

VIEWPOINT

Monday, September 18, 1995

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THE OBSERVER

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■ AND IN THIS CORNER...

The calcium controversy? Pass the moo juice, please

As a newcomer to this campus and to this newspaper, I feel it is my duty to warn you in advance that I am not from Indiana.

During my first couple of weeks here, I couldn't help but notice the many varying aspects of life in this wonderfully heterogeneous pocket of these United States and compare and contrast the lifestyle to that with which I am familiar.

Out of all the striking differences, one similarity jumps out at me - a similarity recently discussed with such vehemence in these same hallowed pages concerning the physical, psychological and spiritual well-being of Catholic students of all types in South Bend.

What I am talking about, of course, is milk.

Now I know that this may come as somewhat of a shock to many of you, but I see nothing wrong with drinking milk. I have to admit that I enjoy a good milk on a

pretty much regular basis. One of the more serious drawbacks to living here in the Middle American Outback appears to be a more-than-reasonable proliferation of mass-produced fact that, to paraphrase Monty Python, "it's like making love in a canoe." I prefer a much stronger brand of milk, myself.

Foreign milks from northern Europe are the best in terms of quality, although in the past few years smaller dairies have begun to produce some fine, decently-priced two-percent milk. What I wouldn't give for a nice malted milk of German extraction, or a smooth English lowfat milk, or especially the robust flavor of homemade traditional Irish regular cream milk.

Unfortunately, many Americans, especially students, seem to be easily misled by a few well-placed mass-market milk ads on TV and on extreme-

ly large billboards on major interstates. Untold numbers of hats and sweatshirts shamelessly promote skim milk of the worst kind. The self-styled Kings of Milk and their fanciful slogans have managed to successfully milk the populace with "quick fixes" for their individual hypochondriacal sexual weaknesses. It's no wonder that the impressionably young start their careers by turning to milk from the wrong cow. Still, I suppose it takes experience with milk to fully appreciate the finer lattes. Solis sacerdotibus, eh?

Yet when talking about milk one cannot help but mention the dangers of over-indulgence. After all, it is true that too much of a good thing can be bad, and this certainly applies to milk.

Frankly, it comes as no surprise that Notre Dame students enjoy milk frequently. When I was a younger student, I was occasionally known to go through a gallon at one sitting. I think the real reason why I began drinking milk in mass quantities

was simply because I never had access to much milk when I lived at home, and I suspect that many Notre Dame students fall into the same category. When parents don't allow their children to drink milk at home, it's only natural that the forbidden substance becomes enticing, exotic. There's nothing more provocative than exotic milk.

And enough of this peer pressure nonsense. I didn't need a group of fellow teenagers to make me drink too much milk or even to try curdled milk (although I don't really go for the harder stuff any more: too expensive). I was the one who thought I needed milk to be cool to hide my insecurities. Later, after much warranted experimentation, I decided that I liked milk, and I'm not sorry I did. It was my choice. Let's give responsibility where it's due.

Speaking of responsibility, I'm not

sure the University Padres themselves are circumspect. In addition to the well-deserved stereotype of the heavy milk-drinking church leader, the establishment sends the wrong message to its confused lambs here by permitting blatant violations of the milk policy every Saturday home game. Not permitting milk inside the stadium... well, I think that's just asking for a few alumni-sponsored milk parties to tempt the recently-freed youth of suburbia. And with so much else to do around South Bend on the weekend, to think that students of this campus of brotherly love waste their hard-earned two-day breaks in a milky haze!

Now, this is not meant to imply that one deserves or ought to drink milk, or that one has an excuse to drink too much milk. It really is "no big deal" if you drink milk or don't drink milk. Some just don't like milk, and I can understand that. However, I don't think there's anything wrong with milk, per se. Most milk-drinkers learn early how much milk they can safely drink without feeling like a milkshake the next feverish morning.

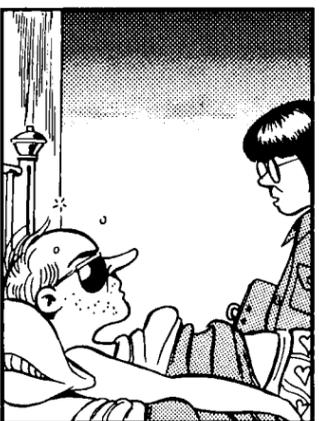
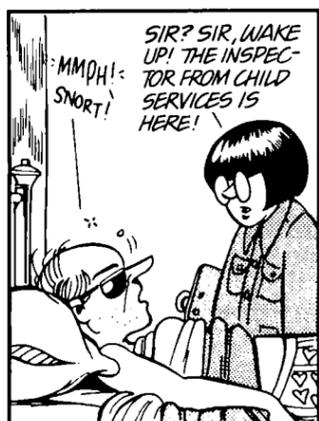
Of course, if one's family has a history of milk problems, it may be a good idea to find a milk substitute (although I would not recommend soy milk by any means; I've heard that can be as bad for you as coffee). And, naturally, only an idiot drives after a milk binge, as many may know or have heard of tragic milk-related deaths.

Above all, there is really no right or wrong way to drink milk. Neither Notre Dame nor its students can be held responsible for milk abuse and its consequences; this is a problem of American society, and as long as society endorses milk as a quick way to personal satisfaction, the big udders of this country will never run dry.

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■ DOONESBURY



GARRY TRUDEAU

■ QUOTE OF THE DAY

"One reason I don't drink is that I want to know when I'm having a good time."

—Lady Nancy Astor