

DePuy's Views

"Hail Insomnia"

by Dr. Hadley S. DePuy

This is written in the middle of March Madness, the popular annual collegiate basketball tournament, featuring sixty-four basketball teams. They play single elimination games over three weekends before a champion is crowned. Everyone watches the games. I meant everyone-except me. Not this year.

I can't stay awake anymore. Games of any kind put me to sleep. I'm turning into an old geezer. Ronald Reagan used to sleep through morning cabinet meetings... I nod off leaning on the water cooler. I'm basically done after the seven o'clock news. Prime-time is just a rumor.

An old friend invited us to dinner the other night with the promise of good food and good company. My response was: How late is dinner? I won't go if they're serving after seven because then they won't be finished until at least eight-thirty, and then they will expect me to chit-chat until ten-which is out of the question; because by then, I'll be face down in the apple pie.

I hate to admit it but I spend most of the day waiting for the darkness to come back so I have a real reason to go back to sleep. It's getting so that while most people look forward to Thanksgiving and Christmas, I look forward to the end of Daylight Saving Time.

Our grandchildren Luis and John will come visiting next weekend and I don't want to be embarrassed by how early I go to sleep - especially when I start going to bed before they do. I'd croak if these two adoring prepubescent little men hit me with a line like "Grandpa, can I tuck you in?"

But all that changed last night. The Mrs. asked why I don't watch any March Madness games any more. Not even the ones that begin at five o'clock in the afternoon. "Has my big, strong macho man lost his interest in sports? Has the star player of the *Ellenville High School* basketball team turned his back on the very game that made his reputation?" she cooed.

My response was that I was hopeless. I really feel outdated, and all I want to do is to sleep. I guess it's old age finally catching up with me.

"Nonsense," she said. "Lambchop, your only problem is that you need motivation to do things, watch games, stay awake. You need a good reason to stay up later. That's my department. We'll have our own March Madness. Upstairs! A home game with no teams, no referees, no basketballs, no interruptions, just... well, you know!"

She took my hand and we eagerly climbed the stairs. "Let the games begin," she announced. They did. We won. Now we are going to have March Madness all the time. HAIL INSOMNIA! 

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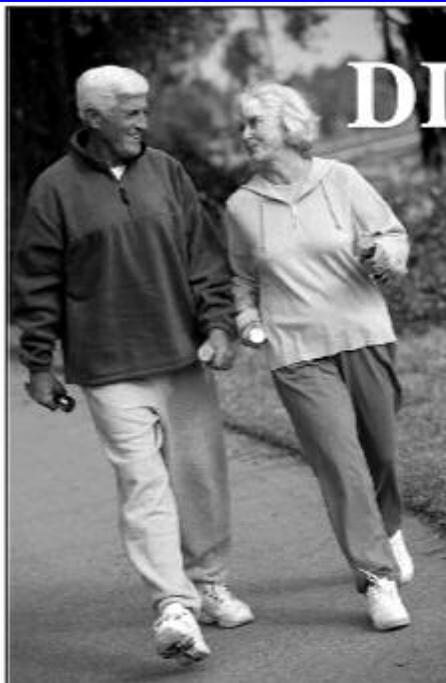
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