is partially funded by Student Activities and Services fees with assistance from the Office of Student Affairs. This public document was promulgated by the president of the University at an annual cost of \$.275 per copy. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of UWF, the *Voyager* or its staff.

Advertiser and advertising agency will indemnify and hold harmless The *Voyager*, and its staff, for all contents supplied to publisher, including text, representation and illustrations of advertisements printed, and for any claims arising from contents including, but not limited to defamation, invasion of privacy, copyright infringement, plagiarism, and in the case of a pre-printed insert, deficient postage.

The *Voyager* is printed by the Press Gazette, in accordance with Florida Law. The above information is presented in compliance Section 283.27 of Florida Statutes. All contents © 2003 *Voyager*.

FALL 2003

## STAFF

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Carmen Reynolds

**NEWS EDITOR**  
Kris Thoma

**FEATURES EDITOR**  
Jessica Leigh Jones

**ASSISTANT FEATURES EDITOR**  
Christina Tilton

**SPORTS EDITOR**  
Andrew Kilgo

**PHOTO EDITOR**  
Ron Besser

**COMMENTARY EDITOR**  
William Bolen

**COPY EDITOR**  
Katherine Goldsberry

**ASSISTANT COPY EDITOR**  
Justin Hooks

**PRODUCTION**  
Tammy Leytham  
Marcus Ditty

**STAFF**  
Merit Celaire  
Melissa Cook  
Travis Huisken  
Josephine Rios  
Rayna Kapec  
Amber Gay  
Mae Humiston  
Mara McDermott  
Rebecca Warren  
Jason Hartman  
Chris Louie  
Bethanne Sevcech  
Geoff Watts  
Edward King  
Megan Martinez  
Luis Ferreiro

Christina Tilton  
Robert Pennebaker  
Chris Monteleone  
Joshua Brunson  
Shanna Hawkins  
Peter Chase  
Chaz Harstad  
Maurice Moulton/FWB Campus  
Bryan Meyers

**BUSINESS MANAGER**  
Beverly Kelly

**ADVERTISING MANAGER**  
Randy Schilling

**CIRCULATION MANAGER**  
Reynaldo Soares

**FACULTY ADVISOR**  
Gary Ghioto

**ONLINE EDITION**  
Marcus Ditty-Webmaster  
Dan Kettinger  
Phyllis Wells

## POLICY

Letters to the Editor must be signed and include the author's address and telephone number for verification purposes. Letters must be less than 250 words and are published as space allows. Letters to the editor do not necessarily represent the views of the *Voyager* staff. The Editor reserves the right to edit letters or to refuse to publish letters. Deadline for letters is noon Friday before the date of publication. Guest commentary is also welcome and follows the same guidelines.

**YOU CAN E-MAIL ALL LETTERS**

**TO THE EDITOR AT**

**voyager@uwf.edu**

**ATTN: EDITORIAL**

**or drop them by Bldg. 36,**

**Room 120**