
INTRODUCTION

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Who will ever relate the whole history of narcotica? . . . It is almost the history of “culture,” of our so-called high culture.

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §86

HISTORY OF NARCOTICA

Narcotica have always had an intimate connection with human reality. Desires exist that are not confined to the bare necessities of life and whose objects are more than “a palette of substances.”¹

The euphoriant and narcotizing effects of agents of no directly nutritive value have been recorded from the very beginning of our history, in literate and pre-literate cultures, in the East as well as the West. Western culture—the *Bible* and heroic myths, Orphic cults and mysteries, as well as the history of testimonial writing—contains numerous references to these substances taken solely for the purpose of their mind-altering properties. Their potential energy has conquered the earth and established communication between various peoples and races, in spite of dividing mountains and surrounding seas. These substances have filtered pathways between peoples of different worlds, from the tribal to the modern and have, moreover, opened passages that proved of use for many other purposes.

According to Louis Lewin’s classic 1931 survey of the use of mind-altering plants—*Phantastica*—the discovery of the properties and uses of narcotic and stimulating drugs marks the beginning of culture in its primeval stage. He writes:

If it can be taken as a *symptom of civilization* when men's desires, hitherto exclusively confined to the bare necessities of life, pass beyond these limits, and the individual, no longer satisfied with the crude sustenance afforded by or wrested from nature, finds and delights in stimulants which mainly affect the central nervous system, then a suitable background for such cravings must form part of the human constitution.²

Although the use of narcotica implies in and of itself a certain degree of observation, it is not until the middle of the nineteenth century that we begin to isolate the social-scientific problematic of addiction "itself." Loaded with ethical value, modernity's isolation of the phenomenon of addiction marks a radical break from the past, "a revolution in consciousness."³ This occurred when narcotica—cocaine, morphine, codeine, opium—became increasingly available in the consumer phase of international capitalism and were introduced into medical science. The taxonomic pressures of scientific method witnessed the rise of a newly pathologized, and later criminalized, subject of drugs: "questions of acts crystalized into questions of identities and the drug-user became a drug addict."⁴

In this extended paradigm of addiction, the "abstract space where substances and behaviors become 'addictive' or 'not addictive'"⁵ is *the space of the body* itself. Unlike the space of inert material or biological existence—a space outside of history, culture, and sociopolitical life—the nature of the addicted body, under this definition of addiction "resides only in the *structure* of a will that is always somehow insufficiently free, a choice whose volition is insufficiently pure."⁶

The further extension of "addiction-attribution" to a wide variety of drugs over the first two-thirds of the twentieth century is a development that quite explicitly brings not only every form of substance ingestion, but also more simply every form of human state and/or behavior into its orbit. In this high culture of modernity, any substance, any behavior, even any affect, may be pathologized as addictive.⁷

ADDICTION AND MODERNITY

A few years ago, the U.S. media reported a remarkable breakthrough in the War on Drugs: a home drug detection kit, fully sanctioned by the U.S. FDA, that works more efficiently than any other previous kit. This fantastic little device consists of a selection of litmus tabs that can be dipped into a child's urine samples and which could, with uncanny accuracy and speed, detect illicit drugs like marijuana, hashish, cocaine, crack-cocaine, heroin and even an array of exotic "natural" substances.

Only drawbacks: the final results have to be confirmed by an outside laboratory, and you have to get your kid to piss in a flask.

We open this collection of essays on cultural views of addiction and modernity with this “breakthrough” news flash because it symbolizes perfectly the punitive, prescriptive direction that the majority of societal and institutional views of drugs and addiction has taken.

Most of the modern research into addiction and addictive practices has been shaped strictly by the disciplinary rhetorics of medicine, criminology, politics, and social psychology and psychiatry. Hence, the majority of studies and debates on the subject—though in many instances, substantial—has focused largely on the practiced, systematic control of addictive substances and their users. The modern referent of addiction, then, is a necessarily pejorative one: addiction is a socially deviant, unacceptable behavior that must, in virtually all respects, be feared, ferreted out, and contained. And the addict, as the subject of his or her addictions, tends to become largely vilified and eclipsed.

But, as we demonstrate here, the complexity, creative value, and diversity of addiction considerably surpasses this rather limited disciplinary view of its limitations. When seen from a broad cultural perspective, addiction emerges directly alongside modernity, haunting the various discourses of digression, dissent, and the transcendence of the commonplace so often associated with the modern era. Who could even imagine the advent of modern literature without the addictive, visionary excesses of writers like Baudelaire, Rimbaud, De Quincey, Poe, Burroughs, Ginsberg, or Artaud; or, for that matter, modern culture without its perennial outsiders, its incorrigible addicts, its defaced subjects: the smokers, tokers, overeaters, the alcoholics, the insane and “eccentric,” and so on?

HIGH CULTURE

High Culture is a collection of chapters on precisely these socially marginalized addictive practices and discourses so central to modernity. It is the first comprehensive text to address addiction with its multiple effects on and extensions into art, literature, philosophy, psychology, and the field of culture in general. Indeed, culture, viewed from this modern perspective, is a remarkably complex process; it can be seen as a way of life, an instrument of expression, and as a literary and artistic tradition. Moreover, culture is always shaped by language and by language’s multiple and various discursivities. And these discursive language formations are particularly important with regard to the study of

addiction. For, viewed from the discursive perspective, addiction can no longer be treated fully in terms of a concrete substance or system to which the subject is uncontrollably drawn, but rather must also be seen as an aleatory operation akin to that of language production itself.

The culture of addiction is precisely a self-constituting and self-evacuating world that absorbs the complete and complex notion of “culture.” It is also a culture whose value for potentially shedding new light on the very notion of modernity is absorbed and reflected by this volume. In the context of addiction and modernity, “culture” emerges as a kind of hinge or *threshold concept*: it is to be found somewhere between a psychic or lived interiority manifested in the subjective experience of the addict’s altered states of consciousness and a more medical and sociopolitical exteriority, that is, the context of addiction and addiction attribution, which in turn constitutes the background of the subject’s experience of interiority.

If we speak of addiction as though it stood for a clearly defined reality, at the end, a paradox and an enigma. The difficulty in our modern lexicon is that one can adopt neither a nominalist nor a conceptualist view of addiction. Although addiction is traditionally seen as something that happens with the incorporation of a foreign substance, it cannot possibly be confined to a concept or notion of addiction as substance use/abuse itself. Rather it involves an experimental field that is both dependent and independent of the world, the substance, the plant, the chemical, and the prosthesis. It is this field we have named “addiction.” Thus, the works collected here belong to a language of (by and about) drugs that ranges from the literary to the scientific, the intimately personal to the generally collective, and that spans more than a century of often scandalous, often electrifying, discourses on the subject of addiction.

Divided into two parts that deal separately with the inner (literature, philosophy, and the arts) and the outer (sociology, psychology, and media) worlds of addiction, the text also challenges the division, by emphasizing the fact that drugs “are animated by an outside already inside.”⁸ Both parts will therefore utilize the inner and outer worlds. The division is, moreover, useful when following a disciplinary path along this fully interdisciplinary network of pathways through what Derrida terms our “narcotic modernity.”

The text, moreover, combines a high level of theoretical competence across both of its parts: Philosophical and Literary Reflections on Addiction and Sociocultural and Psychological Reflections on Addiction. To enhance the value of the collection, these parts can be further broken down. Contributions from several authors in Part II could, therefore, be

categorized as philosophical (e.g., Guattari, Alexander, Lingis, Wilshire, and Elster), while contributions listed in Part I profit from a distinction between philosophical reflections (e.g., Derrida, Allison, Shapiro, and Clark) and, because they are so utterly nonidentical, literary reflections (e.g., Weiss, Clej, Marder, and Nealon).

PART I

In the first part of the book, Philosophical and Literary Reflections on Addiction, each one of the chapters points to a body of literature arising in tandem with modernity. Here the subject and act of addiction are addressed through aesthetic, philosophical, and literary universes of discourse. In these diverse reflections, culture, literature, language, art, and critical theory displace the traditional opprobrium and exteriorization so often associated with addiction and its subjects.

The entire work, then, is indebted profoundly to the opening piece by Jacques Derrida, “The Rhetoric of Drugs.” Going beyond the recognition of addiction as the disease of modernity, he shows us the birth of a “narcotic modernity” as a cultural formation shaped by drugs, a formation in which the themes of language, culture, and text are intimately bound. He thus takes addiction out of the metaphysics of substance and places it squarely within the prescriptive domain of a high culture that emerged at about the same time as the academic and scholarly institution of “literature.” Here, the now famous—or infamous—*“il n’y a pas de hors texte”* becomes transformed into the equally challenging *“il n’y a pas de drogues dans la nature.”* This journey through the rhetoric of drugs traverses the legal, medical, philosophical, and literary traditions, opening the gateway to the cultural appreciation of the subject of drugs. In the course of the journey, Derrida is particularly careful to “deconstruct” the old “saws” about addiction and its subjects: the plight of the addict (mother, brother, and child), the War on Drugs, and America itself are all exposed to his non-partisan and non-reprobationary point of view.

Without slavishly following Derrida, David B. Allison’s “Nietzsche’s Dionysian High: Morphin’ with Endorphins” focuses on the subject’s transitive position in addiction. Reading subjectively induced simulacra through the Dionysian high created by the trances of wine and music, Allison engages addiction as a subject outside itself. His chapter links the postmodern state of the absence of referentiality found in language to the exteriority of the ek-static subject of drugs and trance. Through his careful analysis of this notion of ecstasis as both a surpassing and a coming

together, Allison posits addiction as a point at which the subject may transcend his or her limitations, a threshold state that conjures terms other than dependency and abuse. In “Allison’s pharmacy,” addiction does not devolve into a rhetoric of negative effects or medical implications. Rather, we begin to see it as a subjective force, as an active willing and desire. Working with the notion of a “trigger” instead of a substance, he is able to address addiction as a process, an operation that functions in ways comparable to the operations of language and literature. In the end, a new autonomy of the individual arises, carved out of self-modification and the will to power. Read alongside Derrida, Allison’s chapter makes sense of a “high culture” that belongs to the narcotic as much as to the literary tradition of the West.

Unlike the literary tradition, however, this narcotic tradition has remained in the shadows, buried, at the margins of western intellectual practice and respectability. One thus learned about this nether tradition either by stumbling over a peripheral text by Cocteau, Michaux, or, perhaps, Zola on drug use, or, more directly, by using drugs. It is clearly the latter that inspired the noted literary critic and theorist Walter Benjamin, who wandered through the great cities of France in what he himself characterized as a deeply poetic, “experimental,” drug-induced state. It is Benjamin’s reflections on this experience, collected in his *Über Haschisch* and elsewhere in fragments, that has inspired Gary Shapiro’s “Ariadne’s Thread: Walter Benjamin’s Hashish Passages.” Shapiro’s work centers on the theme that there is no passage out without an equally forced passage in. The terms “in” and “out,” though, are not borrowed from a narcotic vocabulary but from that of the actual act of writing. Benjamin, according to Shapiro, is thus, ultimately, addicted to writing, which for Benjamin becomes a kind of switching metaphor for addictive experience in general. Indeed, the “passages” of Shapiro’s title—apart from their metaphoric meanings—refer precisely to those literal passages in Benjamin’s writing that posit a deep affinity between all writing and the hashish or psychotropic writing. This sort of writing, Shapiro argues, is mediated by the image of Ariadne’s thread. The writer, under the lure of the narcotic state, is able to “unravel” his or her deepest imaginings: “one is unrolling something that is already there, one’s own thoughts, one’s language, one’s style.” Moreover, the intensification of artistic vision and perception in the drug-induced state leads one to focus on the very contours, the specific character of spaces, within the architecture of the city. And it is precisely this collection of perceived spaces, of passages, both literal and metaphoric, that, for Shapiro, ultimately carves out the space of writing.

Walter Benjamin also figures prominently in Alina Clej’s “Profane Hallucinations: From *The Arcades Project* to the Surrealists.” But here

we see a somewhat different approach. Rather than centering on his obsessive immersion in writing itself, Clej focuses on Benjamin's fascination with mental imagery, particularly with the imagery associated with surrealism. Benjamin was initially drawn to surrealism because it offered a means of delivering images that carried a "poetic kernel of reality itself." This move corresponded to his intense desire to save the prestige of personal experience, to avoid what the Surrealists termed "the poverty of reality." It allowed him to enter the unconscious domain and to experience an intoxication that offers a chance for the total transformation of the self. And Benjamin understood this transformation in very complex terms—that is, as a fruitful living experience that allowed one to step outside the domain of intoxication. Later in the text, Clej draws parallels between Benjamin's conception of unconscious mental imagery and André Breton's poetics. Breton saw surrealism as an addictive practice, a new vice that he compares to Baudelaire's "artificial paradise." This claim was based on the idea that surrealism works on the mind very much as drugs do; like drugs, it creates a frightful state of need, a longing to free mental expression from the confines of bourgeois life. And, Clej argues, it was precisely these intoxicating powers of the surrealist imagination that drew Benjamin to the movement and "offered him a justification and a space for deploying his own phantasms of identity."

David Clark's interpretation of Heidegger's reading of Schelling, "Heidegger's Craving," turns on the question of understanding an uncanny, age-old propensity for dependence. Effectively, this is an addiction without drugs, a metaphysical craving where dependency meets Dasein and falls into thrown-ness once again. Only now, there is no way back. Constant craving rules in this language of an existential phenomenology of transport—a state in which language is not only the vehicle of meaning but also the subject of meaning itself, a subject that craves, desires, imagines, much like the subject haunting Descartes's cogito. In short, Clark traces meticulously Heidegger's fascination with Schelling's entire concept of the uncanny, what represents "unreason," arguing, in the end, that Heidegger's fascination is itself an instant of uncanny craving, of an addiction to the "arbitrary violence of the human appropriation of language and longing."

The peculiar blend of states evinced in Heidegger's multiple readings of Schelling is also evident in the awesome fluctuation from the high of drugs to the low of drugs expressed in the vertiginous, oscillating world of *Madame Bovary*. Capturing the nonsensical quality of Emma's impossible sense of time, Elissa Marder traces the effects of drugs and addiction on the feminine condition itself. *Madame Bovary* stands

supreme as the arch-Madame of feminine boredom, passivity, and that narcissistic withdrawal that belongs so much to our contemporary era. Effectively, Emma's addiction is set alongside her fundamental trauma. Marder argues that both bear similarities, in that the former slips away from the inassimilable event while the latter evades it. Thus Flaubert's Emma, trapped in time but unable to assimilate the past, is, Marder argues, one of the earliest expressions of narcotic modernity: "Flaubert announces a temporal structure of addiction that exceeds the confines of the nineteenth century and seeps into the experience of modern life."

Such avante-garde gains, however, are not made without their pains. In Allen S. Weiss's chapter on Baudelaire and Artaud, we see clearly both the exultation and the anguish and distress that attends the precious narcotic tools offered by modernity. If narcotics can open the gateways of the artistic unconscious and unlock the treasures of creativity, they can also plunge their users into a hideous abyss of pain and misery, death, and shock, both electric and electrifying. Here we see a fascinating apposition between the narcotic positivities of Baudelaire and his tradition and the oppressive, painful effects of "the electric drug" on Artaud. Enmeshed in the Romantic tradition of the nineteenth century, Baudelaire used drugs and stimulants as a kind of stagecraft, as a way of "confusing the senses," so as to interiorize all aesthetic experience. Having accomplished this, he could declare the imagination as the sole source of representation, of inspiration, indeed, even as a kind of autonomous mental perception. In fact, the imagination, sequestered from reason and ordinary perception by the narcotic haze, served to form Baudelaire's "artificial paradise." Not so for Artaud. His voyage inward would not terminate in some crafted "artificial paradise." Instead, the "extreme corporeal desublimation manifested in his writings and his psychopathology" would effectively culminate in an aesthetics of pain and delirium. This would, in turn, Weiss argues, lead to an "implosion of the sublime" that created immense fragmentation and heterogeneity in Artaud's *Gesamtkunstwerk*—a condition that revealed "a torment so intense that no intoxication would suffice as a cure."

Jeffrey T. Nealon's "Junk and the Other: Burroughs and Levinas on Drugs" is an extended comparison of two very different types of alterity. He argues that "junk" affects the Other in remarkable ways, giving Levinas's ethics of alterity a new and unexpected twist. The other of junk is not just the other as subject, but the other as a drug that enters *into* the subject, infesting it with an alterity that must be reckoned with differently. As Nealon stresses, "Just Say No!" just doesn't cut it any more. Rather, he urges us to think about how "the logics of intoxication," as well as the kinds of desire one can read in the spaces of addic-

tion, are inexorably tied with current critical vocabularies of alterity and identity. Moving away from thematizing addiction as an “inexorable lack,” Nealon borrows from the work of Burroughs and Levinas to come up with a new formula: “Junk,” he writes, “opens onto an unrecoverable exteriority beyond need,” since intoxication or drug addiction brings to the subject not only “the disappearance of the world,” but also the terrifying chaos of what Levinas calls the *il y a* (“there is”)—a radical givenness without direction. This absorption by a “depersonalized realm of pure materiality” is precisely the “metaphysical” craving at play in the face-to-face encounter with the other, and, in Nealon’s account, “cannot be confused with a simple need.” Modernity’s revelation of a “total need,” a need beyond any possible satisfaction, inaugurates the emergence of something other than “a need that could be serviced by a person, object, or substance addiction.” As Burroughs proclaimed: “junk is a way of life.”

PART II

The second part of the book, *Socio-cultural and Psychological Reflections on Addiction*, contains a group of chapters centered largely on the psychosocial extensions of addiction and addictive behavior. It is, however, by no means oriented to what might be considered the standard forms of interpretation and analysis of these sorts of behaviors and discourses. In fact, most of the chapters extend widely and wildly beyond the rather narrow clinical and statistical methods of the more common sorts of psychosocial approaches to addiction—while at the same time revealing the possibility of reflecting constructively on appropriate treatments for and approaches to addiction in general. This extensive and inclusive view corresponds, of course, to the first part of the text, which is designed to provide the reader with a strong sense of the centrality and diversity of addiction and addictive visions within modern philosophy, art, and literature.

This section on the psychosocial dimension of addiction opens, appropriately, with an important set of interviews with the noted psychoanalyst and social theorist Félix Guattari. Published about five years after his collaboration with Gilles Deleuze on *Anti-Oedipus*, “Socially Significant Drugs” first appeared in the collection *La révolution moléculaire* (1977). As is the intent in virtually all his work, Guattari here tries to situate drugs within their social context, that is, in terms of the specific ways in which drugs become subject to socioeconomic forces. He begins by making the distinction between hard and soft drugs. This, in

turn, leads to the general claim that hard drugs are treated in a radically different way than other “drug-like” substances, including alcohol. The difference consists in that hard drugs invoke a profound, metaphorical sense of darkness and despair, of catastrophe, and thus constitute the other of traditional cultural drug use, that is, as medicinal remedies or as spiritual guides. Indeed, hard drugs are always associated with exploitation, with the criminalization of certain individuals within society. In fact, Guattari goes so far as to compare hard drug use to psychosis but finds drug use even more susceptible to social opprobrium, in that mad people can be excused as being mad, while drug addicts are seen as having only themselves to blame. The solution, Guattari argues, lies in the broad decriminalization of hard drugs, which, he suspects, will eventually bring them into line with other controlled substances. Guattari further fleshes out this solution in a newly translated interview, appended to the main text.

Reassessing addiction’s place within modernist and postmodernist discourse, Anna Alexander’s “Freud’s Pharmacy: Cocaine and the Corporeal Unconscious” draws upon a variety of heuristic contexts, including those of deconstruction, cultural studies, feminism and early psychopharmacology, with a particular emphasis on Deleuze and Guattari’s critique of conventional psychoanalysis. Her general claim is that, due largely to the psychoanalytically derived perspective that divides the individual into inner and outer, addiction has been viewed in a simplistic and reductionist way. It is merely adduced as the result of some hidden, inner dimension. But this view, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, remains singularly unconcerned with some of the most important factors involved in addiction: gender, context, social inscription, and the possibility of social change. To counter this “monistic” view of addiction, the author proposes a much more extensive and inclusive one, which, she argues, is broached in the so-called Cocaine Papers, published by Freud, intermittently, between 1884 and 1895. In these remarkable essays, Freud advances nothing less than a nascent theory of narcotic desire—one that reveals the ontological structures of addiction in ways that are entirely necessary to the understanding of the very meaning of drugs and to adequate treatments that might follow. The remainder of Alexander’s chapter delves into the subtle connection between drugs, addiction and the passage into a new kind of “addictive subject,” one who, freed from the inner–outer myth, may now explore fully the extremes of personal liberation and autonomy.

In his “Schreber’s Ecstasies,” Zvi Lothane stresses the until now little-known importance of Daniel Paul Schreber as a visionary. Schreber is often referred to in the psychoanalytic literature as the most famous

mental patient of all time. This appellation evolved due to the tremendous influence his *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (1903) has exerted on the psychoanalytic tradition. Effectively, there has been a running controversy over his legal status, mental condition, pathologies, influence, etc. since his death in 1911. Lothane, who has added significantly to this debate in his definitive study, *In Defense of Schreber* (1992), now argues that Schreber's so-called hallucinations and delusions were in reality ecstatic visions, comparable to those of the great mystics. He traces the historical development and conditions of these particular visions, arguing that they were rooted in the basic mechanisms of virtually all ecstatic visions: a free sexuality and the direct experience of deity. To this end, Lothane suggests that Schreber may have also anticipated what Aldous Huxley had later referred to as "the doors of perception." Lothane continues to build a general theory of ecstasy, concluding that one might consider ecstasy and intoxication, induced by a number of techniques, including fasting and drugs, as the common denominator of human experience, as a means of encountering "visions, revelations, miracles, prophesies, and the like"—a theory invoking the ghostly presence—a vision, perhaps—of the great psychologist, William James.

Lorraine Greaves's "Smoke Screen: The Cultural Meaning of Women's Smoking" deals with anything but the miraculous and visionary. She takes a hard look at the changes in the social and historical positions of women as expressed in the history of twentieth-century cigarette ad campaigns. Greaves proposes that the ads reflect a slippage from freedom and independence to a discourse of dependency that has left women in tragic and highly contradictory positions. Analyzing the rift between societal expectations of women and their actual needs, Greaves reveals the contradictory messages conveyed to women about their addictions by medical, legal, educational, and therapeutic institutions. In doing so, she also offers a glimpse at the contradictory ways in which women are compelled to counter such messages. The chapter explains the experiences of women within the boundaries of a social control that not only extends to women's practices of smoking (and to their addiction), but also to the vicissitudes of fulfilling their obligations as women to the values of society and culture, that is, values of family and nurturance that run counter to women's need for self-protection, self-medication, and self care.

In a spectacular, physically and emotionally moving literary dialogue, Alphonso Lingis' "Love Junkies" challenges his readers to enter the grim world of two real-life Australian prisoners who, on the surface, seem to exist under the most harsh and demeaning conditions possible. Cheryl, a transvestite, and Wayne, her lover, are both long-time junkies, suffer from HIV/AIDS, and, of course, live within the brutal confines, the "cubicles,

partitions, walls and fences” of Long Bay Goal. But despite the physical limitations of their everyday existence, Lingis exposes the deeply moving and poetic nature of their respective characters and their loving, caring relationship. Combining Nietzschean affirmation and Heideggerian being-toward-death (see *Deathbound Subjectivity* [1989]) with his recently developed ideas of cosmic chance, transformation, and reciprocal death, Lingis makes the point that these two junkie lovers are not simply jailhouse deviants, but came together as the result of a remarkable twist of cosmic fate, of the astronomical number of possible combinations of DNA spiraling in their parents’ genetic signatures. Within this lovers’ dialogue, the easy, simple, child-like faith and desire of two ordinary yet extraordinary people emerges poignantly. Knowing fully their restrictions, their impending suffering and death (Wayne has full-blown AIDS and bowel cancer), they wish only to share their lives and care for one another: “How lucky I have been! How lucky to have met Wayne. How lucky not to die alone, like the other transvestites.” This, even to the extent of Cheryl committing a robbery only hours after she was released, so as to return to Wayne’s side.

Bruce Wilshire’s “Possession, Addiction, Fragmentation: Is a Healing Community Possible?” treats the question of addiction from the perspective of the experiencing (and literary) subject—a position he is eminently familiar with due to his long-time involvement with existential and phenomenological philosophy and the empirical philosophies of John Dewey and William James. The essay opens with a reflection on the author’s own experience of the natural world. Then, the questions are asked: what is it precisely that experiences the natural world? Is “I” equal to “I?” Ego, to Ego? The answers involve consideration of the position of the body vis-à-vis the question of self. In this regard, Wilshire argues, the self can be reduced to a body—a personal space of “dark inner cavities,” of “fluids,” and “subvocal speech.” Thus addiction, seen from this perspective, is precisely the inability to trust the world, to respect the integrity of the inner self, of our body-selves. But how, given this distrust, can the addictive individual become part of the ongoing regenerative world? Precisely through ritual, through the embrace of myth, and the power of myth. While Wilshire seems to depend on binary thinking in his vision of a “healing community,” this would be a naive reading of his position. On the contrary, his eco-phenomenological argument challenges, from the ground up, the modern obsession with the cure, the fix, indeed the “end” of addiction. And it is this embrace of myth and ritual that helps to integrate addictions into the “wilderness” of life itself. Wilshire thus argues against purely physiological theories of brain chemistry and addictive behavior, claiming, along with Dewey and

James, that such limited theories overlook the whole reality of human experience, the “brain-in-body-in-environment.” What the answer to addictive behavior really requires, then, is a study of the whole individual, immersed in the world of his or her total experience.

Jon Elster begins his chapter, “Gambling and Addiction,” with some crucial questions: (1) How does one explain gambling addiction? (2) Is compulsive gambling actually an addiction? The first question is initially approached through a critical evaluation of the rather large body of literature on the subject. The subsequent evaluation centers on the ways in which gambling addiction is viewed. Gambling addiction or compulsive gambling should not, Elster argues, be confused with other forms of self-sustaining activity. Alcoholism or overeating, for example, do not have the same causal mechanisms as those involved in gambling in order to earn money to pay off gambling debts. The alcoholic may drink to cover the fact that he or she is an alcoholic, but in the case of gambling, the gambler is actually involved in a process of escape. The nature of the actual process of gambling is further explored in subsequent sections. Of particular interest is the section dealing with “The Phenomenology of Gambling.” Here, Elster draws a detailed picture of what it is like to be a gambler. Once again, a contrast between other types of addiction and gambling addiction is drawn. What seems fascinating about the gambler is the question of risk. In alcohol, food, and nicotine, there is a pleasurable payback, and these sort of addictions can be understood, at least in part, introspectively. But risk, to most people, is not a pleasant experience. Indeed, most people are fearful of risk. The phenomenology then, is focused largely on the various temporal internal phenomena that contribute to compulsive gambling behaviors: craving, tolerance, withdrawal, and problems of self-control. In sum, Elster proposes that compulsive gambling is not a singular phenomenon, brought on exclusively by some psychological need or quirk. Rather, it is something that evolves over time, playing itself out in four primary stages. Effectively, it is the absorption of the gambler into a gambling environment, one which eggs him or her on, that sets the act into motion. And, according to Elster, the study of compulsive gambling must center on the irrational belief formation effected in this exchange between the gambler and the environment. As for the question of whether compulsive gambling is an addiction, Elster defers to the neurophysiology of addiction, which, he suggests, has not yet developed ways of accurately measuring neuroadaptation in compulsive gamblers.

The question of a totalizing environment and its relation to addiction is addressed in Mark S. Roberts’s “Addicts without Drugs: The Media Addiction.” But the addiction here is radically different from those expressed anywhere else in this volume. Employing modern media theory,

particularly that of Marshall McLuhan, Jean Baudrillard, and Paul Virilio, the author proposes that the information age has created a new brand of addict, one who quite directly “acts out,” monitors what he or she experiences in the media, particularly television. This acting out, however, does not follow the standard addictive patterns. It is not primarily the result of childhood trauma, of hatred, frustration, craving, anger, or perverse desire. Nor does it maintain the traditional subject–object relation of most classical poetic and aesthetic theory. Rather, it consists of an irresistible need to directly enter, merge with, and appropriate the hyperreal space created by information technology, to make life conform to the blinding speed of electronic media. And it is precisely this craving, the author suggests, that drove the likes of Luigi Ferri to slaughter eight people in a San Francisco law firm as a failed means of telling his story on a major talk show (after his suicide, a list of major television talk shows was found in his briefcase). Or, which led a recent grisly suicide on a Los Angeles freeway to first unfurl an enormous banner, specifying his grievances, for the television news helicopters.

The final contribution, John Fitzgerald’s “The Drug Addict in Absentia: Hidden Populations of Illicit Drug Users and the Gaze of Power,” also addresses the question of technology—more precisely, technological strategies—in its relation to drug addiction. What fascinates Fitzgerald in this work is how illicit drug users are made visible by public health organizations. His general approach borrows from a broad range of postmodern, poststructural, and deconstructive methods, particularly Michel Foucault’s idea of the “gaze of power” as it relates to scopic technologies. Using a Melbourne youth rave as the model for hidden drug use populations, Fitzgerald lays out a series of questions as to what it is to be seen by the gaze of power (i.e., counted) and, conversely, to be absent from it. In doing so, he reveals the various rhetorical strategies used to make these populations “visible,” concluding, in the end, that many of these strategies fail because they do not address the real problems of hidden populations but are merely extensions of the discourse of power that has put them into play. The final portion of the chapter is especially interesting, in that it involves some of the counterstrategies, ways of resisting being seen and counted, employed by the rave population. This resistance even extends to the language and imagery of their posters and advertising materials.

PHILOSOPHY YET TO COME

In the end, addiction will emerge from these chapters as an operation (akin to language production) which is not reducible to substance abuse

or compulsiveness per se. We thus hope to document addiction as the ecstatic and psychotropic eruption of the subject of drugs into language and culture, weaving its way through the corridors of modern life, much in the way Benjamin's "hashish passages" meandered through the streets of Marseilles. This work, moreover, is intended to intervene in modernity's insistent drive to medicalize, discipline, rehabilitate, and contain the subject of drugs within explanatory frameworks that disguise deeply rooted moral and religious fears, values and beliefs or prejudices (as in the use of the term "dependency" and "abuse") and that lock this subject into a "metaphysics" of substance that, paradoxically, has no substance. Indeed, we might almost go so far as to say that our task has been to relate Nietzsche's impassioned call for "a history of narcotics" to the making of an era and to a "philosophy yet to come."

NOTES

1. See the lovely passage in Ernst Jünger's *Approaches, drogues et ivresse* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), p. 56.

2. A fascinating source for further reading in this area is Louis Lewin's *Phantastica* (Rochester, NY: Park Street Press, 1998), p. 2. A contemporary and adversary of Freud, Lewin's was the first book to bring scientific insights to a survey of the world-wide use of drugs. He furthered a classification of psychoactive drugs which was used in the original formulation of U.S. narcotics laws. For a more recent survey, see Richard Rudgley's *Essential Substances: A Cultural History of Intoxicants in Society* (New York: Kodansha, 1993).

3. Richard Klein, *Cigarettes are Sublime* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 27.

4. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "The Epidemics of the Will," in *Zone 6: Incorporations*, eds. Jonathan Crary and Stanford Quinter (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), p. 582.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 583.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 584.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 583–584.

8. Avital Ronell, *Crack Wars: Literature, Addiction, Mania* (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 1992), p. 29.