



Chipronick - Houston Chronicle

# The Dallas Morning News

Monday, January 19, 1998

## Puff Puff

*Smoking still de rigueur for the college set*

**H**ere we are surrounded by the anti-smoking movement.

Joe Camel has been sent packing, and the tobacco industry is anteing up billions in repayment of public money spent to treat smokers.

California, considered by some to be a trend setter, just banned smoking in bars. Lawmakers in some states are seeking warning labels on cigars like those on cigarettes.

And America's college freshmen say they are lighting up more than ever.

"We have selective hearing; we think we're immune to getting cancer," is the way one Dallas freshman described the phenomenon.

So much for negative publicity.

According to the annual installment of the largest U.S. survey of college freshmen, the percentage of those who smoke is at its highest level in 30 years.

The survey of 252,082 freshmen at 464 colleges and universities found that 16 percent

say they smoke frequently, up from 9 percent in 1987. And young women do more puffing than young men, 17 percent to 15 percent.

The survey, conducted by the University of California at Los Angeles' Higher Education Research Institute, also found that the class of 2001 is less interested in politics and social issues than its predecessors.

Freshmen also reported spending fewer hours studying, although more of them say they plan to get advanced degrees.

But poor study habits and political apathy are, while serious, not life threatening. Students will learn to hit the books once they get a few failing grades. And an interest in political issues should develop as students take on responsibilities like a family and a mortgage.

There's not much to say to all the young smokers out there that hasn't already been said. And apparently, many haven't been listening.

We can only hope they get smart in college.