Colloquium Will Not Eliminate Cheating

By Bill Jackson

In a recent editorial, The Tech proposed setting up a new cooperative to sell textbooks to MIT students (“Coop ‘No Longer Deserves Monopoly,’” Sep. 29). The underlying idea seems to be that the Coop charges too much for textbooks. Unfortunately, this idea doesn’t seem to match the commercial reality — the time that this idea came up, five or six years ago, the Coop management replied that they would be willing to give the textbook business to any business that wanted to take it. There were no takers. From a retailer’s point of view, textbooks are bad business: high overhead, high retail merchandise is marked up 100% or more, and most merchandise turns over faster than Spaceballs. If you have to give up an entire line, you’re not going to use it.

Mattuck is Not “The Confusing One”

How can you call Professor of Mathematics Arthur P. Mattuck “the Confusing One” in your yearbook spoof (“Normal,” Oct. 16)? Mattuck in 18.063 was one of the best lecturers I’ve ever had at MIT. I thought he was entirely clear, sensitive to the class, and enthusiastic.

He gave great explanations; his problems sets were clear; his tests were fair. In fact, it was obvious that class was that term and the terrific job that he did that made it possible that math was new.

Many students in the class also loved Mattuck’s style — at the end of the semester, they put together a list of their favorite quotes and distributed it to the class as a “handout.” I am grateful to him for his inspiration. With so many busy lecturers around at MIT, it’s just too bad that you didn’t pick on one.

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