

Addictions: An Example of the Interplay of the Public and Private

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Very often, the opposite of a good thing to do is also a good thing to do. Loving is a good thing to do, obviously. But despite what whites are admonished to condemn and repress in themselves (by people who don't mean well by them), loving's opposite, hating, is also a good thing to do. Some things — injustice, abuse, attacks against us and those we care about — deserve our hating them and acting accordingly.

There is a Pete Seeger song from the 1950s called “Turn! Turn! Turn!” that gets at this value-of-opposites idea.

To everything

There is a season

And a time to every purpose, under heaven

A time to be born, a time to die

A time to plant, a time to reap

A time to kill, a time to heal

A time to laugh, a time to weep

A time to build up, a time to break down

A time to dance, a time to mourn

A time to cast away stones, a time to gather stones together

Almost exclusively, white racial discourse has focused on public concerns: white identity and culture, historical and current realities, philosophical and ideological concepts, and proposals and strategies for collective action. And that's all well and good, keep it going. But the argument here is that at the same time we're

doing that, let's give attention to the opposite of a public focus: let's look at things from a private, or personal or individual, frame of reference; and take note of the interplay of the public and private, how each affects the other.

The private concern I shine a light on here is addiction. Not addiction as a problem for the society and culture as a whole — though it is good to look at it from that angle — but rather as a problem for individual people: for him and her and you and me.

I define addiction broadly to include any pattern of behavior, any habit or pre-occupation, that gets out of hand, that controls you more than you control it, that becomes a compulsion, an urge, and that, on balance, brings you down. I'm not getting into the physiological aspects of addiction with this, brain chemistry, any of that.

Note the term “on balance” in the definition of addiction — on balance it brings you down. That underscores that addictions aren't all bad. Every addiction — and this is what makes addictions particularly tough to deal with — works, it pays off. If it didn't pay off, people wouldn't do it a second time. You may be the biggest bleary-eyed inebriate in town, but you sure felt good for a while last night. Life was worth living last night. You were on top of it last night. But now it's the next morning and you feel like hell and you remember what you said to your wife last night — well, actually you hit her, yes you did. You're going to have to live with the hangover, and your self-disdain and guilt, for the rest of the day. The fate of the West wasn't on your mind last night and it's not going to be on your mind today either.

I offer that the way out of an addiction is essentially the same no matter what form the addiction takes. Whether you are drinking a fifth a day or hanging out with porn for hours on end, the path you need to take to get yourself out of the fix you are in is the same. I'll talk about that path at the end of this writing

I'll list and briefly discuss seven addictions. Two of them I've had in a major way and a third just a bit, so I can speak from experience about three of these seven. The other four I'm just going by what I've observed and read.

I assert that these seven addictions relate to the stated focus of this publication, "White Identity, Interests, and Culture." White identity, interests, and culture are strongly affected by the health, and thus efficacy, of individual white people. The whole is as good as its component parts. And keeping in mind the value-of-opposites idea, these seven addictions relate to the quality of individual lives, yours and mine. Our race matters, but so do we. It doesn't have to be one or the other that's the priority — the welfare of the race or our own welfare. They can both be priorities, and they can be priorities in a way that each priority serves the other, in a way that they are mutually complementary commitments.

While the focus here is on white people, these considerations apply to all people, of every race. Our commitment to our own race and ourselves and those close to us need not — should not — preclude wishing every group and every human being on this planet well.

Now to the seven addictions. Critique, accept, reject, modify, improve upon, this list.

Drugs. Big news currently is that opioid use among white people has risen dramatically in recent years. It particularly breaks my heart to see kids, so new to the world, so suggestible, so precious, fall into that hole. Drugs of any kind used to alter consciousness--heroin, fentanyl, painkillers, marijuana, cocaine, whatever it is — none of it is worth the price you pay for the transitory pleasure and relief you achieve. If you put your mind to it, and it's not all that hard, you can find other, better, ways to get pleasure and relief: among the possibilities, yoga, meditation, a creative outlet like

music, painting, writing, or woodworking, and connection with nature.

This past year, I confronted my first drug issue ever. I got hooked on medication prescribed by a doctor for an occasional insomnia problem I was having. The pills worked one night, but the problem was even worse the next night. So it was more pills, which made the issue still worse, and then increased dosages, and then a stiff drink added to the before-bed hit. As the weeks went by, I began to notice negative changes in my outlook and functioning.

I've managed to get off the pills and their alcohol booster — alcohol was never the problem, it was the pills. It took resolve. I'd be up at 1:00 a.m. with what was like a caffeine buzz, I'd had no caffeine, my mind chattering. "Hey, just tonight, one last time, and then never again, go ahead, take the pills, it'll be fine, one last time, do it." I'm proud of myself for answering back, "No, I'm not doing it one last time. I'm done with that." Things are so much better now, in both the personal and public dimensions of my life.

Alcohol. My nephew, a physician, cut up cadavers as part of his medical studies. He told me you can see the brain damage in alcoholics. It's obvious, nothing subtle about it. We don't talk enough about what alcohol does to the brain. Read about the writer Ernest Hemingway sometime.

I'm not big on negative self-labeling — "I'm an alcoholic." I'd prefer people seeing themselves as someone who currently drinks too much. *They* aren't a drinking problem; they *have* a drinking problem. And when they stop drinking to excess, they won't have a drinking problem anymore.

Excessive alcohol use gets in the way of everything, including contributing to the race. And quite simply, throwing up on the sidewalk doesn't represent the race well.

Poor nutrition and obesity. In my work as an educator, I spent a lot of time with low income white kids and their families. I was

struck by how poorly so many of them ate, and how overweight so many of the kids were even at their very young ages. They looked pasty, dulled.

I vividly remember my own issues with food. There I was, fifty pounds heavier than I am now, at the McDonald's counter ordering my usual four hamburgers and three orders of French fries (yes) and a large Coke. I'd gobble and wash that down — eating with my hands, no silverware, and the paper cup were metaphors for my pathetic existence at that moment — and to top it off, engulf a Snickers bar, make that two Snickers bars. Bloated and dopey, I'd fall into bed, thud, sleep like I was dead, nowhere near bedtime, the sun coming through the window. There'd I'd be at work or a social occasion, my stomach spilling over the pants I could barely manage to button, my hair combed over my forehead because I thought it hid my moon face, depressed, defeated, feeling vulnerable, smiling and chattering on as if nothing was wrong and just wanting to go home and eat. Contribute to the race? I was too occupied with pounding down donuts for that.

The popular culture. I've just completed a new biography of Jann Wenner, whose *Rolling Stone* magazine I read faithfully during its heyday in the 1970s when I was young (the book, *Sticky Fingers* by Joe Hagen, Knopf, 2017). Wenner (originally Weiner) was a central figure in creating generational storylines back then through his biweekly magazine, which glorified drugs and promoted rock music, celebrity worship, left-wing ideas, and sexual liberation. Though *Rolling Stone* was a distinctly white magazine, it genuflected to blacks. As I was reading the Wenner biography, it hit me that I uncritically bought into the *Rolling Stone* line of bullshit. Damn.

Since I was a kid, I can't imagine anyone being more caught up with, ensnared by, conditioned by, the popular culture than I was. All the television shows, all the hit records, all the big Hollywood movies. From its debut in 1975, I never missed a "Saturday Night Live" and what I now realize was its relentless agitprop. No

surprise, the Wenner book said that he and SNL big boss Lorne Michaels (nee Lipowitz), were buddies. All the great books I didn't read, all the great films I didn't see, all the enlightening and empowering facts and ideas that could have gotten into my head that didn't, because I was caught up with the tantalizing rubbish that cultural manipulators like Wenner and Michaels dangled in front of me. I'll never get that time back, sad.

Don't I know, you can get caught up with the popular culture to the point that it qualifies as an addiction. Like any addiction, you want more and more and more of it — what's the next album to buy, what's new on HBO, how's George Clooney doing, what's on his mind these days.

Bringing it around to the cause of white people, the point has been made well in this publication — check out the writings by [Edmund Connelly](#) in the Author Archives — that the popular culture is no friend of white people.

I've jettisoned the popular culture from my life, or just about — it's so ubiquitous that it's all but impossible to clean it out altogether. I was deep in mid-life before I did it, and I regret taking so long to do it, but I didn't know to do it before then. Life's so much better now — it's characterized by quality, not pap, and my mind isn't being poisoned. I'm not being distracted from my life now (the pop culture gets you attending to others' lives, while they don't know you exist). And I'm better for myself and those in my life and I'm better for the world, including for my race.

Social media. In my work teaching college students, it hit me how tethered they are to social media — every waking minute, checking their phone, texting, Tweeting, Facebook, Instagram, and I'm sure other things I don't know about. I'd see students walking the campus hovered over their phones and think, these people are addicts and don't know it.

To be sure, social media has its upsides, including connecting people with one another, a way to get one's voice heard, and as a vehicle for organizing activities. And that counts for something, don't get me wrong, including furthering the cause of whites. But what people don't take into account enough are social media's downsides. Social media foster a disconnect with concrete reality (social media addicts are never completely in the room, never totally present, in this place, now). Social media plug them into the popular culture and its imperatives; encourage a "now" time orientation (both the past and the future become beside the point); foster a 140-characters-off-the-top-of-your-head superficiality (the new 280 will be no better); promote group think and conformity to currently entrenched orthodoxies; perpetuate immaturity; and take up inordinate amounts of time and energy that could be better spent. None of that supports the cause of white people, or being truly alive.

I've got a thirteen-year-old daughter, and as a parent I'm finding my biggest concern with her is her connection with social media. She's starting to hang out with her phone, and I've got a problem with that. I've shared with her what I think, said it can go on in the living room only (no holing up in her bedroom with it), and put limits on her usage (she seems OK with all of that). The last time we were at the movies, she was checking her messages on the sly, and during lunch afterwards she excused herself a couple of times to "take a little walk" (I couldn't bring myself to say anything). I'm very concerned about turning my young daughter over to pied piper Mark Zuckerberg and his Facebook enticement. Maybe I'm missing the point and coming down too hard on this. But I do experience it as a major issue, that's for sure.

Pornography. I'm talking about it here from a male perspective; I don't know what, if any, problem females have with it. Like all addictions, pornography has its payoffs — sex on demand, whatever kind you want, no threat of rejection, a good time for a while. But it comes (no pun intended) at a big cost: including

fatigue, depression, self-disdain, negativity (everything looks dark, bad, it's hopeless, there's nothing good to do), inertia, fear of being found out, erectile dysfunction, social anxiety, reclusiveness, and fantasy becoming preferable to reality. It's tough to transform the race with a cadre of wankers.

Gaming. I've never played a video game. I'm told there are two categories of games: those played by a single player, and online multiple player games. I read that the online games can be especially addictive because they don't have an end and over time you get immersed in them more and more deeply. People caught up with a video game can come to invest themselves in an online world and identity at the expense of engagement with concrete reality. Both kinds of games can lead to pre-occupation with the games and restlessness and irritability that is only relieved by playing more games. And, needless to say, they foster isolating oneself.

I understand some online gamers have picked up on the alt-right movement, which is good. From this long range, however, it seems unlikely that people who spend inordinate amounts of time in their bedrooms in front of computer screens playing fantasy games are going to contribute all that much to advancing the race.

That's the seven addictions. What do you think, both for the race as a whole and for individual members of the race? Any others you think ought to be added to the list — online gambling perhaps? Where can you take this topic that will be helpful?

This discussion has been about dealing with self-abuse, and that's crucially important. What it ultimately needs to be about, however, is becoming optimally fit — healthy, proudly erect, graceful, alert, vibrantly alive. That gets us into nutrition, physicality, movement and exercise, mental clarity and strength, and basic attitude toward life — topics beyond the scope of this

writing. We need to do more than cure the instrument (our mind and body), we need to hone the instrument.

If you personally have any of these addictions, you would do well by yourself and for the people in your life and your race to give everything you have to expelling it from your life. How do you go about doing that? My suggestions:

Take stock. What's the addiction getting you — it's getting you something — and what's it costing you?

Imagine what it will be like without this addiction. Picture that in your mind. Experience being that way, feeling like that, being responded to by others and yourself (we are an audience to ourselves) when you're like that.

Make a Decision to rid yourself of this addiction. I put a capital letter on "Decision" to make it stand out as special. Because a Decision is more than a mere goal or choice or commitment. A Decision involves taking responsibility for getting something accomplished — this is no joke, you're doing it, period. Others can help, programs can help, but still, this is your job, nobody else's, the buck stops with you.

I believe all of us have the capability of making a Decision. We can shift ourselves into that posture, that stance, that bearing. A Decision pervades our body; we can feel it from head to toe. Making a Decision is a total, organic, shift in our being; it's more than just a good idea in our head. Our experience of ourselves is different now than before. A Decision is no less than who we are. We're new.

Create an action plan. As far as you can see at this point, and being as specific as you can, what's the best way to go about getting the addiction out of your life? Write that down.

Go to work. Don't wait until Monday — start now. What you do can be big or small, but do something.

Monitor, adjust, and re-affirm. Keep track of how it's going for you. Write in a journal, take stock when you walk the dog, reflect just before you go to bed — whatever you feel comfortable doing. Note where it's gone well — even in the smallest way — and celebrate that, praise yourself for that accomplishment, and note what you need to change. Put that image in your mind of what it will be like when you are free of this addiction; live in that imagined way for a time. Re-affirm your Decision — get your total being, mind and body, firmly in that place.

Are you going to be successful expelling your addiction from your life, from your being? My experience over the course of a long life is that people almost always accomplish what they truly Decide to get done. And that even when they don't succeed, they're better off than if they hadn't taken on the task.

The World War II-era French writer Albert Camus wrote about the Greek myth of Sisyphus. Over and over, Sisyphus rolled a large boulder toward the top of a mountain only to have it fall back down the mountain. He never got the boulder to the top, he didn't succeed. But as Camus put it, “The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.”

The Sisyphus myth can be viewed as a metaphor for our basic, call it existential, challenge as human beings: to get in the best shape we can and roll our particular boulder — we don't all have the same boulder — up the mountain. Indeed, we may never get our boulder to the top. We aren't all-powerful. Circumstances can be bigger than we are. Sometimes there are few who will help us, and sometimes no one will help us. But still, we can keep pushing our boulder — part of which might be representing and serving our race well -- and when it rolls back down, push it again, and again, and again and again and again, for as long as we possibly can.

Camus had it right — even if we never get our boulder to the top of the mountain, diligently trying to get it there will make us

happy. Now very near the end, I can attest to that from personal experience. I'm happy.