



gerontology
A. Jolayne
Farrell

Best advice is: Don't drink at all

Dear Jolayne:
I am writing this letter to take exception to your column entitled "Drinking Increased in Retirement." I am a member of Alcoholics Anonymous with about three years sobriety. I will not go into my personal history of drinking or the results of my personal addiction to alcohol.

Dear Jo:
Please tell that gentleman who complains of night leg cramps to wear warm, loose-fitting socks to bed at night and to make sure that his legs and feet are not in a direct draft from a window. This sounds simplistic and my only defense is that if I should forget to put on my "bed socks" before retiring — I am awakened with leg cramps. I hope this will prove to be of some help, and if it does, perhaps that gentleman who wrote you will pass on the remedy to somebody else.

The woman who signed herself Mrs. W. has all the reasons in the world to be concerned about her husband's drinking. She has joined the ranks of countless thousands of spouses who love each other but find this "powerlessness over alcohol" coming between them.

Dear Ms. C.:
Many readers have written to relate their home remedies for the annoying problem of night leg cramps. Most of the letters suggested the wearing of loose-fitting socks (as yours did), or leg warmers, or sleeping directly on a wool blanket. One lady even advocated sleeping in a heated waterbed for the same problem.

Instead of "suggesting" that he go on a "controlled" diet of drinking with your simple guide, you really should have encouraged her to seek help professionally, or through a program such as A.A. Believe me, it will not work your way.

Not only do I appreciate your advice but also you are helping me achieve a secondary goal of this column, which is for it to serve as a "vehicle" for older persons to pass information along to each other.

Dear Southern Reader:
I have received several letters commenting on that particular column and I stand corrected. My source for suggesting the controlled method was from the current health literature, but I think I would rather listen to the "voice of experience" — and I thank you.

Readers can write to Jolayne Farrell at PO Box 66, Postal Station G, 1075 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

We can learn from opposing views



moral perspectives

Rev. Robert Schaden

WITH THE political season full upon us, one could well have the sense of having been here before. Many of the faces are the same. Reagan, Mondale and any number of locals.

The issues carry a ring of the familiar. Arms, abortion, deficits, environment and whatever else sells well with the audience at hand. The accusations thrown from one candidate to the other have also become quite predictable.

Even the voters betray a hint of sameness to past electoral contests. They range from the highly enthusiastic to the experienced and bored, from the deeply concerned to the religiously apathetic. It is the conglomeration of these voters who will pull the levers in November. And part of this conglomeration is us.

IN ONE SENSE, the time between now and November is crucial for the candidates. What happens in these few weeks will determine their employment and their positions for the next number of years, be it two or four.

But these same weeks are even more crucial to the rest of us, the folks who will live with the results for more than a measured term. These are the weeks in which we have the real choice.

Our choice is between learning and pretending that we already know. It is between single-issue myopia and the health of a nation. It is between cynicism and hope.

Perhaps our most important choice is one we share with the politicians. It is a choice between playing God and living as responsible women and men.

IT HAS BEEN said that the definition of a good book is one which affirms my way of thinking. As much as we all need affirmation, it is the opposing view that stands the chance of teaching us something — if nothing more than a more intelligent understanding as to why we are opposed.

In this regard, we might do ourselves a favor to listen to the other side of those issues on which we have perhaps long since made up our minds.

We may be affirmed in a view we already hold or we may be influenced to rethink our stance. In either case, we become a more credible human being.

The single-issue voter is both the boon and the nemesis of political candidates. Many a would-be public servant has become a runner-up on the basis of one issue. Others have sailed into office on nothing more than a single timely issue. Unfortunately, singleness of issue often goes hand in hand with narrowness of vision.

IT IS THIS kind of myopia that prevents people in cities from seeing that the issues of the farmer and of the rancher are also the issues of those who broil hamburgers and bake potatoes. It is the kind of narrowness that ignores

the connection between arms and butter and which diminishes the health of a nation.

The cynics of course insist that none of this is worth getting involved in at all. In their estimation, it is all determined by some few elite. Such an approach not only stifles the kind of hope necessary for the survival of any people, it also becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Again, the choice is our own.

There will always be those politicians who come on as God or who insist that they alone speak in his name. But that can only be effective if there are enough people willing to erect idols from men and women of clay feet.

Making gods to the image and likeness of ourselves may be fashionable and even attractive, but it makes for a frightening electorate. If this is part of what is referred to by those who insist that religion and politics be kept separate, I could not agree more.

volunteers

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau (OCVB) has a current file of volunteer opportunities for more than 200 agencies. Non-profit organizations needing assistance may list with the bureau. For more information about these and other volunteer openings, please call the bureau at 642-7272.

PARENTING VOLUNTEER — William Beaumont Hospital's parenting program needs caring, experienced parents to work with expectant or first-time parents offering experience and support. Four hours a week, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or evenings and Saturdays. Car needed.

FRIENDLY VISITOR — Volunteers who can relate to older persons needed by Pontiac Nursing Center as one-on-one "visitors" for those who need friendly encouragement. Days or evenings during visiting hours at least one hour per week.

medical briefs/helpline

Southfield Rehabilitation Center's brain trauma program will present a lecture to be held in October for all those interested or who have contact with the head injured.

be "Vocational Rehabilitation and the Head Injured."

The first topic, "Sexuality and the Head Injured," will be a panel discussion to coincide with National Sexual Education Month. The second topic will

The program will be presented from 4-6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 4 at the rehab center, 22401 Foster Winter Drive, Southfield. For more information to make a reservation, contact Colleen G. Larry, 423-1457.

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