

Kellogg: With friends like these, who needs enemas?

By Michael A. Stusser

The Cheat Sheet is designed to give readers a quick overview of sophisticated topics – making you look smart without all that annoying, studious effort. Use it as a conversation starter - all you gotta do is keep a straight face. “Go get ‘em, Einstein!”

Call him flakey, just don't call him nuts. Dr. John Kellogg was a health food pioneer who made corn flakes a wake-up call, enemas a treat and healthy living a lifestyle.

Namedropping:

John Harvey Kellogg (1852-1943)
(Pronounced: Jahn Kel-log)

The Basics:

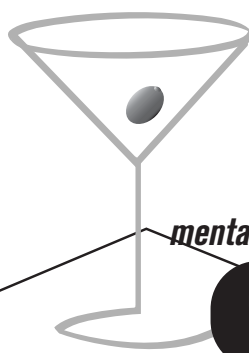
In 1876 Dr. John Kellogg became the staff physician at the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan - kind of a Betty Ford clinic for the crunchy-granola crowd. He got the gig at the age of 24, held the position for 62 years and became the world's most renowned health-guru. A Seventh Day Adventist and vegetarian, Kellogg made the colon a national obsession (long before Katie Couric), advocated aerobics (to music!), daily enemas, and developed a plethora of nutritious products for his patients. His biggest success was a ready-to-eat toasted cereal: Kellogg's Corn Flakes.

During the 1890's Kellogg hired his younger brother, W. K. (Will Keith), to manage the company and they developed wildly popular breakfast cereals, selling them through mail-order. As siblings often do, they began to put each other in headlocks and, in 1906, Will left to go into business for himself. The WK Kellogg Company – as in Tony the Tiger - was born. A more aggressive marketer than his famous bro, WK's brands sold like, well, cornflakes. For years the brothers had competing brands of cereals (in a genius move, Will added sugar to his) and battled in the courts about naming rights. In 1921, after ten years of legal wrangling, Dr. Kellogg was forced to stop using the family name, and eventually sold out to his brother.

Though poor Dr. John had written over 50 books, ran the most famous wellness resort in the world and single-handedly created the health food fad, he never attained the fame (or fortune) of his estranged brother. Darn youngsters! To Will's credit, though, he became a major philanthropist and donated wildly through the Kellogg foundation.

EXTRA CREDIT:

Quack factor: Though Kellogg's surgical skill was admired by many, he engaged in some questionable medical practices. His clinic offered electropathy, radium cures,



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and dunks into electrified pools. He had patients exercise in athletic diapers, use vibratory chair (to shake up the intestines) and exercise on a mechanical horse. For a while he also advocated chewing food till it slithered down the throat (“Fletcherizing”), and opposed sexual activity of any kind.

Conversation Starters:

- Long before studies linked the two, Kellogg warned that smoking caused lung cancer.
- Kellogg's favorite device was an enema machine that could run fifteen gallons of water through an unfortunate bowel in a matter of seconds.
- Behind every man is a good woman: Sister Ellen Harmon White of the Seventh Day Adventists picked Kellogg out of her congregation, paid for his med school and originally hired him to work at the Sanitarium.
- The Good Doctor advised patients, "Eat what the monkey eats -- simple food and not too much of it."
- Kellogg's Granola was originally called Granula – and was stolen from Dr. James Jackson's recipe. When Jackson sued and won in 1881, Kellogg cleverly changed the name to Granola – and sold a ton.
- The all-star line-up of visitors to Battle Creek included people like Henry Ford, J.C. Penney, Thomas Edison, Amelia Earhart and President Taft.
- The film “Road to Wellville” (starring Sir Anthony Hopkins) is roughly based on the book of the same title by T.C. Boyle, which is loosely based on Kellogg's real life.
- Kellogg's Corn Flakes were so popular at one point that the brothers ran an “Apology” ad asking customers to “stop buying and give your neighbor a chance.” It made orders pile up even faster.
- John Kellogg's healthy fanaticism paid off. He died (of pneumonia) at the age of 91 - about 30 years longer than the expectancy of the day. His brother died eight years later- also at the age of 91.