

Ask Louanne

The Collegian's Advice Column
by Dr. Louanne Barton
Personal Counselor



Dear Louanne,

I'm probably the world's greatest procrastinator. It seems I always put everything off until midterm. I could blow the whole semester if I don't get on the ball pretty soon. How can I make myself get off my butt and get going?

Signed,
World's Greatest Procrastinator

Dear W.G.P.,

There are two kinds of people in the world, those eat their spinach first and those who tend to put the spinach off in the hope Mom will let them have the ice cream anyway. Unfortunately most professors aren't like good old Mom.

Following are some tips for overcoming procrastination:

1. Use the "Swiss cheese technique." Poke holes in an overwhelming job with small manageable tasks.
2. If the task is unpleasant, promise yourself you'll quit after a limited time: 15 minutes, half an hour, an hour.
3. Try a leading task like sharpening a pencil or xeroxing an article.
4. Talk to yourself in a positive way.
5. List the benefits of doing the task versus the consequences of not doing it.
6. Make a commitment to someone else.
7. Consider your working environment. Is it too convenient to fall asleep?
8. Sometimes it pays to do a task when you think of it.
9. Establish a set time for tasks you don't enjoy.
10. When you leave a project temporarily always write down the next step.
11. When you become bored, change to a different but related task.
12. Avoid information overload. Collecting information can be a way of procrastinating.
13. Become aware. Slow down. Think of the consequences and the benefits.
14. Don't try too much too quickly.
15. Start each day by doing the most unpleasant task on your list.
16. Reward yourself.
17. Expect backsliding.
18. Avoid being a perfectionist.
19. Start now, not after midterm.

Good Luck,
Louanne

Send your letters to:
Louanne Barton, Counseling Center
Reed Bldg.

From the hip

Rite of passage means more than booze

My, how loud this room is getting. The radio is cranking out some pop relic, reminding us that we are a *student* newspaper and that we sometimes take ourselves too seriously. Across the room, a frantic reporter is rushing through a last-minute phone interview. A few editors are grilling a columnist about the true definition of date rape, and the red-faced editor perched above the light table is sending me a glare, hoping to push this paragraph along a bit sooner.

And my head is throbbing...

Last night, I wasn't worried about deadlines, line tape or parallel sentence structure. My priorities were more basic -- getting back from the celebration of my 21st birthday, for one.

For many, the 21st birthday is a rite of passage. It's more than a birthday; it's a movement into recognized adulthood. But judging by the way most college students celebrate the day (or the evening, for those truly eager souls), most of us aren't ready to grow up and mature.

But after ordering my first few drinks, I realized that the true value of turning 21 has nothing to do with alcohol. Sitting in a booth bookended by two of my best friends, I noticed that none of us had been complaining about classes, money or dates (or a lack thereof) -- our usual topics of conversation. We had left all our pressures -- from the trivial roommate squabbles to the undeveloped essay due within the next 12 hours -- cooped up inside a room back at school.

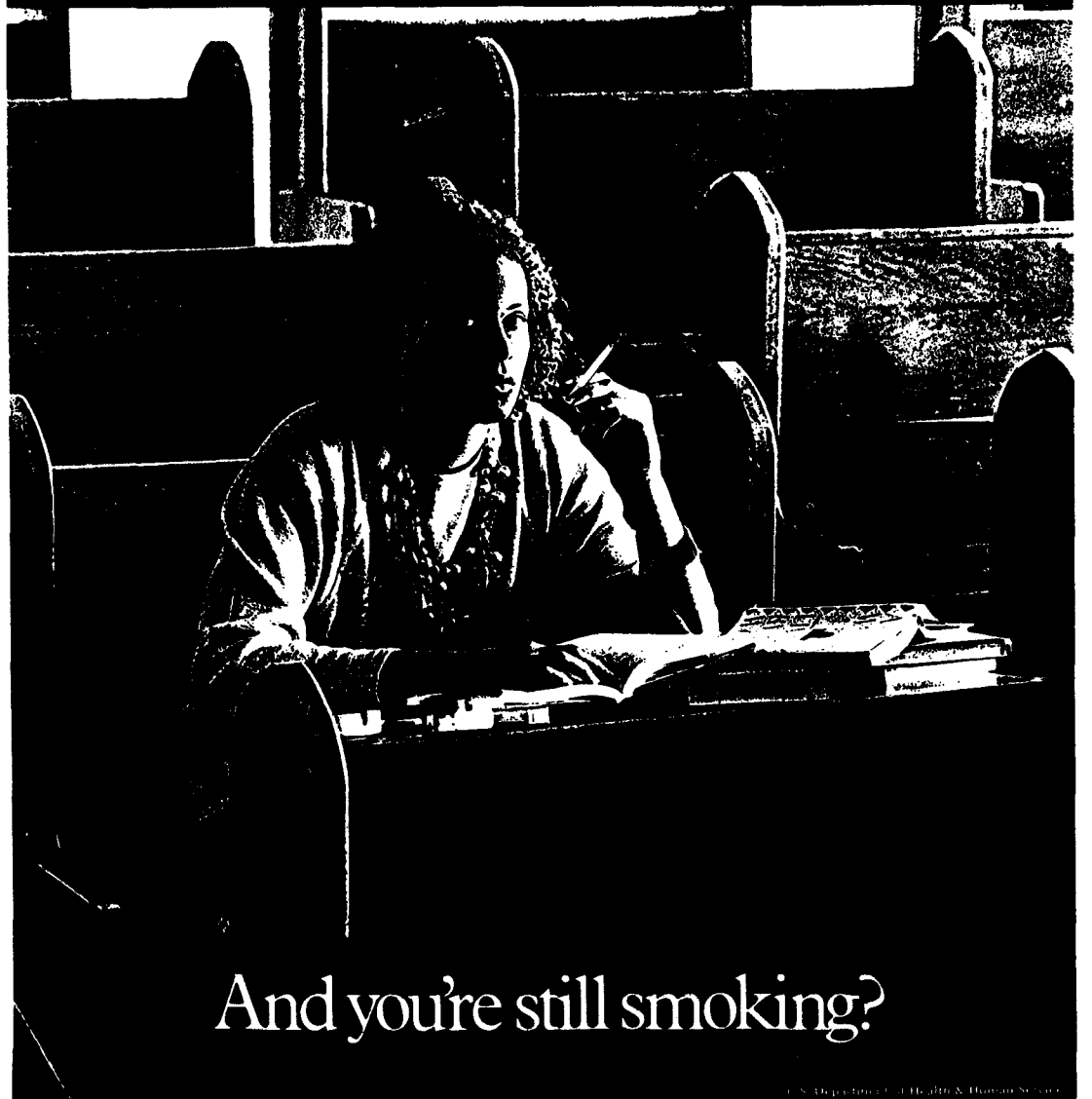
I understood that the friends at the table had done more and lasted longer than any class, paycheck, or date I've ever had. And I couldn't have asked for anything more.

But then again, I was probably reeling from that last drink. After all, friends have to have their fun too.



Features Editor Robb Frederick is a seventh semester communication major. He has served on the editorial staff of The Collegian since his sophomore year, and still doesn't care to know the ingredients of a "cement mixer."

You're smart enough to write
about Alice Walker's use
of African storytelling traditions.



And you're still smoking?