

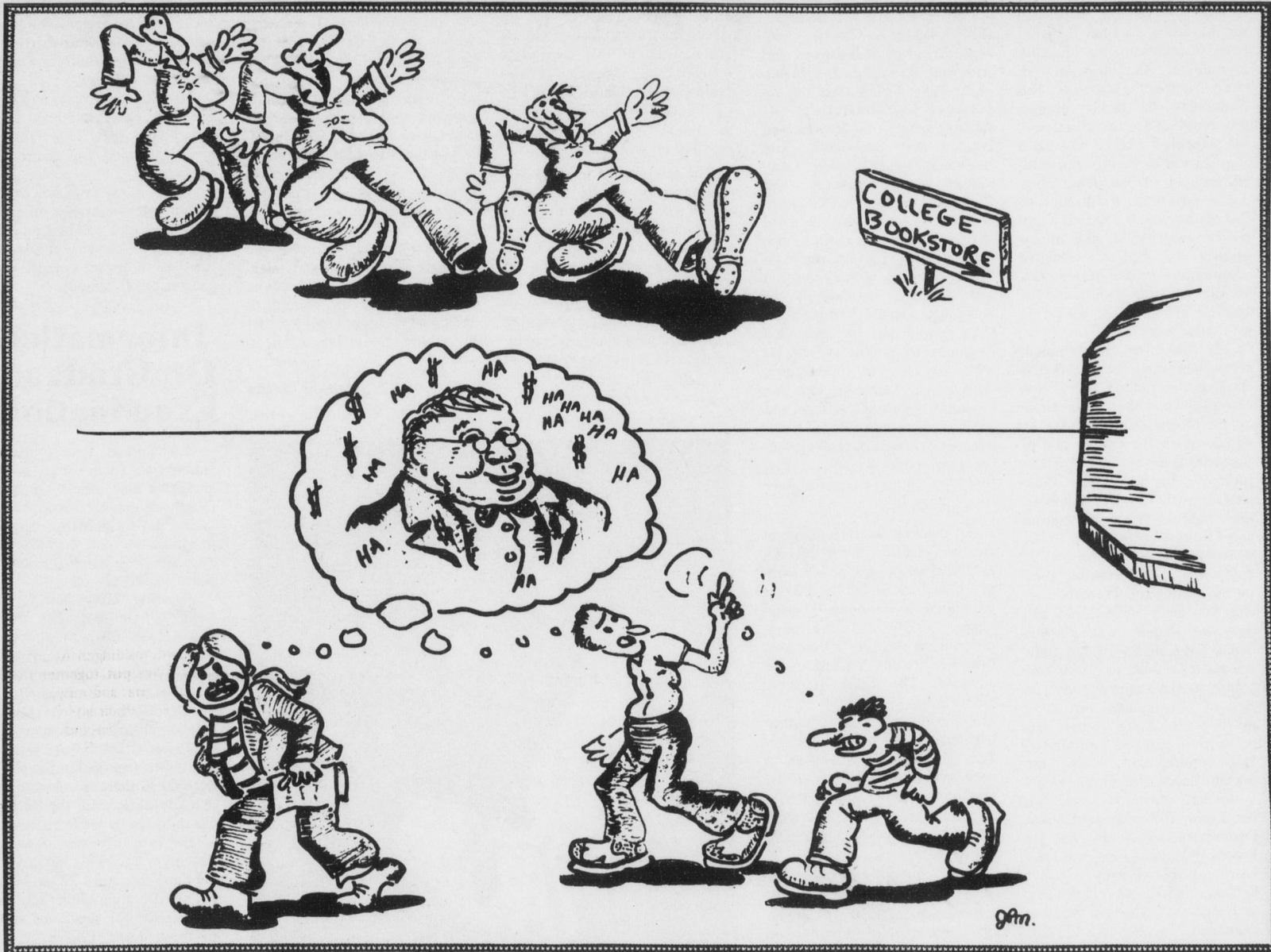
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Textbook Problems Mount

By Clare Glone

Frustration and added enrollment seem to be the key terms when talking about the Guilford College Bookstore and its service to students and faculty.

Each year there seems to be a number of hassles arising with getting books at Guilford College—professors who say that the bookstore manager does not order enough books, poor estimation of class number by professors, and the inevitable difference between pre-registration figures and actual class size.

The bookstore is basically a profit-making operation, leased to a private source by the college.

In the past few years the bookstore has been selling more and more non-stationary items and the actual space devoted to books has diminished. One rather disgruntled professor termed

it "A drygoods and notions store," and mumbled something under his breath about Guilford College mugs and monogrammed athletic supporters—obviously not his idea of a bookstore.

The manager of the bookstore, Lee Kay, said there have been fewer problems this year than any other. When asked how he figured out how many books to order, he explained that a professor sends an estimate of the number he will need, and Kay figures how many copies may be in the hands of the students, etc., or as he says, "many imponderables." Kay noted that all the professors that have come into the bookstore have been happy with the ordering.

Professor John Grice of the political science department says of the problem, "Guilford is not large enough to support a bookstore (of the profit making variety), and the availability of

books is important to the atmosphere of a good college."

Grice suggested that the college run the bookstore at a loss and hire the manager on salary, pointing out that the school supports an athletic program that loses money.

Leslie Carr of the sociology department had in his words, "one course pretty well messed up" by the bookstore. Three months ago he ordered 20 copies of a text, but somehow only one arrived. He asked Mr. Kay to hold that copy for him, but when he got to the store it was gone. Carr requested that Mr. Kay telephone the publisher to order the books and Mr. Kay declined, saying it would cost the college money. Carr added that he had had problems with other bookstores, and did not consider Guilford's situation unique, even if it was one of "enormous frustration" for him.

William Burris, the academic

dean, expressed the thought that the bookstore is much better than it used to be. "When you have 95 professors and only four or five problems with ordering, you're batting about .900," he said. Burris recognized that to the professors who don't have enough books it is a serious problem.

The dean said he did not think it would be possible for the college to absorb the cost of a bookstore, "in times such as these."

Another alternative seen to the problem would be to give the textbook part of the bookstore to the library, since they already have the technical facilities and know-how for ordering books. The library could use the profit to hire an extra person who would do textbooks each semester and technical work the rest of the time, or use the profit to buy library books, whichever would be of most direct benefit

to students.

Some schools employ book exchanges, or textbooks are run by the student government for minimal profit. A typical book exchange might have books sold for 10% mark-up on the student's asking price to pay for the people who "mind the store." Ideally students would get books cheaper, people could sell books for what they want, and it would eliminate running to different dorms, following elusive leads, and reading or making all those lists that are found on various walls around campus.

This semester Guilford student Alan Socol has started a book co-op called Parabolis. Parabolis has gotten off the ground and is now in the process of trying to learn how to fly.

Several professors have indicated that they would support student efforts, whether individual or co-op, to sell books better and less expensively.