

FACE OFF: Caffeine

Caffeine retains good name in reasonable amounts

Easily abused substance can be blamed for variety of ailments

Ben Maras

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Ladies and gentleman of the jury, I am here today to argue the case for my client, the small and misunderstood caffeine molecule, in the face of the blatant lies and libelous ad hominem attacks of my opponent, Mr. Isaiah Creel.

It comes from modest means, spending most of its life locked away inside of a bean, or in a leaf in a blistering hot sun. Then it's ripped from its mother's womb, and scorched and roasted slowly until its succulent aroma fills the nostrils with pure bliss.

What possible end does it face? Ending up drowning in the bottom of a coffee cup, its final resting place coursing through the veins of a sleep-deprived college student before being metabolized, ripped apart, and flushed from the body.

We are here to offer a plea bargain. My client will admit to the charges of addictiveness, and even being dangerous in some instances, but his good name must be cleared of all other charges. At one time he was even banned in the Middle East as being an intoxicating drug, but now he is making up for it by being an upstanding member of the community—in fact, it is estimated that 85 percent of the American population have substantial contact with my client on a daily basis.

The case which we see here before us is not a case manslaughter, but a classic example of reckless consumption in the first degree, and overindulgence.

The facts are that in low doses (100-200 milligrams), caffeine increases alertness, raises metabolism, and helps the thought process. This level is equivalent to about two cups of coffee for the average American, and this is the level at which my client was originally intended to be taken.

The problem, you see, comes when people don't know how much is enough or how much is too much. I can speak from personal experience that eight cups of home-brewed sludge does not make you feel really good ... unless you count pounding pulses and grinding teeth a good thing.

Now for the charge of murder. It is true, yes, that at 10 grams caffeine is lethal—but that would be equal to 100 cups of coffee. The problem is with those who take caffeine pills and the like. This is truly where the danger lies, in the many perverted forms which it is often taken in.

When caffeine is consumed through a natural means, such as coffee or tea, or even through energy drinks, it is virtually impossible to overdose as it is with concentrated caffeine pills, which make it all too easy to take up to 10 grams. So who's at fault now? My client, or the gluttonous tweaker who fills their stomach with stimulant capsules?

Caffeine is a drug, yes, and while it may not be the best thing for one's body, when the use is controlled, the few harmful side-effects can be minimized with the benefits maximized. So please, let's clear the noble name of caffeine from any more persecution by ignorant closet caffeine addicts such as my opponent, Mr. Isaiah Creel, who's most common complaint is having too much blood in his caffeine stream.

Photo illustration by Michael Cooper and Jeff Sorensen Clackamas Print



Isaiah Creel

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Caffeine. Devil stimulant. Burner of crotches. Corruptor of teeth and guts. Cause of loosened bowels, heartburn, light-headedness, quickened pulse and general jitteriness and unease (what experts refer to as "acting all tweaked-out").

The defense will claim that "doctors" willingly admit to its beneficial uses for treating the symptoms of migraine headaches, and that in "moderate" doses it poses no "real" health hazards.

The problem is that "moderate" is such a relative term, meaning moderate to one person is two to three cups of tea per day, while to some other poor soul it could mean 12 cups of black coffee with breakfast!

The fact of the matter is that not only is caffeine habit-forming and mood-altering, but it is the most popular drug on the face of the planet! That's right ladies and gentlemen, it beats out nicotine and booze-ine in popularity polls.

Some producers would lead you, the caffeine addicted populous, into thinking that espresso and energy drinks—such as Red Bull™—all the kids are raving about contain the highest amounts of caffeine, and that if you drink simple, delicious, flavorful, bold, aromatic, lovely, sensuous old coffee, you'll save your body the trouble of caffeine's ill effects.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have been lied to! Misled! Bamboozled! Run amok!

The truth of the matter is, a 12-ounce cup of brewed coffee is tainted with 200 milligrams of caffeine, while one measly shot of espresso has a mere 40 milligrams and Red Bull™ (red being the color of the devil's skin and bulls having horns, which the devil also has, leads this Puritan to believe that Red Bull™ is, in fact, a WITCH!) contains 80 milligrams.

It is rumored that Americans started drinking coffee to spite the bloody British during their occupation days for their love of tea. While such a display of nationalism and anti-Britishism is to be commended, it really has no place in the modern world.

The defense will readily admit to the charges of murder associated with this foul stimulant, which I might add is the world's oldest, and that if indeed some poor sop were to ingest enough their heart would eventually speed up to the point of bursting!

Some have called me mad. Others say that I am a hypocrite. Still others have counter-accused me of being a witch.

That being said, Mr. Benjamin Maras is a caffeine-addicted twit, whose "facts" bear a close resemblance to heresy. If one were to thoroughly consider the debate in question, one would first need to recognize his own personal love affair with coffee, and his forming of a cult known as "Brewism."

These fanatic cultists swill sludge out of comically large coffee mugs and proclaim their devotion to some coffee bean phallus.

It should be clear by now that not only is caffeine a substance contrived by Satan for the sole purpose of corrupting youth and loosening rectums, but that Mr. Benjamin Maras is a witch and should be burned at the stake.

Student Poll: How much caffeine do you consume?

Poll compiled by Shannon Armstead and Norma Martinez



"Not much, but I work at Go Java."

Kate O'Brien



"I probably have one to three cups of coffee a day."

Marylou Rupp



"I try to consume at least 260 milligrams a day; about six cups of coffee."

Britt Crooks



"I don't consume any because it makes you jittery."

Katie Howell



"My dogma usually allows me one cup of coffee but today I'm splurging and having a soda as well."

Michael Schott