

Asking Around/Smoking

By Jan Travers/Editor Have We Come a Long Way, Baby?

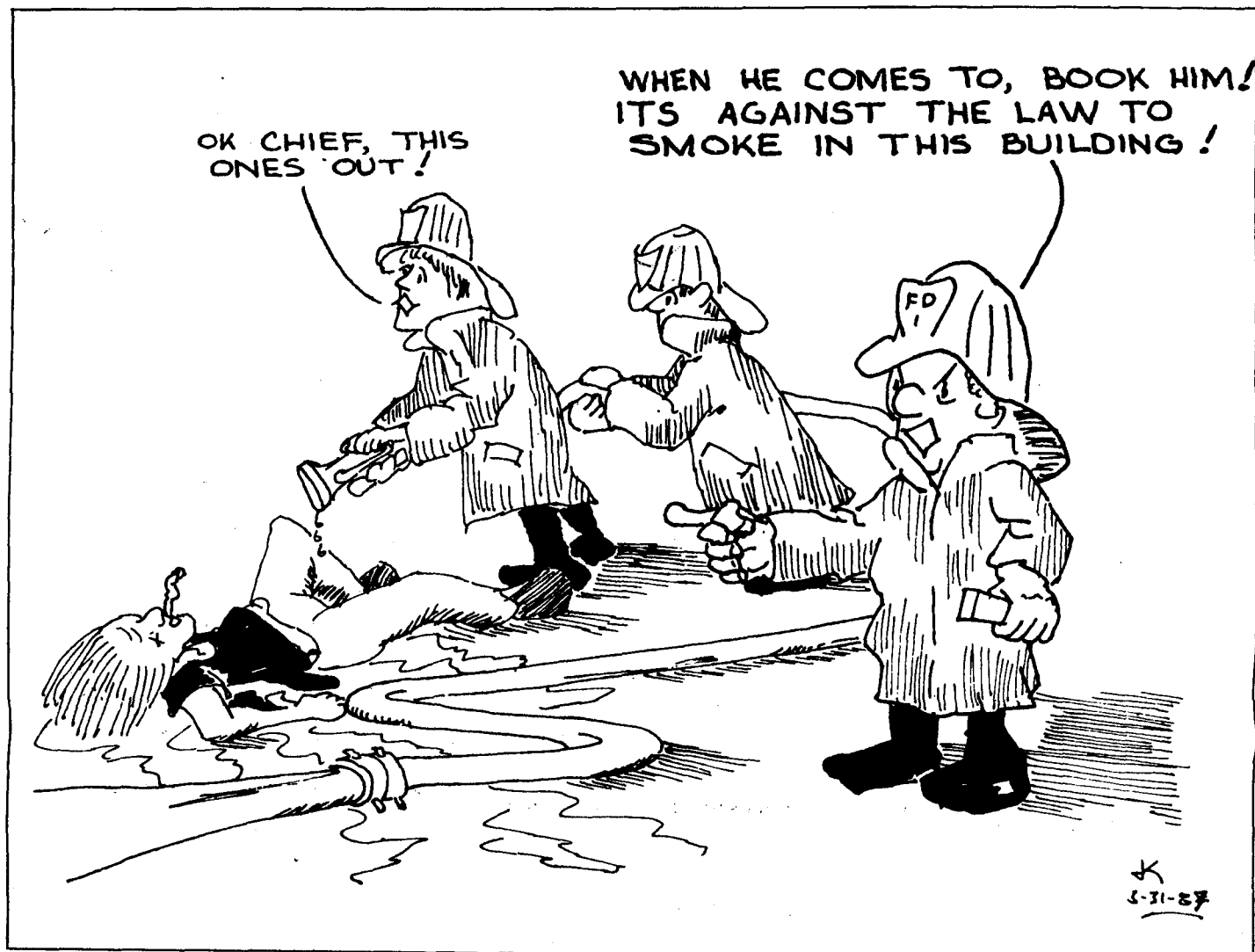
I was talking to my friend Maggie the other day. She's just irate because the state is trying to adopt legislation telling her where she can or cannot smoke. She doesn't think it's fair to spend so much money to come to college to get away from her parents nagging about smoking only to find that an even higher authority may prevail. But maybe the pending law will do her a favor.

According to a federal study released in July 1986, college females are twice as likely to smoke as college males. Dr. Lloyd Johnson, director of the study for the National Institute on Drug Abuse, offered a reason for the discrepancy. He said the tobacco industry has spend a lot of money and time convincing females that smoking is okay by 1) linking it with an image of independence, success, and glamour, and 2) giving the subliminal message that smoking helps women stay thin.

If you think about it, there are ads such as this. The one that comes specifically to mind is "You've come a long way, baby." It uses both themes in one ad. It emphasizes how a woman now has the independence to live life to its fullest and it invariably shows a tall, thin, beautiful woman smoking a long thin cigarette.

What people fail to realize is that these ads have more influence on us than we like to admit. Those who bend to the influence could end up as one of the 350,000 Americans who die each year because of smoking.

We can't nag people into quitting smoking. But just maybe the new law will make it inconvenient enough to the smokers that they will reevaluate their need to smoke.

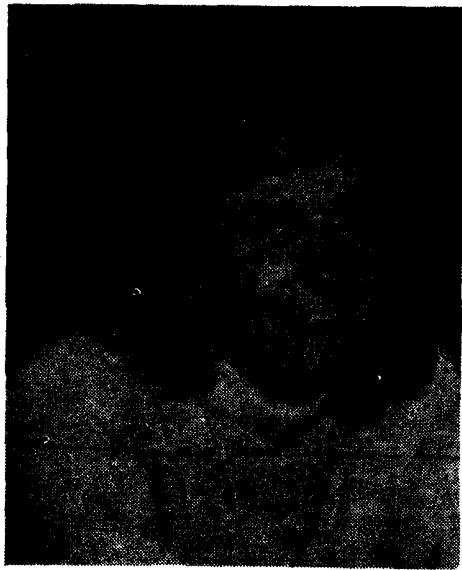


Do You Think Smoking Should Be Banned in Public Buildings?



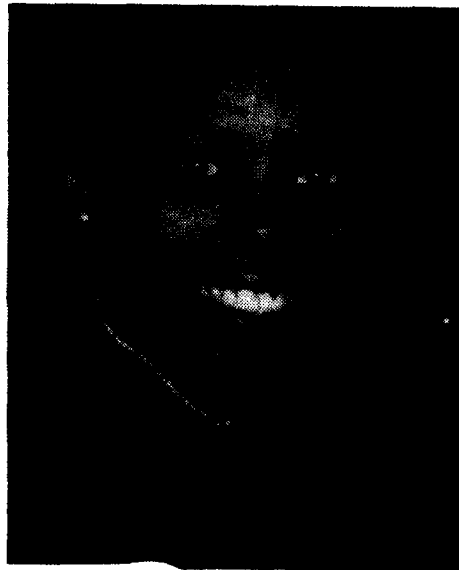
Rebecca Seib
American Studies

"It should not be totally banned. I would not be against designated areas but a total ban would be unfair because of individual rights. At least designated areas would take everyone's rights into consideration."



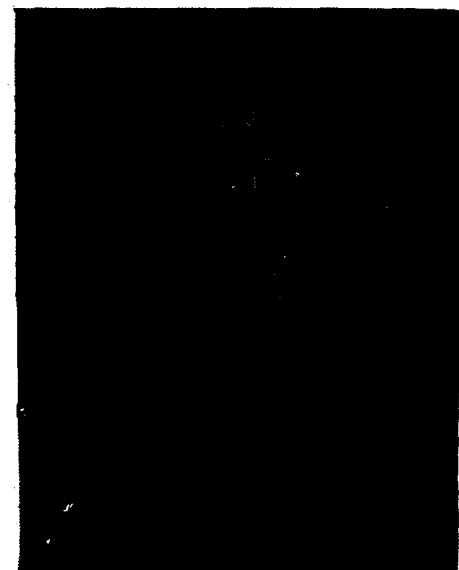
Kay Holtzman
Management

"It shouldn't be banned, but there should be separate sections so non-smokers don't get their lungs polluted."



Nadine Armstrong
EET

"It should not be banned but there should be restricted areas where employees can smoke. This is because of the danger of secondary smoke."



Ed Pitingolo
Accounting

"No, because it is a legal activity and it's one of my few remaining vices. I feel the danger of second hand smoke has been greatly exaggerated."