

PRO CRASTINATION

Students deal with repercussions of laziness

BY MELISSA PANTANO
The Battalion

Trent Owens sits down to write a paper. Once he has sharpened all 10 of his pencils, called three friends, cleaned his room, taken a shower and watched the weather channel for an hour, he finally gets down to business.

He surfs the Internet for a while, then sits back at his desk. He decides he is tired, so he takes a little nap to 'revitalize' himself. The clock reads 4:30 a.m., and Trent finally finds himself ready to get down to business.

Everyone does it, and whereas many proclaim themselves to be royalty in the field, procrastination, like dorm food, is an undeniable part of college life.

Owens, a senior telecommunications engineering major, said the quality of his work improves with the degree of desperation he feels.

"Procrastination stimulates creativity," Owens said. "When I study ahead of time I don't do well — I think I work better under pressure."

A central theme of procrastination is the belief that anything else comes before the responsibility. Owens said sometimes he gets desperate for something other than his school work to do.

"I'll do anything that I'm not supposed to be doing," Owens said. "I'll even clean my room. I mean, you've got to rationalize doing the dishes somehow."

Some students are at one with their procrastination, while others are in denial about their habit.

Brandon Rivera, a junior aerospace engineering major, said his stalling tendencies are just practice sessions for the post-graduation "real world."

"Procrastination prepares you for the real world," Rivera said. "It prepares you for jobs with tight schedules."

Problems arise when a group of self-admitted procrastinators get together to spend their time-wasting skills together.

Matt Green, a senior architecture major, said not having anything to do gives students time to plot their next night of procrastination.

"I am really good at procrastinating," Green said. "In my major, it's customary for professors to assign projects that will keep you up for a week. Then you have nothing to do for two weeks — kind of this ebb and flow kind of thing."

Green said he uses the extra time to come up with fun stuff he can do when he will be behind a deadline.

"We get together and do just about anything we're not supposed to be doing," Green said. "We make wearable models, play frisbee, drink beer, surf the net, make unnecessary phone calls and hang stuff from the tiles. Now that I think about it, we do a lot with the tiles."

While others use procrastination as an excuse to get creative, some spend their time wondering about the theoretical impact on society this habit can cause.

Taylor Delleney, a senior agricultural development major, said it is society's fault that he procrastinates.

"Procrastination is like everything else bad in the world," Delleney said. "You only do it because everyone else does. Procrastination breeds laziness."

Delleney said when he procrastinates, he is really just mentally preparing for the rest of his day.

"I'm usually doing something more important," Delleney said. "I'm not procrastinating; [it is] more like planning what I'm going to do with the rest of my day."



ERIC ANDRAOS/THE BATTALION

Although students may feel procrastination is a way of life, others espouse the virtue of timeliness.

Richard Johnson, a lecturer in the center for academic enhancement, said if students put as much effort into their studies as their procrastinating they would be much more successful.

"Students are content settling," Johnson said. "Over-achieving does not have a value."

Johnson said some students take their past achievements for granted, and bring bad habits with them to college.

"Society does not demand a lot from students," Johnson said. "I'm not procrastinating; [it is] more like planning what I'm going to do with the rest of my day."

Part of the procrastination problem stems from stu-

dents' experiences in high school. Johnson said students who have it easy in their late teens will suffer when they bring the same attitude to a college campus.

"[Students] have gotten by with mediocrity in the past. They didn't try very hard in high school and they passed, and now they are at a fairly prestigious university."

Johnson said although he was at one time a procrastinator, he found out soon enough procrastination was not the right approach to life.

He also said there could only be one possible advantage to putting things off until the last minute.

"If it gets stressful enough," Johnson said, "then students might learn not to do it in the future."



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