

Words Poorly Used #29 — Addiction

In the past, men created witches: now they create mental patients. — Thomas Szasz

Those who would control you seek to take your mind as their tool. And, the unconscionable use of the term, “addiction,” is a rampant case of that usurpation. How did the communists control those whom they didn’t kill? They often trumped up charges of mental deficiency. We may treat outcasts as mental patients today, but we still proceed as though we believe in witchcraft. When we accuse someone of an addiction, we are often right back in colonial Salem. Many things that are mere hobbies, perhaps to the degree of obsession, are now called addiction with the implication that something should be done about it, by some authoritative entity. Is the World Wide Web a stimulant to addiction? Who among us is capable of saying? Are video games addictive, or are they a source of intense education? Is violence all we can take away from video games? We have not yet repealed the natural right that accrues to every individual born on the Earth, the right to be interested in pursuits. In fact, here in the US, our founding documents guarantee our rights to pursuits that do not infringe on the rights of others. A sensible extension of that idea says that we each should refrain, without intervention of legislation, expertise, or authoritarianism, from impairing the peaceful, private pursuits of others.

Hat tip to Skyler for suggesting #29.

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