

# Bathroom break scheduled for 2:00

[Business](#)



My alarm rings each weekday morning at 6: 30 AM., and then again at 6: 35. It takes approximately four minutes for me to muster the strength to push myself out of bed, provided that I don't immediately slip back into unconsciousness. I then pop out my retainer and commence my two-minute tooth brushing while simultaneously pulling out my clothes for the day. Then I hop into the shower and pray that by the time I get out, it will be 6: 55 or earlier.

Following that, I dry off, get dressed while performing whatever other toilet tree functions need to be done, and get the hell out of my room. On the way, I pick up my coat and put on my shoes with the laces already tied. These items were conveniently left as close to the door as possible the previous night in an effort to save time. If I shorten my routine by thirty seconds, I can jog to catch the bus instead of sprinting. No matter the morning, it will be around 7: 01 when I leave my house.

I'll admit that the rest of my day is equally as scheduled. It seems to me that the same goes for most of the students and faculty members at any given school. In fact, I would venture to guess that nearly every working human being in the United States of America has each day mapped out from end to end, hour by hour. Such is the civilization we live in today. Life wasn't always like this... Or was it? From pre-Neolithic times all the way up to the Industrial Revolution, time was relative; it revolved around the sun.

But clock-less farmers still had their daily routines. Their crops would go unfarmed without them. As history progressed, society became more and more ritualized, until the twenty-first century came around. Now even

procrastination is habitual. The great question remains: are rituals something we want to have, or something we need to have? Just a few weeks ago, I realized that the A.

P. English juniors of Byram Hills High School are themselves a microcosm of the modern world. Unlike in regular English 11, students taking A. P. English are given a single deadline by which they must turn in their entire Junior Author Paper, better known as the JAP. It's a year-long assignment, and a tedious one to be sure.

And without a series of smaller due dates to regulate the process, these students have a tendency to wait until the last week available to get the bulk of their work done. As a result, they're stressed, tired, and they spend the majority of their February breaks writing about writers. One has to wonder how radically different their work ethic would be without free reign. On the other hand, cultures within third-world countries around the globe still operate without clocks, dates or predictable lifestyles. Their routines are as simplistic as they come. They go with the flow, so to speak, and it seems to be working out fine for them.

And yet, they remain economically and technologically backward. It's little wonder, then, that the world's superpowers move by schedule. Clockwork is the way of the future, and our timetables keep it grinding along. But is this symbiosis necessary in the first place? If I didn't set my alarm in the morning, if I stayed in the shower an extra minute, if I drove to school at nine o'clock, would I still learn? Would I receive a proper education? If classes were fifty minutes instead of forty-nine, would the day ever end? Non-

ritualized life hasn't existed since the Stone Age. To a teenager like me who doesn't know any better, daily routines appear to be essential to the survival of the human race. But when is it too much? When have we spent so much time darting around in circles that life itself moves by unappreciated? I don't know.

Do you?