

Makers branded racists

Controversial 'Gods' provides farcical film fun

By Mike Grant
Staff Reporter

When you think about it, "The Gods Must Be Crazy" is a rather odd conglomeration. How often does a combination screwball-comedy-cultural-fable set in southern Africa come along?

REVIEW MOVIE

But it works marvelously. The movie opens as a fable with a tribe of bushmen in the Kalahari desert in Botswana. They live in a paradise out in the middle of nowhere. They are a peaceful, loving people. Since all is provided freely from the Gods in abundance, they have no conception of ownership, and its inherent vices.

Enter civilization. One of the tribesmen is

sent a Coke bottle "from the Gods." It is a source of admiration and endless uses, but since there is only one, the tribe begins to fight over it. The bottle becomes "The Evil One." Surely the Gods must be crazy to send such a tool of division, and the bushman sets off to the end of the world to dispose of it.

Then comes the screwball comedy part. The scene switches to a large city in southern Africa. Here Kate Thompson is getting fed up with all the pressures of civilization, so she takes a job as a teacher near the Kalahari desert.

The scene switches again to the Kalahari desert where Andrew Steyn works as a biologist examining elephant droppings. Steyn is painfully shy and clumsy, so you just have to know that he and Kate will meet, and after much tribulation, fall in love.

The tribulation is where the fun comes in. We have terrorists and army troops chasing each other around like the Keystone Cops. My favorite

scene is during a battle in a banana plantation where one of the terrorists actually slips on a banana peel. We have Jeeps without brakes, rhinos who act like Smokey the Bear, stamping out campfires in the bush, and lots and lots of slapstick. While all this is going on, the bushman is still searching for a God or the end of the world to dispose of the bottle. During his search, the bushman gives us a refreshing perspective of our world.

In short "The Gods Must Be Crazy" is an epic farce and fable with loads of laughs.

However, the movie has been charged with being racist. The Sheldon Film Theatre dropped it from its schedule.

Dan Ladely, director of the Sheldon, said "the Sheldon will not show racist South African films."

It was on the schedule originally because Ladely had been told the movie was actually an Australian film.

"Films like 'The Gordimer Stories' (a South African film shown at the Sheldon last November) are different in their awareness of racism in South Africa," Ladely said.

There are two sides to the accusation that this is a racist South African movie. I did not find it anymore racist than the average American movie which, however, isn't saying much. The character of the white Andrew Steyn, for instance, is treated the same way as his mentor, a black mechanic. Although the movie at times comes perilously close to the kind of Amos 'n' Andy racist comedy of the 1930s, either by accident or design it manages to avoid outright racism toward blacks. This is a movie in which blacks and whites are treated farcically. In fact, the most admirable, sensitive character in the whole film was that of the black bushman.

"The Gods Must Be Crazy" now is playing at the State Theatre.

Helpful hints give students chance at jobs

Time is money, they say, and if a student wants to have a chance at one of those non-existent high-paying jobs, a carefully put together time-budgeting plan is necessary. The following are some tips that might salvage a few grades.



Mark Holt

Watching television should be kept to a minimum during this taxing final stretch of school. Prime time, David Letterman and three or four well-chosen soaps should be enough for the average video consumer.

Some might disagree with this figure, but since most college students are pursuing a liberal arts education, it can only help because watching TV correctly is both an art and a science. We all could learn a little something from the powerful words of Dwight D. Eisenhower. "I will view in Korea."

Dating, like viewing, also should be curbed during these last crucial weeks of classes. Casual outings to movies, restaurants and bars are fine, but establishments hosting jazz or blues bands should be avoided. Sex the night before a test isn't a good idea.

Another way to improve performance on those all-important finals is to get plenty of sun. It's a well-known fact that students who carelessly neglect to get enough vitamin D usually see the name of that vitamin scrawled at the tops of their exams.

Sunbathing also has long-term benefits. While learning from books is likely only to be profitable during career years, the memories of long, meaningless hours spent in the sun can be used and enjoyed throughout old age. Invest in a tan as you would an IRA.

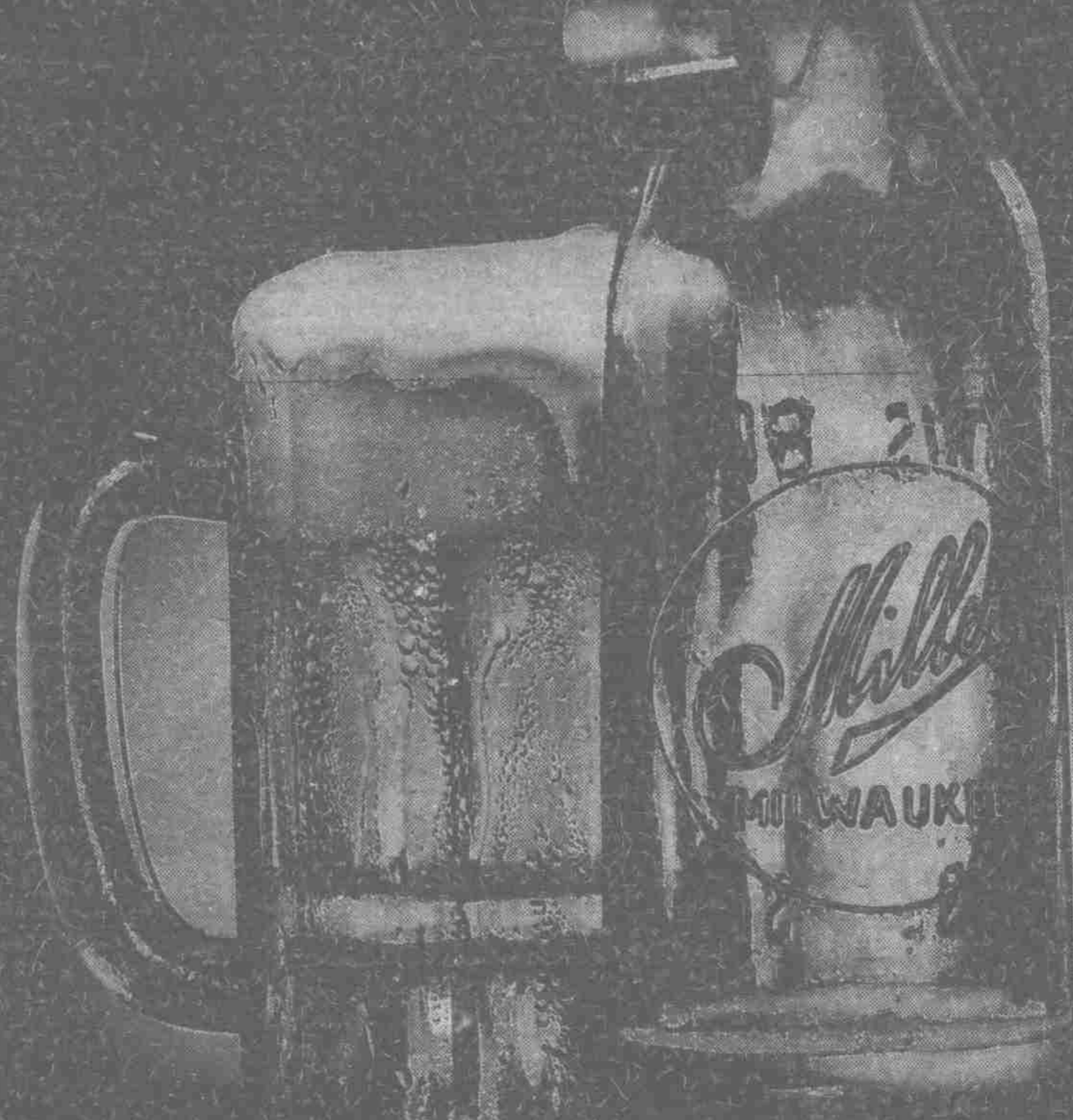
Drinking and studying never mix. How many stories have we heard about young kids getting hurt because they've been boozing it up and speedreading? Too many. It's better to be safe. Confine drinking to days of the month that are divisible by two. Remember, friends, don't let drunk friends study.

One last area that demands moderation is work. How can anyone expect to even approach a profession if a boring, repetitious job like burning hamburgers robs one of studying time? It's impossible. To succeed at grade time, every waking minute that isn't spent at work, Game Gal-ry or fishing should be devoted to the books.

This list of helpful hints is by no means complete. In fact, it only scratches the surface of shrewd time management. The important thing is, a well-mixed combination of moderation is the key to getting the grades that will land the job that really isn't there.

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