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Dependence Theory

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Dependence Theory

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by

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To the kids I grew up with.

I understand you much more now.

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My adviser, Professor Kathryn Tabb, continues to inspire and amaze me. Not only is my engagement with philosophy owed to her academic guidance, but I think of her as my friend. Her support has been irreplaceable and beyond measure.

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I am grateful for my family. They are the most reliable people I know.

Preface:

Out of all the things I am familiar with, I am most familiar with loving addicts. I grew up in a small town in central California that was, among other things, home to many drug addicts and alcoholics. I was raised by my grandparents for some years while my parents took time getting clean and sober. My family and my closest friends have all had life-characterizing experiences with addiction, either directly or by association.

My love of philosophy grew out of my anguish with how addiction unfolds in society. I am sad and frustrated that there are addiction-recovery programs that support an atomist attitude of being self-made and independent, because such programs hypocritically ignore the inevitability and benefits of dependence. Such programs ultimately frustrate and confuse anyone who is trying to understand what addiction is and how to treat it. I am mad at programs who preach that people just *are the way they are*, and that there is nothing people can do to fundamentally change who they are; this makes addicts feel trapped and doomed. I am especially mad at diagnostic practices around mental illness that refer to symptoms as diseases—as if feeling craving, withdrawal, and/or tolerance *means* someone is an addict. I am mad at those who ignore how the same dependence in different contexts causes different reactions, and thus different, or a lack thereof, diagnoses. In totality, I am mad at the haters of dependence: the people in this world who tremble over it, who hear that you are dependent on something and shame you, who take utter pride in independence as if they have risen above dependence. These people are destroying relationships, corrupting opportunities for personal fulfillment, and diminishing identities. I would like us, instead, to develop a love for dependence.

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Introduction*:*

I take something. I am on something. I am dependent. Some people would say that I have a problem. This project explores whether or not they are right.

Our aversion to the idea of dependence is so widespread and popular that it was apparent within my very first Google search result of the word "dependence." The first synonyms to appear were "helplessness," "weakness," and "vulnerability" ("Dependency" *Oxford Languages*).Another example of the shame we put into dependence is that we say alcoholics are alcohol "dependent." We admonish certain relationships by using the term "codependent." We shame dependency and promote independence. I would like to propose an opposing attitude—I would like us to develop a love for dependence. Over the course of this project, I will explain why such an attitude is most effective for having healthy relationships. The theory I introduce in the following chapters is called Dependence Theory. The main aspects of Dependence Theory that I discuss in this text are: one, that we can differentiate between addiction and dependence; and two, that we can use Dependence Theory to have a practical grasp of how to assess and change selfhood over time. Dependence Theory does not go as far as to suggest the cause of addiction, but rather explains how to recognize addiction's presence. Such a theory is similar to the theory that the medical community might use to recognize a burn on one's skin, even if one does not know why one's skin is burnt. Since there is currently not an agreed upon definition of addiction, it is extremely important, for the sake of diagnosis and treatment, that we come to a standardized definition of addiction. We do not want Individual A to diagnose someone with addiction and Individual B to disagree. Dependence Theory provides a standard definition of addiction by synthesizing commonly used definitions.

According to Dependence Theory, "a dependence" is defined as a reliable connection. A dependence is at least one reliable connection. When we understand it in terms of connection, dependence requires at least two domains: a Domain A that reliably connects to a Domain B. A "domain" here refers to any subject, material, process, and/or relationship. Both terms, dependence and independence, are intrinsically *relational* terms in this way—requiring both a Domain A and a Domain B. For independence, Domain A disconnects from Domain B, and both remain existing still, each connected to something else. In sum, since they refer to connection, dependence and independence only concern domains relative to other domains.

The point of this essay is to explain what falls out of Dependence Theory by breaking down into sections the various domains that dependency operates upon: dependence on the self, dependence on an object, dependence on a subject, and dependence on a company. Throughout, I will describe how addiction fits into each of these sorts of dependence relations.

What to Expect from this Project: a roadmap

Chapter One discusses independence. Independence is often conceptualized as either dependence on oneself or dependence on nothing. This is an important topic to cover first because the widespread promotion of *independence over dependence* frustrates all attempts at appreciating and understanding dependency. In order to expose the reliance we all have on dependence, I refer to Hume's bundle theory and Patanjali's Yoga Sutra to explain why dependence on nothing (complete independence) is impossible. In seeing why complete independence is impossible, one may see why dependence is so intrinsic and valuable.

In Chapter Two, I discuss dependency on objects. I differentiate between dependence and addiction to argue that addicts are not dependent on their object(s) of addiction. I posit that we

must use dependencies to treat addictions. I emphasize the specificity with which dependency ought to be talked about. In doing so, I explain why the phrase “alcohol dependent” is misleading. I also compare alcohol to a parasite in order to show how addictions hijack one’s intentions.

Chapter Three is about one’s dependence on a subject. I relate concepts of addiction to interpersonal relationships and explain the difference between dependending on versus being addicted to someone. I highlight the role of consent in a subject-subject dependence, and I explain how a lack of consent can lead to an addiction. Referring to concepts from Chapter One, I explain how people’s identities overlap in subject-subject dependency. I also explain why the term “codependency” is misused, and why such misuse matters.

Chapter Four introduces subject-company dependence. The major feature of it that I discuss is the idea of “induced appetite.” I explain how induced appetite leads to one’s addiction to a company. I refer to Chomsky and Herman’s *Manufacturing Consent* to show how commercial capitalism can make consumers into addicts.

Chapter five concludes with a couple political takeaways, and a more general takeaway, from the project that are not quite discussed in the preceding chapters. I explain why the Declaration of Independence promotes dependence, and why one cannot depend on their political party to stay in power. I end by reminding the reader that dependence is inevitable and that only our love of dependence can facilitate healthy relationships.

CHAPTER 1: Independence

Introduction:

We often hear of people seeking to avoid dependence. There are people who claim to be "more independent" than others as a point of pride. If you claim to be more independent than others, and you are proud of that, then I ask: why not just be independent of everything? Would you still be proud? In the United States, we fetishize independence. Whether we look to the atomist idea of the self-made man or the spiritual concept of liberation, if one can argue that they have attained greater independence, their status and efforts tend to be praised. However, if absolute independence is not actually the ideal, then there must be *something* about dependence that is desirable, or at least agreeable (if not celebrable). This project shows what it is about dependence that we value. In this first chapter, I will argue that dependence dictates one's sense of selfhood. According to Dependence Theory, the self is a composition of interdependent domains. So, what would happen if one attempted to get rid of all their dependencies? They would not exist anymore. Understanding the answer to this question is critical for understanding Dependence Theory, not because there are large numbers of people who want to be completely independent, but because, from working through this argument, we will be able to see how essential and unavoidable dependence is to selfhood. Taken together, the arguments that follow should work to destigmatize dependence.

This chapter refers to Patanjali's Yoga Sūtra, David Hume, and Derek Parfit to demonstrate how, according to Dependence Theory, the nature of selfhood makes complete independence impossible without the ultimate loss of the individual. I will show that a kind of bundle theory of the self falls out of Dependence Theory. "The bundle theory construes objects

as collections of properties (tropes or universals) tied together by a bundling relation" ("Bundle Theories - Bibliography," *Philpapers*). As bundle theories suggest, you could never achieve complete independence because there would be no "you" to experience the achievement. Dependence Theory asserts that dependence is necessary for an experience of self.

Part 1: Self-Replication

In order to start thinking about how self and dependence are related, an important question to ask is: what are *you*? This is a classic philosophical question, and answers can be mainly divided into two debating camps. Some people think that the self is a composite structure that can be divided (bundle theories). Others think of the self instead as an indivisible core, force, or energy, separate from one's body-parts (ego theories).

In the way Parfit describes ego theories, bundle theories reject ego theories because Parfit says that the ego is said to be "purely mental," as though what is mental could exist independently from one's parts (2). Bundle theories do not think that a mental state can exist independently from one's parts. According to bundle theories, the self is a composition of discreet parts.

> On the Ego Theory, a person's continued existence cannot be explained except as the continued existence of a particular Ego, or subject of experiences. An Ego Theorist claims that, if we ask what unifies someone's consciousness at any time—what makes it true, for example, that I can now both see what I am typing and hear the wind outside my window—the answer is that these are both experiences which are being had by me, this person, at this time. Similarly, what explains the unity of a person's whole life is the fact that all of the experiences in this life are had by the same person, or subject of experiences. In its best-known form, the Cartesian view, each person is a persisting purely mental thing—a soul, or spiritual substance (Parfit 2).

According to bundle theories, on the other hand, people cannot be "purely mental." Rather, people's mental states exist in relation to perceptions; therefore an individual cannot have a self

outside these relationships to perceptions. Ego theories would say that oneself is in fact beyond, or outside, of these domains. Ego theories' "soul" or "spirit substance" is what I described as a "core." This core is non-material. The core is not some organ we can isolate from your body and transfer to another body. The lack of discreet parts is a critical distinction between ego theories and bundle theories: ego theories suggest that the self is indivisible, or eternal. Bundle theories suggest that the self is very much divisible and very much temporal. By temporal, I mean that different selves develop in and out of existence through the course of life.

Here is a thought experiment, from Parfit, that demonstrates an ego theorist's relationship to this "soul" or pure core: imagine that new technology has been developed for interplanetary teletransportation. This is how it works—your body gets completely destroyed while a perfect replica of how you think and behave is technologically copied and pasted into an anatomical replica of your original body, which will have been constructed on Mars. The question is, would you be willing to get "teletransported" to Mars in this way? Parfit thinks that, in fear of death, ego theorists would be unwilling to participate in this kind of "teletransportation."

> Several writers claim that, if you chose to be teletransported, believing this to be the fastest way of travelling, you would be making a terrible mistake. This would not be a way of travelling, but a way of dying. It may not, they concede, be quite as bad as ordinary death. It might be some consolation to you that, after your death, you will have this Replica, which can finish the book that you are writing, act as a parent to your children, and so on. But, they insist, this Replica won't be you. It will merely be someone else, who is exactly like you. This is why this prospect is nearly as bad as ordinary death (Parfit 3).

The difference between you and this replica, according to ego theorists, is that the replica lacks your core. It may have a core of some sort—why not?—but it is not the core that is *you*. There is only one you, and that's *you*. As Parfit notes, "You do not merely want there to be psychological continuity between you and some future person. You want to be this future person" (6). Ego theorists would not say that *you* were destroyed when your body got destroyed—rather that *your*

body has died, and that you are doing whatever souls do when they leave the body after death (e.g. go to heaven).

The consequence of ego theories (aside from missing out on some cool new technology) is that, no matter what you are doing as an ego theorist, there is never going to be a version of you that is exactly like a previous version. There is a risk here of perpetually longing for oneself. This is what bundle theories consider. Parfit says:

> You want the person on Mars to be you in a specially intimate way in which no future person will ever be you. This means that, judged from the standpoint of your natural beliefs, even ordinary survival is about as bad as teletransportation. *Ordinary survival is about as bad as being destroyed and having a Replica* (6; italics are his).

Ego theorists want us to believe that there is a 'true' self—that 'you' are beyond the domains you rely on. In doing so, ego theorists convince people that the self is something that can be right or wrong and that one must spend their life finding and honing the right one. From there, ego theorists run the risk of making people who have, for instance, a chronic illness, or disease, or *addiction*, feel as though they will never be able to experience a true self while alive, lest they could separate themselves from their ailments. They may be convinced that they will only be able to experience their true self after death, when the soul leaves the body.

Bundle theories see the self, not as a core, but as a "bundle." If one is a bundle, then one would assume there is a catalog of parts that make them what they are; they are divisible into parts A, B, C, and so on. One may get rid of parts from this catalog and, eventually, there is no "them," or "him," or "her." Hume's "bundle" account of the self is one theory that operates this way. He calls the "parts" that make us up "perceptions." He says:

> I am willing to affirm of the rest of mankind that each of us is nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions that follow each other enormously quickly and are in a perpetual flux and movement (131).
>
> According to the Bundle Theory, we can't explain either the unity of consciousness at any time, or the unity of a whole life, by referring to a person. Instead we must claim that there are long series of different mental states and events—thoughts, sensations, and the like—each series being what we call one life. Each series is unified by various kinds of causal relation, such as the relations that hold between experiences and later memories of them. Each series is thus like a bundle tied up with string (Parfit 2).

To get a better understanding of bundle theories, let's review Parfit's teletransportation scenario. How would a bundle theorist respond to the proposition of being teletransported to Mars? According to Parfit, bundle theorists would consent to being teletransported in this way. From their perspectives, before they get teletransported, they know they are themselves through assessing a bundle of interconnected perceptions. For instance, they would find psychological continuity between the present moment and the previous moment; meaning: whatever happened in the previous moment seems like a plausible moment to have had before arriving at the current moment. For example, if in the previously recalled moment one of them was turning a doorknob, and in the current moment they are opening the door, they would feel that the experience is psychologically continuous. There would be continuity in their point-of-view between the present moment and the previous moment. However, bundle theorists recognize that no instant is objectively identical to the previous instant because everything is in constant motion. Ego theorists want to posit the existence of some form of self that persists through this motion unaffected. Bundle theorists disagree and posit that the self moves along with everything else. Bundle theorists want to say that nothing ever stays the same—especially you.

To be fair, this is not to say that you are very different between moments. You may be, relative to who you were a year ago, the same. However, since we are being technical about this, we must acknowledge that this change between selves is not a function of the duration of elapsed

time. The duration of elapsed time is just a way of quantifying the amount of opportunities there were to change selves. If you could be frozen and thawed out 50 years later, you may be as close to your old self (50 years earlier) as a non-frozen person is to themselves from a moment ago. You may feel like mere moments have passed when everyone else experienced 50 years. Therefore, time is not the sufficient variable for change. We need sufficient motion. If people were really the same moment to moment, then we would stay the same throughout our lives. Some moments must be *aha!* moments or *oh no!* moments. There must be more impactful moments than others.

Nevertheless, let's say that I am wrong about the impossibility of the perfect sustenance of self over time. Even if you could hold onto the same exact parts your entire life, you cannot, as Hume argues, really understand the connections between these parts. You may, for instance, trust that water quenches your thirst, and you may understand the modern paradigm explaining the chemical reactions that underlie the process, but you do not know the nature of the connection between *you* and these domains. How does water give rise to the experience of selfhood? Nobody knows. Not only do we not understand what causes the experience of selfhood, but Hume thinks we cannot fully understand the causation of anything. Hume says,

> But all my hopes vanish when I come to explain the principles that unite our successive perceptions in our thought or consciousness. I cannot discover any satisfactory theory about this (Hume 138).

Therefore, even though Parfit's teletransported bundle theorists are inferring psychological and point-of-view continuity to assess a changing self, existence is hardly continuous at a perceptual level—at best it is a composite structure of discrete parts that our brains piece together in lagged time frames—a *bundle* of perceptions. For instance, brains process images at a certain number of frames per second (say, 16fps). The feeling we get of a continuous scene unfolding before our

eyes is a product of there being so many frames processed per second that we fail to see the missing information. It is exactly the same principle as a moving reel. There are people who see far less frames per second than the average person and life for them is indeed like a movie that skips. Here I described sight processing alone, but we have so many senses. Some senses will process at different rates than others, and nothing processes instantaneously. This means that, between the previous moment and the current, I missed some things, I misunderstood some things, some of my cells replicated, some cells died, the Earth has spiraled some distance, and various other things changed that I could name. Parfit is saying that with so much natural change and thus uncertainty, what *you* are right now is not exactly what you were before this moment, but instead you are now more like a replica of your past self that lacks that past self's core. Thus, for a bundle theorist, Parfit's teletransportation is acceptable because its only problem is that one must dismiss selfhood's essentiality, one must believe that the core does not exist, which is something bundle theorists believe anyway.

Dependence Theory, like bundle theories, rejects Ego Theory. Dependence Theory argues that, if there is no discernable domain available for identifying someone, then there cannot be any metric or measurement of their selfhood. Without being able to identify domains as comprising the self, there is no self. From Dependence Theory's perspective, ego theories that subscribe to a domain-less self subscribe to no self at all. It is a theory that, intuitively, can feel right because, even according to Dependence Theory and bundle theories, an essential self does exist. The difference is that, according to Dependence Theory, there is not just one self, but various potential selves. These selves are "potential" because all one has to do to change who they are is change what they depend on. Since we live in a society that is often offering

suggestions of what to depend on and what not to depend on, since we are flooded with and may choose to shed domains, we tend to have the potential to change who we are.

The theory of selfhood that falls out of Dependence Theory is, as I said, a kind of bundle theory. It is not quite *Hume's* bundle theory. Hume focuses on a bundle of "perceptions," which Dependence Theory includes but is not limited to. Recall, Hume's formal statement of his theory is,

> I am willing to affirm of the rest of mankind that each of us is nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions that follow each other enormously quickly and are in a perpetual flux and movement (131).

According to Dependence Theory, perceptions inform us about what is dependable. For instance, I must first learn to recognize water (to depend on my senses) before I can depend on water. However, one's dependence on water is not a perception itself, but a relation. Dependence Theory states that relations, too, build one's experience of selfhood. Even though perceptions are a prerequisite to relations, I think it is important to recognize that the construction of selfhood does not stop at selfhood's roots. The roots need to be considered, but to observe and describe a tree, we do not only look at its roots. In the same way, we must look to perception in order to understand what can be depended upon, but once we know what can be depended upon, we must actually assess what perception has allowed for, which includes one's relations to things like water (or the trunk, branches, and leaves of a tree, to complete the metaphor).

Part 2: Detach From the Essentiality of Selfhood

Some people say things like, "I want to be more independent" or "Don't be so dependent." In these peoples' eyes, to be independent is to be in a state that endorses the riddance of dependencies. Dependence is seen as something avoidable. Dependence Theory

rejects the notion that dependence and independence necessarily conflict. I would like to demonstrate this conclusion by taking independence to the extreme—by describing what would happen if you were to become completely independent. I will reference Buddhist philosophy, because Buddhists are frequently bundle theorists who have considered the question of absolute independence.

Not only are Buddhists frequently bundle theorists, but

> The first Bundle Theorist was Buddha, who taught 'anatta', or the No-Self view. Buddhists concede that selves or persons have 'nominal existence', by which they mean that persons are merely combinations of other elements (Parfit 2)

Now think back about the conventional desire to *let things go*. If we take seriously that you are your components, then, as Buddha says, there is no "you" to let things go. According to Dependence Theory, you would just be letting yourself go. If you let go of your past lover, you're letting a part of you go. If you let go of that habit of eating powdered doughnuts, you are letting a piece of yourself go. In this view, you do not really own anything that is not simply *you*. You do not own your body parts; rather, you are your body parts. Or further, you are your domains. Dependence Theory can use the language of domains to understand Parfit's claim that, "There is no one to cast away this set of elements, and no one to assume a new set of them. There exists no Individual, it is only a conventional name given to a set of elements." (Parfit 3) There is no entity outside your domains that can let things go. Certain domains of you can make the executive decision to let other domains go and accept new domains, but, according to Dependence Theory, there is no core you that is controlling the whole operation throughout life.

The Yoga Sūtra is a great tool for us here because one way people might promote the elimination of dependencies is by referencing spiritual enlightenment. They might say something like, "Independence is so good. Just think of how independent the yogis are! Consider how

independent one becomes when they reach Enlightenment, and spiritual liberation—they must be independent of everything. How amazing?!" Indeed, Yoga Sūtra philosophy is a dualist philosophy that is a discipline for achieving spiritual liberation; spiritual liberation within this tradition is referred to as *kaivalya*. However, I will explain how, according to Patanjali's aphorisms, kaivalya actually does not lead to a state of complete independence, even though it is the best possible argument in favor of the pursuit of complete independence. The reason that *kaivalya* is not to be understood as the same as complete independence is that the yogi must become independent from independence itself in order to achieve full liberation. Thus, one must detach from even the intention of disconnection to fully detach from all domains. I will explain how this ultimately means that you cannot depend on yourself while in *kaivalya* because you would need to have a self in order to know what to be independent of.

Therefore, I will argue that *kaivalya* leaves the yogi neither dependent nor independent due to the non-localizability or dynamicity of the "self" in *kaivalya*. As Buddha says, such a state is no self at all. I will argue that the result is the same as ultimate dependence: which I define as the self being equally defined among all domains. In such a state, the self has no definition. To have definition is to be unique in at least one discernible way, which does not happen when you depend equally on all domains. Since Yoga Sūtra practice leads to the removal of oneself from all domains, a yogi in kaivalya cannot be identified as dependent or independent.

Before I continue, it is important to keep in mind that "removal of oneself from all domains" means to detach from personal gain or personal interests. It does not mean to detach from the purpose of one's action. The difference between these two is that detaching from personal gain or personal interest still allows one to remain attached to universal gain or universal interest. This way, yogis focus their actions on what would be best for what they

understand to be *all things*. On the other hand, to completely detach from the purpose of one's action entirely leaves no room for even universal consideration. If you accidentally caused a fire, but did not care how your actions affected anything, then the fire might cause damage. If you were disinterested in personal gain, but still cared for the universal, then you might be drawn to extinguishing the fire. Thus, detaching from the purpose of one's actions seems dangerous, which would make the act of detachment even more difficult and thus counter-productive. Yogis cultivate the conditions for easier detachment. In yogic detachment, attention is diverted away from the self and toward the cosmic order that provides for all things. In this way, one's actions tend toward cosmic neutrals. Being neutral in this way is the yogi's ideal social life, and they think of it as skillful sacrifice. One does not need to renounce action and society entirely in order to sacrifice and remove oneself from domains like a true yogi.

Removing oneself from all domains is not the only conceptual model for the annihilation of the self. Consider the opposite extreme: dependence on all domains. Dependence on all domains would mean that every domain equally describes you. Usually one might describe themself with the occupation that they depend on for a living (e.g. a teacher, a lawyer, a magician). Or maybe people refer to what perhaps can be less professional relations they depend on for enjoyment (e.g. an artist, a lover, an explorer). These dependencies, when taken together, make a person unique—it gives them their sense of selfhood. However, if you depended on all domains equally, then there would be nothing unique about you. Zen master Suzuki refers to this concept as "big mind." Suzuki's "big mind" is not just big, but all-encompassing. As Suzuki says, "In your big mind, everything has the same value" (Suzuki and Dixon 44). The big mind concept might invoke the idea that all things culminate into a solitary self, whereby everything is one moving entity, but this again defeats the purpose of invoking selfhood because there is no

distinctness to a self that represents everything. In that lens, a big mind is actually no self at all. Anything and everything could be used to identify you, so nobody would be able to know what differentiates you from anything else—you would lose your identity. Thus, in complete dependence, one loses their sense of self.

The main conundrum of complete independence is this paradox: a completely independent person cannot be dependent on independence. Thus, Dependence Theory concludes that complete independence does not exist, and therefore independence cannot be suggested as a virtue in opposition to the acceptance of dependence as a virtue. Either dependence and independence are both involved, or neither are involved. This sheds light on the cooperative interplay between independence and dependence, and destigmatizes dependence.

Part 3: Patanjali's Agreement

Now that I have explained the philosophical conundrum of complete independence, I would like to explain in more detail why Yoga Sūtra practice is posited as an example of complete independence in the first place. Then I will explain why that position is incorrect. Such an argument will help us see more clearly why independence is not something you can pursue in spite of dependence.

The second aphorism of Patanjali defines what yoga is. According to the translation of Mallinson and Singleton (M&S), the second aphorism is "Yoga is the suppression of the activities of the mind" (Mallinson and Singleton). According to the translation of Stoler-Miller, the second aphorism of Patanjali is, "Yoga is the cessation of the turnings of thought" (Patanjali and Miller). Both translations agree that yoga leads to detachment. This is very similar to Zen Buddhism's promotion of self-control. For Zen Buddhists, suppression/cessation of thought (or

mental activity) is self-control. Meaning: suppression/cessation is not allowing something to become entangled with one's experience; it is to control what oneself is. The Zen Buddhist master Suzuki, says,

> When you walk along the brook you will hear the water running. The sound is continuous, but you must be able to stop it if you want to stop it... One by one you will have various thoughts in your mind, but if you want to stop your thinking you can (137-138).

Suzuki is discussing what some might call "self-control," but it can also be seen as skillful sacrificing, disconnection, or independence because one must intentionally separate or detach from the sound.

One major counter-argument here—thus an argument in favor of Dependence Theory—is that Vyāsa, the most important commentator of the Yoga Sūtra, emphasizes the absence of the word "all" in Patanjali's second aphorism. Meaning: not *all* activities of the mind need to be suppressed. If not *all* activities of the mind are suppressed, is this really an example of pursuing *complete* detachment? In fact, Vyāsa praises what's called *samādhi with cognition* (Mallinson and Singleton 18). Samādhi is the point at which one identifies with the object of meditation. The object of meditation is whatever the individual is holding at attention during the meditation. Samādhi with cognition is whatever causes a "single-pointed" mind to see an object "as it really is" (Mallinson and Singleton 18). In other words, the translation by M&S allows for there to be a thought present in the mind, hence "with cognition," which does not seem conducive to complete independence. Patanjali says that "Insofar as thought depends on any object, however subtle, or even on a single idea, it is limited" (Patanjali and Miller 42). Between the translations and commentary, the goal of yoga is either to have one thought steady in the frame of mind or zero thoughts present. How do we reconcile this disagreement?

We may see that they are effectively the same argument. Miller argues that "samādhi with cognition is just one of the states that can lead to the cessation of thought" (34). We do not have to define thought completely in order to see why a single thought and zero thoughts could be effectively the same. We just have to see that thoughts are necessarily relational. Thought does not arise for itself, but rather in the relation between domains. Understanding sentences and images requires understanding relations. In other words, thinking is an act of dependence on perception and relations. Therefore, the awareness of one thought cannot occur without at least a second thought to constitute the awareness; there must be a Domain A that connects to Domain B. There is a difference between being cold and knowing that you are cold. You can be so cold that you are unaware you are cold ("Hypothermia - Symptoms and Causes."). You cannot know that you are cold unless there is a part of you capable of being aware of it. You can be cold (i.e parts of you will be cold), but a part of you needs to be elevated above the immediacy of the experience in order to observe it and communicate to others that there is this coldness that these other parts of you are dealing with. To have a single thought, therefore, feels like and looks like not thinking at all because one thought cannot acknowledge its own existence.

Determined to reach kaivalya, are you maximizing your independence? You are certainly independent of a lot of domains. However, you still depend on food. If not food, you'll depend on warmth and your place to stand because you want a sense of self; meaning: you want to acknowledge your efforts, to know whether or not you have completed your goal of independence. Being as independent as possible, but not yet independent of having a sense of self, there are things "you" cannot part with because separation would compromise your ability to sustain a sense of self. Since self-control is necessary for enlightenment, we do not want to lose this sense of self. However, it is this sense of self that holds people back from *kaivalya*. If

you have no sense of an essential, or core, self, then Dependence Theory suggests that every act of dependence is approached as if your identity is changing at the very moment of crafting a new dependence.

Losing interest in your sense of a core self is not the same as letting everything go. To let something go, there has to be a "*you"* to experience the letting go. Losing interest in a core self means that letting something go is an act of changing identities—so there is no continuous "you" that can be said to have experienced "you" both before and after the letting go. Rather, at best, there are domains that have been with you both before and after letting go of other domains. Losing interest in your core self allows you to change who you are.

You may think that you can drop the bundle. But you are the bundle—if you drop it, then there is no you. This "culminates in Patanjali's higher dispassion—a complete detachment from the world of experience, wherein we cease to identify ourselves with the material world" (Miller 33). "You" would be without a self, which defeats the purpose of invoking the word "you." So identifying "you" as "a person," or as "an individual," who is dependent on or independent from something, does not make sense anymore. You are gone.

Kaivalya annihilates one's ability to distinguish oneself from anything else because it is defined as utter detachment, making the description of independence and dependence useless because independence and dependence are inherently *relational* terms. If there is no self, one cannot say "you" are independent of this or "you" are dependent on that. Thus, ultimate independence has the same effect as ultimate dependence: equal (even that value is zero) connection to all domains and a self that therefore disappears.

Part 4: Dependence comes with Independence

At this point, the argument may look like this: "Dependence is not categorically distinct from independence because the former contains the latter. However, even though self-dependency is a type of dependence, self-dependency, above all other kinds of dependency, is superior." In other words, my argument might seem to support a semantic switch that does not reboot the praise of conventional ideas of independence over dependence. Those who praise independence would just use the term "self-dependency" in lieu of "independence," and promote self-dependency over all other kinds of dependency. I will now explain why this conclusion is not valuable on the account of selfhood being a composition of dependencies.

Eric Nelson provides a perfect entrance point into considering this objection. In a very different context—a discussion of liberalism—Nelson brings up the hollow politics that comes with putting independence in competition with dependence. This hollow politics is what makes "independence versus dependence" a false dichotomy. In the choice to be either dependent or independent, both options actually involve dependence: you will either be dependent on yourself or dependent on something else. Nelson and I both have trouble seeing the inherent value or disvalue in being affected by molecules over here (independent) instead of molecules over there (dependent). Nelson says:

> In order to make sense of liberalism, we need to explain what is uniquely bad about being my being directed by an outside force or agency. If the alternative is simply being directed by my own DNA sequences or class consciousness (or some combination thereof), why should it matter to me that my actions are dictated by your DNA sequences instead? It seems odd to attach moral significance to the *location* of the lines of code that dictate my every action (Nelson 124).

Nelson is asking whether there is logic that justifies why dependence on oneself is fundamentally, or ontologically, different from dependence on something else. I do not see the

difference. With that frame of mind, dependence on oneself is ontologically the same as dependence on anything else.

This comes awfully close to a disturbing mindset. Some people may take this sort of approach to justify harm, anticipating that someone who subscribes to it might reason: "I can cause you harm because your identification with your body is arbitrary, *and therefore your body is not really yours.*" What *I* am saying is rather this: Your identification with your body is because you use certain domains and find those domains reliable. What's 'arbitrary' in this context is the actual domain in the world that ends up being yours or ends up being reliable. If someone enslaves you, then you might find your body unreliable for bringing you happiness. According to Dependence Theory, you would then stop identifying with your body. This sort of explanation can explain dissociation as a reaction to unwanted circumstances. As far as the arbitrariness goes, you never know from what fleck of soil the nutrients in your banana will come from, but upon eating it, it nevertheless becomes you. The arbitrariness of redirected influence does not devalue the experience of selfhood. It shows that one's body is not limited to conventional anatomy. It shows what it means for there to be no *essential* self. Whatever you depend on becomes part of you, so all instances of your dependence refer to dependence on the self.

An interesting conclusion can be drawn here. Ego theorists have to make choices between what it means for them to be more or less independent, because they can feel how pure or cluttered their core self is. Dependence Theory recognizes that not only are we inevitably dependent on other domains, but, because each act of dependence fosters a sense of self, then selves themselves are technically independent of other-selves. Otherwise, things would be indistinguishable. Thus, Dependence Theory allows for dependence-based taxonomy.

From the perspective of dependence theorists, any act of dependence is technically an attempt at being “independent” (where “independence” means dependence on only oneself) because you cannot depend on something that does not become you. To pursue dependence is to pursue independence. Thus, Dependence Theory suggests that dependence must be as desirable as independence. It is therefore undeniably important that we study, discuss, and value dependence.

CHAPTER 2: Subject-Object Dependency

Part 1: What if Dependency Fails?

What happens when you intend to depend on something, but it does not work? The simple answer is that you should try to depend on something else. Unfortunately, however, that may not be what happens. What might happen instead is that you keep trying to depend on the same domain. According to statisticians, a sufficient sample size is necessary for drawing practical conclusions. What often happens to people is that we do not know what number a sufficient sample size is. I do not fear that we will try things multiple times. I support that. I do not fear that people will become dependent on things that they end up trying several times. I support that also. I fear that people will keep going back to a domain that they have found to be unreliable, and I refer to that as addiction.

As of now, there is not an agreed-upon definition of addiction—clinically nor otherwise (Clark-Deone and Tabb 4). But Dependence Theory offers a definition of addiction that is a synthesis between the currently disjointed composition of definitions that are used. A standard definition of addiction is extremely important because there needs to be an identifiable and consistent distinction between, say, healthy drug dependence and unhealthy drug abuse. It needs to be standardized because otherwise someone will receive an addiction diagnosis at Locations A and B but not at Locations C and D.

Various people and/or organizations have developed definitions of addiction, but there continues to be special contention around how “free will,” or “agency,” fits into the equation. For instance, while they themselves do not believe this, Clark-Doane and Tabb have reported that addiction is often characterized by a lack of choice:

> Addiction is distinguished from [mere heavy] drug use by the lack of freedom of choice. Using a mood-altering substance is a choice. Addiction is a condition that robs a person of choice and dictates the frequency, the quantity, and the nature of use (1).

However, Dependence Theory rejects this picture of addiction. It is not that one loses the choice to use a drug that makes someone a drug addict. That does not really explain the problem that addicts have. According to Dependence Theory, the problem that addicts have is that one intends to depend on Domain A for something in particular but ultimately ends up with something unwanted. According to NIDA and the WHO, "Addiction is widely viewed as a chronic, relapsing, neurobiological disease characterized by compulsive use of drugs or alcohol" (Pickard 40). So, NIDA and the WHO are saying that compulsion, which is defined as "constraint, obligation, or coercion" describes the distinctive nature or feature of addiction (OED). Thus, their definition refers again to a lack of choice. Similarly,

> Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) draws on concepts such as compulsion to use, inability to stop drinking once one has started, little control over when one drinks and what will happen after drinking has commenced, and presence of the phenomenon of craving (Wasmuth 607).

AA, like NIDA, the WHO, focuses on obligate, constricted, or coerced use (A.K.A lack of choice). However, if obligatory use determined addiction, then we would all be addicted to water—which is not an intuitive position. Saying that we are all addicted to water is not a medically practical conclusion because our dependence on water is not problematic/harmful.

Alternatively, according to the DSM-V,

> The essential feature of a substance use disorder is a cluster of cognitive, behavioral, and physiological symptoms indicating that the individual continues using the substance despite significant substance-related problems" ("Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders.").

The DSM-V refers to addiction's symptoms as addiction's features. Rather than focussing on agency/choice as the core of addiction, it focuses on the effects of the fact that addicts suffer from usage.

These two definitions—lack of choice and self-harm—are not quite the same, but the through line between them is that the addict is *suffering* from the addiction. Following an extensive review of various definitions of addiction, a report commissioned by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction concluded that,

> accumulated evidence indicates that impaired control, conflict, craving, and so on are not necessary features of addiction even though they are frequently observed and have to be accounted for in any comprehensive theory… common symptoms like craving, withdrawal, and increased tolerance are not universal features… (as cited in Clark-Doane and Tabb 5)

Its author, Robert West, defines addiction as "a repeated powerful motivation to engage in a purposeful behavior that has no survival value, acquired as a result of engaging in that behavior, with significant potential for unintended harm" (as cited in Clark-Doane and Tabb, 4-5). Here, we can already see the apparent disagreement between definitions of addiction on the basis of one's agency. West is more concerned with survival value and intention than he is with "free will."

Dependence Theory is sympathetic to the DSM-V's and West's definitions, whereby one's free will is not important when it comes to diagnosing addiction; the more pressing matter is the outcome of one's actions. The DSM-V refers to the problem an addict has with their actions as "substance-related problems." West refers to it as unintended harm, but I think West's formal definition could be laid out more simply. He brings up "survival value," which is unclear from the clinical perspective. For instance, if someone is in an abusive household and uses methamphetamines on a daily basis as my escape from the sadness caused by abuse, it becomes controversial whether methamphetamines have any survival value. I could say that, because it helps the individual escape some sadness, and thus the potential for suicide, it has survival value. On the flip side, one could deny its survival value, saying that methamphetamines, while helping

out the immediate situation, will ultimately render the user worse off than they were before. Therefore, I would like to remove the notion of survival value from the definition of addiction. There is a clearer way to say what West was trying to say, which is that addiction happens when one continues to cause and suffer from predictable, yet unintended, harm.

Dependence Theory's formal definition of addiction is this: if you continue to seek to depend on *x* for *y*, although you cannot reliably attain *y*, then you are addicted to *x*. Further, you cannot be said to be dependent on *x* in this situation because *x* is not doing what you want it to do; dependence is characterized by *reliably* getting what you expect.

Under this hypothesis, we would expect people to be able to use what society currently calls "addictive substances," and mitigate their use based upon their intention for using. In other words, if someone wanted to feel relaxed from smoking cannabis, and did so successfully between the ages of 17 and 29, then stopped at 29 because it started to make them paranoid, according to Dependence Theory, they were not addicted to cannabis—no matter how much they smoked. Pickard and I see eye-to-eye here. She hangs on to this point and specifies what exactly the possible dependence could be that is taking place between a user and a drug. She writes,

> I hypothesize that this difference in patterns of use and relapse between the general and psychiatric populations can be explained by *the purpose* served by drugs and alcohol for patients. Drugs and alcohol alleviate the severe psychological distress typically experienced by patients with comorbid psychiatric disorders and associated problems. On this hypothesis, consumption is a chosen means to ends that are rational to desire: Use is not compulsive. The upshot of this explanation is that the orthodox view of addiction as a chronic, relapsing neurobiological disease is misguided (Pickard 40; italics are hers).

Pickard is alluding to the fact that someone could develop an addiction, not in terms of compulsive use, but through compromised intentions ("the *purpose* served by drugs and alcohol"). Indeed, one might initially use drugs to alleviate symptoms of depression ("comorbid psychiatric disorders"). In doing so, they are not addicted to drugs, but dependent on drugs to

alleviate symptoms of depression—which is a valid relationship, as valid as eating a banana to satisfy hunger. They could develop an addiction to the drug if, for instance, while it was properly stopping serotonin-reuptake in the brain, it caused an unwanted amount of jitteriness as a side-effect. If this jitteriness is truly unwanted, ultimately making the patient depressed again, continued use of the drug would be considered an addiction, even if the original depressive symptoms that motivated the drug use are gone.

My definition of addiction differs from the DSM-V's insofar as it dismisses the 11 different "cognitive, behavioral, and physiological symptoms" that the DSM-V refers to as essential (see appendix). I am sure they exist among a statistical average of randomly sampled patients, and also help in gauging the specific aspects of many people's lives that the substance affects. Nevertheless, it is too easy to conflate the symptoms with the problem (or disease, as it is referred to). It is better, because it is more specific, to define the source of the problem: intention. Akin to West's definition, my definition of addiction is a function of one's intention, so defining the source of the problem relies on one's subjective experience. It might sound flimsy to rely on a patient's subjective experience when it comes to medically diagnosing someone. Doctors dream of being able to diagnose someone on objective grounds regardless of the patient's input—like diagnosing cancer or low blood pressure. However, addiction cannot be diagnosed objectively because addiction depends on understanding someone's intentions—their subjectivity.

It would be helpful to ask a patient the following two questions, and make the diagnostic assessment based on the patient's response. One—what are you depending on that thing to do? Then two—does it work? If the patient cannot pinpoint a reason for their usage, then start helping them there—the first step should be identifying the intentions driving usage. If the

patient has an identified intention and then says that they are not getting what they want, then they have an addiction; and treatment should consist of fostering dependencies. If they have an intention and are getting what they want then they are not an addict. The truth of drug usage is that if drugs reliably did what we depended on them to do, then there would be no reason to stop depending on them; addiction would not exist. A key component of conventional ideas of addiction, however, is the prevalence of denial. Thus, one might ask, "If someone is in denial, can they still be said to be an addict?" The answer: sometimes. For someone in denial to be diagnosed with addiction, someone who they depend on must 'know better.' For instance, if Person A is Person B's *close friend*, and Person A thinks that Person B is an addict because Person B's bright and happy energy has been lack-luster or otherwise off putting, for Person A to say that Person B is in denial, Person A must claim to know better than Person B. According to Dependence Theory, if their dependence is true and reliable, then these two individuals are one and the same at this moment because Person B is dependent on Person A for survival (assuming that addiction can be life-threatening). However, if Person C, someone who Person B does not depend on, tries to claim that Person B is in denial, then Person C is wrong because Person C does not know Person B. The kind of person that can accurately say that Person B is in denial must understand what Person B wants.

Part 2: All Dependence is Contingent Dependence

Since it is apparent that there is a significant difference between what happens when one depends on water versus what happens when one is addicted to methamphetamines, I would like to posit the idea that dependence and addiction are not the same things. Dependence is useful.

Addictions are not only useless, but harmful. In the words of Lauren Berlant, addiction is "cruel optimism."

> A relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing. … They become cruel only when the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially (10).

Dependence, on the other hand, is valid optimism. I will argue for a distinction between dependence and addiction that will destigmatize dependence and may help to diagnose and treat addictions. Below, I focus on alcoholism for ease of communication. However, my argument applies to addiction in a broad sense. I think that someone can become addicted to anything that they can depend on. I am going to bring up alcoholism as a representative example for discussing addiction in general because I am under the impression that everyone agrees that alcoholism is a form of addiction. Also, significant effort has gone into trying to diagnose and treat alcoholism, so there is a wealth of accessible information on it.

I will first explain the two different types of dependencies that matter in this conversation: necessary versus contingent. A necessary dependency is a must. For example, water is necessary for survival, so we must have water to survive for the entirety of our lives. However, even necessities are conditional. We only *need* water *if* we want to survive. We do not *need* to survive in the first place, so even water is not always necessary for an individual. Those providing an alcoholic with treatment assume that the alcoholic does not need alcohol to survive, but is rather contingently dependent on alcohol for something. Contingent dependencies are not necessities, but instead work on a spectrum of reliability. For instance, our apparent "need" for water relies on our contingent dependency on survival. Whether or not we want to survive is subject to change. To contingently depend on something is to act as if x will do y, even though x may not do y all the time. So, water is only necessary if we remain contingently dependent on

survival. Surviving may not always be a pleasant experience even if pleasure is the motivation for surviving. Using a thought experiment, I will explain why addicts suffer from *continued unsuccessful contingent dependency*. We will see someone planning to use something to be happier, but such usage ultimately generally makes them sad. In such a situation, it is easy to see that continued usage is an addiction. I will then praise successful contingent substance dependency, and explain why the phrase "alcohol dependent" is misleading. After that, I will compare alcohol to a parasite controlling the alcoholic, which will illustrate the extent to which the alcoholic has hijacked the person's intentions. This is important because successful contingent dependency entails getting what *you* want. In total, we will see the problem of the alcoholic is not that they are dependent on alcohol, but rather that they can no longer successfully depend on alcohol. With this knowledge, we can encourage and/or guide addicts to being successfully dependent on other things. We can further celebrate dependency both in clinical settings and non-clinical interventions like AA. Since this is not something that is already popular, I am writing this in order to promote such a philosophy in treatment programs.

Part 3: Be Specific!

To describe dependent relationships, scientists use a pair of phrases: they say that there is a dependent variable (y) and independent variable (x), where the value of y is under the influence of x. Our survival (y) is under the influence of water (x). If I am trying to find out whether sunflowers grow more efficiently under purple, yellow, or green light, the different kinds of light are independent variables (x) while the growth of the sunflower is the dependent variable (y). In writing the results of this experiment, it would not suffice to say, "My study shows that sunflowers depend on light" because that does not elucidate how to utilize the proposed

dependent relationship. Readers would not know what kind of light positively or negatively affects the flower, or what part of the sunflower is affected. *I would have to be specific*. Claims about dependency must include the domain: z depends on *x to do y*. I could conclude that sunflowers depend on purple light *to grow more efficiently*. That is useful. I mention this because too often I will hear people say things like "That person is dependent on nicotine," or "You kids are so dependent on your phones." These claims are only half-claims! What is that person dependent on nicotine *to do*? What are the kids depending on their phone applications *to do*? Thinking in this way is one of the most important features of Dependence Theory because it allows one to assess the success or failure of their dependencies. Does the nicotine do what you are depending on it to do? Are the phones providing you with what you are depending on them to provide? This is how we assess addiction.

Part 4: Contingent Substance Dependency Failing

Next is a thought experiment that shows contingent dependency failing. We will see that this failure sets the stage for addiction. If one keeps participating in a failed contingent dependency, then one is an addict. This exposes an important difference between dependence and addiction. Dependencies can be fleeting, lasting merely one moment and then never happening again—like depending on your friend to buy you a candy bar one day. Addictions are necessarily durational. It is not a simple matter to determine how many tries it takes before one knows that a dependence will not work, and thus when addiction becomes official. Addiction comes from unreliability, and reliability is a statistic assessed from large enough sample sizes. I am unsure what counts as a large enough sample size as a universal standard. I do not think that a sufficient sample size can be standardized because there is too much variability between subjective

tolerance and risk-assessment. I would like to think that, at some point, one (or someone that this individual depends on) ends up “pretty sure” that a desired dependence does not work. In that case, continued existence starts to be an addiction. In my personal experience, people who suffer from usage of something are aware that their usage is the problem.

Let's say that I depend on the produce from my garden to survive and that I love the sight of sunflowers. I contingently depend on sunflowers to make me happy, so I grow them in my garden. I read the above study about sunflowers and am now growing all my sunflowers with purple light. As the season progresses, I notice that my sunflowers are thriving while everything else suffers. The sight of the sunflowers still makes me happy. However, they are stealing the resources of my produce, restricting the growth of my food. Therefore, even though, in the past, I had successfully contingently depended on sunflowers to make me happy, they are now letting me down due to my inadvertent starvation. If I choose to remain starved to continue growing these sunflowers, then I am effectively making myself less happy than I was before in an effort to be happier. Since the outcome and the intent do not match, I am addicted to growing sunflowers.

I would like to point out that what happened in the above thought experiment was an indirect disjunction between intent and outcome that can be visualized as a corruption of distally relevant dependencies. My intent was happiness. My method was sunflowers. What got damaged was my supply of food. The sunflowers indeed made me happy, so how come my intentions were not met? Food is a distally relevant dependency concerning my ascertainment of happiness, so if growing sunflowers damages my food, my happiness goal cannot be met.

If destruction *is* my goal, then I am not an addict, but rather depending on sunflowers to destroy myself. For someone to be considered an addict, destruction is not their goal when using.

In growing my sunflowers, my goal is happiness. Thus, I probably would try to stop using the purple grow light. If I end up using it again, no matter how long after refraining, it is a characteristic of my addiction as long as I invariably find myself starved and therefore unhappy in the process.

Let us now return to substance use. Contingent substance dependency is a welcomed phenomenon. Again, it is too broad to simply say, "I am dependent on alcohol." We have to include the domain. Somebody could say "I am depending on alcohol to relax," or "I am depending on amphetamines to make me attentive." If these claims produced consistent outcomes, then Dependence Theory would agree that such substance usages count as dependencies. Indeed, not everyone who uses alcohol or amphetamines is an addict, and other (more socially accepted) substances are used for the same ends. For instance, I am not addicted to alcohol. When I do drink it, I contingently depend on it to relax in a certain way. This is why drinking is referred to as "being under the influence." It has some control over the body. The same goes for any domain someone may depend on. I may depend on apples to make me attentive, or music to make me relax. When I get bad headaches, I may depend on Adderall daily to relieve symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. If I have a severe enough anxiety disorder, I may depend on Xanax to help stop the onset of a panic attack. We often appreciate being under the influence of, being dependent on, things. As I discuss in the first chapter, not only do we appreciate it, but dependence on things is what allows us to be ourselves. Thus, being dependent on drugs and alcohol is a welcomed, or often celebrated, phenomenon.

Part 5: Why “Alcohol Dependence” is a Misleading Phrase

Even though substance dependency is encouraged, people suffering from alcohol use disorders (something that is not encouraged) will often, in scientific papers, be referred to as alcohol “dependent” (Prashanth and Sowmaya 67-75; Gerhant and Olajossy 245-258; Mejldal et al. 1-11; Stojanović and Stojanović 680-687; Higuchi et al. 431-438). There is an official alcohol dependence scale (Mejldal et al. 1). The DSM-V does not say ‘substance dependency’ in its own writing per se but refers to papers that do (“Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders”; McLellan et al. 1689-95; Chen et al. 319-322). According to Dependence Theory, this framing of dependence is misleading because it uses a functionally useless definition of dependence. The reliability of the alleged “dependency” is not present within the alcoholic. In other words, the problem is that addictions are useless and harmful, while dependencies are useful and helpful; it is a contradiction to be an alcohol-dependent alcoholic. If addictions were utilizable, then we would not want to treat them. What makes addiction harmful is that it is “a craving,” or at least a desire, “for the drug which caused the disease, and poisoning by the drug” (Hickman 113). Dependence, on the other hand, is characterized by strong reliability. To crave something reliable makes sense. One may crave water or crave a good workout and, according to Dependence Theory, that is not a signal for addiction. An addict might experience craving because they believe their coveted domain is reliable somehow. Therefore, if someone is said to be dependent on alcohol, the idea is that they depend on it to accomplish a specific task and that they can rely on alcohol to achieve that task. Alcoholics, however, cannot accomplish their goals with alcohol. Alcoholics lack control over themselves when alcohol is involved. If they could accomplish their goals with alcohol, then they would not be suffering from alcohol use.

I am not saying that those researchers who use the phrase "alcohol-dependent" are one-hundred percent incorrect. Alcoholics do *try* to depend on alcohol to be happy. They may feel happiness from the drunkenness that accompanies drinking. Consider how, even though the sunflowers caused me starvation (in the first thought experiment), I still got happy when I saw them. The same phenomenon could happen to an alcoholic with alcohol. However, the problem is that they will damage more important areas of life (a.k.a distally relevant dependencies). Sometimes, alcohol kills the alcoholic. Such a cost is not the intention of getting drunk for the alcoholic. Thus, while it is not entirely inaccurate that alcoholics can depend on alcohol for happiness, it is not the dominant role alcohol plays in the life of an alcoholic. Therefore, "alcohol dependent" is a misleading phrase when referring to alcoholics. It is more practically accurate to say that an alcoholic cannot depend on alcohol.

I will now provide a thought experiment that will show unsuccessful dependency on alcohol setting the stage for alcoholism. Let's say that I have started drinking a glass of wine every evening, and it has been two years. My life has gone undamaged. I intend to drink for relaxation, and it works—I end up more relaxed. So far, my drinking is a dependency because I am accomplishing what I say I am going to accomplish with drinking. However, suddenly my alcohol consumption is making me feel sick every morning, which I am not happy about. This sickness makes it harder to be a caring partner and do my job well, both of which matter deeply to me. Still, I drink every night, going out of my way to make sure there is sufficient alcohol available, even if that means missing my favorite show. If the collateral damage were in areas of my life that I did not care about to begin with, then it would not be a problem. The problem is that my life has gotten worse from drinking—defeating the purpose of drinking.

If people start getting worried that I am developing an addictive relationship with alcohol, they might say "You are starting to seem alcohol-dependent." Remember though: that claim is too broad. We have to define the contingency's domain. Perhaps what they mean to say is "You are starting to seem dependent on alcohol to make you happy instead of depending on the other things in your life to make you happy." If alcohol truly made someone happy, then their relationship is not an addictive one, but a dependent one. Even if they were to leave the support of other people to cherish their interaction with alcohol alone, on the surface, that would not be ontologically separable from doing the same thing with anything else. The true problem is that I am depending on alcohol for happiness and it is letting me down. If I had been drinking to avoid stress, then stress has been exacerbated by my drinking. If I had been drinking to celebrate joy, then I am ultimately ruining the joy. Thus, since I can no longer accomplish any goal that I tell myself I am accomplishing by using alcohol, I can no longer depend on alcohol. If I still drink, then I am not alcohol-dependent, but instead suffering from alcohol addiction. That is how unsuccessful contingent dependency on alcohol can become alcoholism.

Part 6: Alcohol as a Parasite

The transition from successful contingent dependency to unsuccessful contingent dependency and finally to addiction can be viewed as a transition from mutualism to parasitism. Unsuccessful contingent dependency is not necessarily addiction. Someone may try to depend on something a few times, decide that it does not work for them, and thus they would have found an unsuccessful contingent dependency. It becomes an addiction when the individual *keeps going back*. This situation necessarily favors the parasite, which, in this case, is the object of addiction. In healthy drinking, the relationship between the alcohol and the drinker is mutually dependent.

Both parties act as dependent and independent variables to each other. The user gets what it wants (drunk) while the drink gets what it "wants" (sold). It sounds like anthropomorphizing alcohol to say that it wants to be sold, but through the metaphor, what is really referred to is to the companies that sell the alcohol that thrive from their alcohol-dependent and alcoholic clients. In untreated alcoholism, alcohol has the advantage: the user remains stressed while the alcohol remains sold. It is then a small step to see how an alcoholic is being used by the alcohol more than the other way around. As long as the user uses alcohol to alleviate the stress (either directly or indirectly) caused by the alcohol, alcohol works like a parasite, becoming part of the alcoholic's life and sucking the person of their resources. AA emphasizes this parasitism as members of AA admit the surrender of their willpower to alcohol. The very first step of the twelve steps in AA is, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable" ("Alcoholics Anonymous | Learn About The 12 Steps of AA.") This switch from mutualism to parasitism marks the switch from successful contingent dependency to addiction and highlights how addiction is characterized by loss of one's intentions to the 'intentions' of the parasite.

Part 7: Diagnosing and Treating Addiction

One point of misunderstanding that Dependence Theory elucidates is if people who used to have a drinking problem, now do not drink, but who still rely on the tools they used to quit drinking, are still addicts. I am suggesting a shift in the conceptualization of treatment, whereby dependency is the remedy to addiction. With this frame of mind, addiction is treated using dependencies. So if someone used to suffer, but now does not, then they no longer *suffer* from their addiction. In the same way that your house will get cold in the winter if you turn off the

heat, they might still have the potential for addiction if they stop using the remedy. However, to say that a warm house is cold simply because it *could* be cold if you turn off the heat is terribly misleading, so I do not think that someone who has been sober for a while can be said to be an alcoholic. Rather, they are no longer an addict but are, like everyone else, a person with dependencies.

I know people who, years ago, suffered from alcohol use disorders. They recovered through AA. These days, one of them (I will call him Don) claims to be "cured" of addiction. The other (I will call her Mia), conversely, in accordance with AA, says that she will always be an addict. Neither of them has used alcohol in over ten years. How could Mia be an alcoholic and yet not be experiencing symptoms of alcohol use disorder? I would say that she is dependent, not on alcohol, but on treatment. She is *successfully depending on* the twelve steps to achieve sobriety. Mia feels herself to be an addict because she is dependent on the program that helped her achieve prolonged sobriety to keep her in the mental state conducive to sustained sobriety. The change, therefore, that I am promoting, would be for Mia to say, "I am dependent on the twelve steps, or my spiritual maintenance, to not suffer from addiction."

I want to shift the focus from abstinence (independence) to dependence. I do not want to do away with abstinence. Indeed, addicts should abstain from their domains of addiction. However, such awareness comes with a concentration on dependence. It is not that Don is cured and never needs treatment, or that Mia is an alcoholic. By celebrating dependence in this equation, we say that they both no longer suffer from addiction, contingent on the upkeep of what they are now dependent on. For Don, he claims to have been delivered from God the day before he decided to be clean and sober, so Don is God-dependent. If he is found to relapse, it

would be useful to identify what Don depends on. Then we could not only encourage sobriety, but also the rehabilitation of reliable dependencies.

Conclusion:

Now that we have this theory of failed subject-object dependency becoming an addiction, we can apply this to previous scenarios: addiction to self. If we take seriously the notion that you cannot avoid dependence, then the pursuit to mainly pursue independence is an addiction.

We can apply this lesson to social settings as well. Often, I hear the idea of dependence in shameful social contexts. People admonishing the "codependency" between people, or admonishing one's dependence on companies. I will argue that the common use of the term "codependency" is better termed "co-addiction." Dependence Theory suggests that, if we could cultivate our dependencies instead of shaming them, we could better identify and treat our addictions. In the next chapter, I will describe how interpersonal dependence compares to object dependence.

CHAPTER 3: Subject-Subject Dependence

Introduction:

Think about someone you depend on who also depends on you. What do you depend on each other for? Dependence Theory defines a dependence between two subjects as the relations that are *consensually agreed upon between the two subjects*. If Person A is trying to depend on Person B but does not care for Person B's consent, then Person A would be treating Person B as an object rather than a subject. Dependence Theory would not consider that to be a dependence between two subjects. Nonconsensual dependence, or objectification, can be an example of subject-subject dependence that fails. I will ultimately argue that true subject-subject *addiction* is impossible. In other words, I will argue that love, defined as subject-subject dependence, is not an addiction. When subject-subject dependence fails, what we get instead are either objects addicted to subjects (object-subject addiction) or objects addicted to objects (object-object addiction). One cannot find subjects addicted to subjects.

Part 1: Am I a Subject or an Object?

The body is composed of objects—cells. However, we indeed have subjective experiences. Thus when it comes to having a relationship with another person, you have the option to treat the person as an object, as a subject, or a mixture of each. One choice is not always better than the other. Considering violence, it is easy to speculate why objectifying people could be bad. Subjectification is less of a concern, so I want to address the shortcomings of subjectification in a person-to-person relationship just to show that both options—both objectification and subjectification—are worth considering when you decide to interact with

someone. Think of a child, for instance, who is wanting to run next to the edge of a cliff for fun or unknowingly eat poison. In situations like that, it is in the best interest of the parent(s) to decline the requests of their child, assuming the parent(s) have the best interest of the child in mind.

Thinking back to selfhood being a matter of dependence, Dependence Theory shows us why the legal permissions of children are subject to the consent of their guardian(s)—children depend on their guardians—they are the same individual with regard to the specific instances society deems too difficult of a decision for minors to handle alone. They are not the same individuals entirely. Rather, they are each like half of a Venn diagram, where the overlapping section of the Venn diagram represents the parts of the people that are the same. Thus, there are reasonable situations in which it is in the best interest of the child for the parent(s) to ignore their child's consent. In situations wherein the child puts its life at risk, Dependence Theory would predict that the parent is thinking, *this child does not actually want to die/I don't want this child to die/this child is going to be the death of me!* As I have defined it, ignoring consent amounts to treating someone as an object, so the parent here is *healthily* objectifying their child on account of the child being an extension of themself.

When we imagine a parent who is addicted to their child, we imagine either a helicopter parent, which is someone who overly-objectifies their child, or we imagine someone who spoils their child, which is to overly indulge the subjective experience of the child. Thus, it is extremely important to recognize where both objectification and subjectification are valuable or damaging.

It appears that sometimes we need to be objectified and sometimes we want to be subjectified. Thus, whether or not you are treating someone as an object or subject cannot alone be enough to constitute an addiction. We will always need to know more about the story. For

example, while slavery is a form of objectification, slavemasters were not addicted to slavery on the account of slavemasters objectifying their slaves. If slavemasters depended on slavery to make life better for land-owning white men, then only upon life becoming worse for land-owning white men as a result of slavery did the slavery prove unreliable and thus addictive. From the slavemasters' perspectives, they were not addicts, but dependent on their slaves for labor. This shows us that not all dependencies are good from all perspectives—in fact, some are unforgivably reprehensible from every perspective but that of the subject within the dependency. Nonetheless, they still do not count as addictions, since the intentions of the subject are what determine whether or not something is an addiction. From the perspective of the subject within a subject-object dependence, dependency is good. If that "object" is actually an objectified subject, then this situation could easily be reprehensible from the objectified subject's perspective. Objects that are not objectified subjects cannot be reprehensive. What we have learned from these distinctions between objectification and subjectification is that subjects can be treated similarly to objects, so it makes defining a true subject-subject dependence elusive.

Part 2: Object-Subject Addiction

What differs the most between subjects and objects, according to Dependency Theory, is the process of becoming dependent on them. Failure to secure consent from a subject is enough to compromise the dependency and set the stage for addiction, while securing consent from an object is nonsense. During the process of Person B becoming addicted to Person A, Person B would be objectified through Person A's lack of care for Person B's consent. This is important because it signifies that subject-subject dependencies, when failed, can set the stage for object-subject addictions, whereby an *object becomes addicted to a subject*.

Note here that this is not *subject-object addiction,* whereby a subject is addicted to an object. The last chapter covers subject-object addiction. We are currently considering the opposite. When subject-subject dependence fails, people can become objects who are addicted to subjects. These people who have been objectified are not *solely* objects. Rather, they are *objectified* subjects. Their relationship to objects who bear no subjectivity is solely that neither's consent gets considered by subjects who depend on them. The addicted party counts as an object in this scenario because the subject that they are addicted to is treating the addicted party as an object.

Remember that what sets the stage for addiction is unsuccessful contingent dependence. So I will now present a thought experiment that illustrates the failure of subject-subject dependence. We will see it become object-subject addiction.

Imagine that I own a sunflower shop. Also, imagine that your favorite thing is sunflowers. I have noticed you frequenting my shop. Your passing through my shop is the extent of our relationship thus far. You depend on me to open the store according to the displayed schedule and have sunflowers. I depend on you to come by during business hours. So far, the situation is object-object dependency. I have presented no evidence that either party is concerned with the other's *consent*. I could be forced into this kind of work, or you could be forced into coming, or both. Who's to say? The point at which this relationship could transition into the evidently mutually subjective realm is if, for instance, you ask me for a job. If I say yes, then you and I will have taken concern with each other's consent, presenting us with the employee-employer subject-subject dependence.

If I hire you, you will have documented your consent to certain terms and conditions (i.e. you must arrive to work on time and be prepared to work). We would have an understanding that

your failure to meet the standards that we set at the start results in me firing you. This type of dependence is quite standard in workplaces, and is fundamental to any kind of contractual agreement, including social contracts. And, to add to the security of this contract, as it says in the Declaration of Independence,

> ...That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness ("Declaration of Independence: A Transcription.").

Thus, not only do I have to consent to you, you have to consent to me. In order for me to hire you, you would need to continuously provide consent to my form of government. If our relationship proves to be dependable, then that means there is a junction between our intentions and outcomes.

Let's say you show up to work late one day. You come running through the door, dripping in sweat, huffing and puffing, and nearly overly apologetic for your lateness. This is the first time this has happened, you seem in your right mind, and so I forgive you and you remain hired. However, this was not part of the deal. The subject-subject dependency has been breached and the stage for addiction is now being set. Let's say that the next week you arrive late again, slightly less sweaty, and slightly less apologetic. I still forgive you. This process repeats. At this point, based on what I had consented to at the beginning, I should fire you. You have proven to be unreliable. Also at this point, you treat me like an object because you are ignoring what I had consented to. If I do not fire you, then you are still getting what you want. You are still a subject from my perspective, but according to Dependence Theory, I am an object addicted to a subject at the cost of my business. Your objectifying me does not cause me to be an addict, but it does set the stage for it because your objectification of me is not in my best interest, but in yours. I

would officially become an addict as long as I keep you hired and can predict that you will be unreliable. For this to truly be an addiction, there cannot be any valid reason for your behavior; there can be no reason to forgive you—no sympathy. If there was a valid reason for break in contract, the situation would be more complicated than simply calling it addiction. Since you are indeed getting what you want from me, again, you are not the addict. You are using me. All I would have to do is fire you in order to end my addiction. Thus, as long as I care about you working for me more than I do about the success of my business, and your best interest conflicts with the best interest of my business, but my business is actually what's supporting me the most and what is most important to sustain, then I am addicted to you at the cost of my business.

What we ended up with is an object-subject addiction, where I became an objectified subject (due to your objectification of me), and you remained a subject. But remember, "your objectification of me" does not eradicate my subjectivity from existence. Since my subjectivity indeed still exists, to break from the addiction is to reclaim my own subjectivity, which has become objectified.

Part 3: Object-Object Addiction

We can have subject-object addiction, as I detailed in the last chapter. We can have object-subject addiction, as I explained in the last section. To understand the workings of object-object addiction, let's consider an alternate version of the story of Bonnie and Clyde.

Imagine Bonnie begins to see Clyde and is considering living with him full time—deep in the life of crime. They talk it through a lot, really mulling over all the risks and confirming each other's intentions with respect to the relationship. At this point, the situation presents us with a subject-subject dependency. Now let's say that, after a few months, Bonnie changes her mind

and wants to end things with Clyde, but she is afraid to tell him. Clyde doesn't check in with her about her wishes. At this point, both people have now been objectified: Bonnie has not established Clyde's consent to remain with someone who does not want to be with him, and Clyde has not continuously established Bonnie's consent to be with him. Neither are consenting to the situation, so subjectification has stopped. This situation is not that same as a tacit agreement whereby two parties continue on in a relationship without regularly explicitly asking consent. In a tacit agreement, the parties involved each *would still agree* if asked explicitly. In our current situation with Bonnie and Clyde—object-object addiction—Bonnie would not still agree to the relationship if Clyde genuinely asked her what she would like to do.

It is not an object-object *dependence* because, again, they are not getting what they intended to get; dependence is characterized by getting what you want. Thus, as they remain together, their relationship to each other is an object-object *addiction*. In this situation, both parties are partaking in an unreliable dependence, and so it is up to them as a team to subjectify each other as a remedy. If Bonnie became concerned with Clyde's consent, but Clyde remained unconcerned with Bonnie's, then we are left with object-subject addiction. Bonnie would be addicted to Clyde. In reverse, if Clyde became concerned with Bonnie's consent, but Bonnie remained unconcerned with Clyde's, then since Bonnie is the one who initially wants to leave, the relationship would end. Essentially, if Bonnie took concern with her own subjectivity by leaving Clyde, she would end her addiction.

How would that have looked if Bonnie and Clyde were in love? Imagine that Bonnie and Clyde are happily partnered up and living the life of crime. They have completely abandoned their other relationships to remain side-by-side and commit crimes. Since none of their goals are aligned with altruism or social conscientiousness, the harm they cause is condemnable for many

reasons, but they are not addicted to each other. They are rather subjectively dependent on each other for happiness, and their love fulfills their intentions for it. From an outside perspective they may be condemnable, but they are not addicts.

Part 4: Codependency

Many psychologists and psychoanalysts have written about the importance of dependency between people. I am going to draw on Freud, Winnicott, and Fairbairn. There is also a popular idea of codependency. These two situations—dependency between people versus codependency—are often considered two different kinds of dependency. For example, a child may depend on their mother, and this dependency would be deemed socially acceptable. On the other hand, two people who mutually reinforce addictive behaviors in each other would together be deemed codependent, and society would condemn them for it. I would like to protest this use of the term "codependency," and I would like to offer an alternative term in place of codependency— "co-addiction."

I would first like to discuss the relationship between a mother and child in order to show how intense healthy dependency between people can be. This is not to say that all dependencies between people are so intense, but rather partly to show that the intensity of a dependency is not a sign of unhealthiness. Among Freud's psychoanalytic theories, he emphasized the oral stage of development, whereby a baby is dependent on the mother for consumption. In order to move on to the next stage of development, the child must learn separation from the mother. If you have ever interacted with a baby, you would know that babies do not ask for your consent. They just demand things, and thus depend on the mother as an object rather than as a subject. Of course a mother will consent (most of the time), but it is not because the baby asked them to, but because

the baby objectively depends on this mother—the mother *is* the baby in whatever features constitute this dependency. Indeed, the mother and the baby have other dependencies that they do not share. Taken in totality, they are different people. However, in the specific instances of the baby being in peril, the mother knows that nobody else other than she will save the baby. The mother's own ability to be self aware includes keeping the baby alive. Between mothers and babies, the overlap of the Venn diagram is large.

> The mother is prepared in the last trimester of pregnancy for this deeply biological, evolutionarily honed function by her natural absorption with the baby, whose growth inside her is crowding her own internal organs, compromising her own mobility, her own digestive and eliminative processes, her very capacity to breathe. She becomes increasingly withdrawn from her own subjectivity, from her own interest in the world, and more and more focussed on the baby's movements, on the baby's vitality. The final stages of pregnancy become symbolically emblematic of, and a literal preparation for, the mother's supplying in the earliest months of life an environment that nurtures the growth of the infant's self. In providing the environment for the infant, the mother finds her own subjectivity, her own personal interests, her own rhythms and concerns fading into the background; she adapts her movements, her activities, her very existence to the baby's wishes and needs (Mitchell and Black 125).

Dependence Theory lines up with Winnicott's understanding of how mothers become their babies (Mitchell and Black 115). Think back to the child who is going to run off the side of the cliff. Dependence Theory asserts that, looking at this act alone, the two individuals are the same. Again, it is not that all their dependencies have become equal. However, whatever dependencies are shared between them indeed count as overlaps in identity (much like a Venn diagram). Dependence Theory would go as far as to say that it is just as much the child's action as it was the mother's action for the mother to save the child's life.

One's drive to depend on things coupled with the commotion of existence is why Fairbairn says that the first anxiety we experience is separation anxiety. Everything is fine until we realize we have to change domains. Fortunately, this anxiety is about something that good parenting should mostly thwart because the actual separation at hand should only be a partial

separation. “Inadequate parenting” will stop the “infant [already] wired for harmonious interaction and nontraumatic development” from internalizing the motherly relationship. Internalizing the motherly relationship is what is needed to provide the capacity for experiencing it elsewhere, despite the anxiety (Mitchell and Black 114). Without the proper parenting, we either get adults who want too many dependencies, provide too many dependencies, do not provide enough dependency, or do not want enough dependency. Such outcomes will result in subject-subject dependencies that fail more often in later life.

In maturity, infants with these sorts of unhealthy dependencies may indeed find partners. What do we call these partnerships? A clingy, spoiled brat may find an overly-sacrificial, and clingy, partner. It is common for relationships like this to be classified as “codependent.” We say that the spoiled brat depends on the willingness of their partner to sacrifice themselves in order to maintain being spoiled. We also say that the overly-sacrificial partner depends on the clinginess of the brat somehow. Then, since they each depend on each other to maintain their respective issues, we call them “codependent.” However, I think that the relationship between these two people presents us with an unrepresentative prototype for codependency. As long as they depend on each other to reinforce *issues*, which means that they are encouraging traits in each other that are harmful, then Dependence Theory would call this relationship a co-addiction. Codependency is quite the contrary on this front. Much as cooperation could mean an operation between two people, coincidence could mean an incident between two people, coinhabit could imply a habitat between two people, codependency could mean a dependency between two people. Thus, subject-subject dependency is codependency; and codependency, in Dependency Theory’s terms, is healthy love.

People who suffer from co-addiction might experience something they see to be love. I do not want to say that that is not love. Rather, I would like to assert that co-addiction is unhealthy while codependency is healthy love.

I am going to show how the term codependency is currently used in popular discourse in order to portray what would better be referred to as co-addiction. It is damaging our understanding of dependence to use the term codependent when referring to co-addiction. For example, "the term codependency is most often identified with Alcoholics Anonymous and the realization that the Alcoholism was not solely about the addict but also about the family and friends who constitute a network for the alcoholic" (as cited in "Codependency."). Therefore, codependency is most often identified with dependents upkeeping alcohol addiction; thus it is really a co-addiction. The addict depends on the family to facilitate suffering less from addiction, then the family "overhelps," somehow causing the addict to suffer from their addiction again. Referring to this situation as "codependency" makes people avoid any relationship that resembles reliance on another person. However, I believe that reliance on another person, which is subject-subject dependency, a.k.a codependency, is one of the greatest things about life—it is healthy love.

The addiction might appear to only be on one side of a co-addiction, but both parties would be suffering from addiction in co-addiction. Thinking of AA's version of co-addiction, if this were the first time that the family tried to help their loved one but accidentally made things worse, then it is safe to say that the family is not suffering from addiction. However, if the alcoholic keeps depending on their family to help and the family keeps trying to help but ends up making things worse, then the addict is addicted to seeking help from the family, and the family is addicted to their doomed quest to help. Co-addiction is a two-way street. If the addict sought

help elsewhere after realizing that the family is addicted to a certain way of "helping," then the co-addiction would stop. Conversely, if the family tried different methods for helping the addict, then the co-addiction would stop. What we would have instead is a set of people who reliably do what the alcoholic wants and vice-versa—thus a dependency shared between two people, also known as codependency.

One source for this popular view of codependency may be the DSM. There was once a very explicit attempt to add codependency into the DSM-III:

> While Timmen Cermak, M.D., proposed that co-dependency be listed as a personality disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III-R; American Psychiatric Association, 1987), it was not accepted by the committee and, as such, no medical consensus exists on the definition of codependency. With no definition, the term is easily applicable to many behaviors and has been overused by some self-help authors and support communities. Some clinicians think that the term *codependency* has been overused by the general populace and labeling a patient as codependent can be confusing and may even shame them rather than help them focus on how their traumas shape their current relationships ("Codependency.").

While codependency was not accepted into the DSM, The DSM-V contains a diagnosis for Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD), which "is a pattern of submissive and clinging behavior related to an excessive need to be taken care of." ("Personality Disorders."). To be diagnosed with DPD, one must exhibit five of eight factors (See Appendix). However, each of the factors in the DSM-5 for DPD refers to what Dependence Theory would call an *unreliable* dependency. For instance, the first one is: "Has difficulty making everyday decisions without an excessive amount of advice and reassurance from others" (DSM-5). The keyword is "excessive." Making everyday decisions can come with advice and reassurance without you being diagnosable for DPD. Since disorders are necessarily out of the ordinary, the desire for advice and reassurance must be out of the ordinary to the degree that it becomes impractical. If that is the case, then what we find is *failed* subject-subject dependence. This individual is not suffering from

dependence but from holding onto dependencies that are not functional. If you try to make everyday decisions using excessive advice and reassurance, you will not be able to make decisions because people will not be reliable enough to validate you so often. Therefore, according to Dependence Theory, due to the disjunct between intention and outcome, this individual has an addiction to people.

When people suffer from Bipolar Personality Disorder, their personality is considered bipolar. When someone is diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, they are considered anxious. When someone is diagnosed with Dependent Personality Disorder, their personality is considered dependent. This is practically wrong though, which is why the name—DPD— is misleading. In practice, their personality is not dependent. It is *addictive* because each of the factors of DPD refers to an *unreliable* dependency. If an individual is involved in multiple unreliable dependencies on people, then, according to Dependence Theory, they are not dependent on, but addicted to people on multiple counts.

The current treatment for DPD is "to make the individual more independent and help them form healthy relationships with the people around them" ("Dependent Personality Disorder"). According to Dependence Theory, we really do not want the individual to be "more independent" since the individual's problem, to begin with, is a lack of dependence. By "more independent" and "healthy relationships" they mean that treatment will help the person work for more reliable dependencies. According to Dependence Theory, independence is not conducive to healthy relationships, so I would suggest treating someone with DPD by guiding the individual to develop reliable dependencies.

Conclusion:

One major conclusion is that subject-subject dependence is, at least self-referentially, *a good thing*. If you are in love, then you should never be forced to "treat" your relationship in the way one "treats" an addiction. People may say that they do not like your relationship, but as long as the relationship is mutually consensual, then the relationship is at least not an addiction.

Another main conclusion here, in the spirit of destigmatizing dependence, is that people should stop using the word "codependence" when they are referring to "co-addiction." Based on its prefix and suffix, codependence ought to mean dependence between two parties. It is sad to see subject-subject dependence shamed by those averse to addiction who have adopted the use of the word "codependence" when they are referring to co-addiction. If this facet of Dependence Theory gets dismissed, and we treat the idea of subject-subject dependence with dismay and avoidance, we will fail to encourage healthy relationships between people. It is extremely important to be able to identify types of addiction that exist between people, and it is equally important to have someone reliable to depend on.

Perhaps separation anxiety is what keeps us from wanting or liking dependence. We do not like having something to lose. Wanting little to depend on is a desire to deliberately lessen one's weaknesses. If you had no coworkers, lovers, friends, or family, you might have few weaknesses, but I would argue that such a lifestyle is hardly enjoyable.

CHAPTER 4: Subject-Company Dependence

Introduction:

Let's start with a question that poses a counterargument to Dependence Theory. Since, according to Dependence Theory, intentions are necessary in order to assess the success of a dependence, can someone be an addict if they do not have an intention? If Dependence Theory cannot answer this, then it would seem that Dependence Theory is unable to account for a vast number of situations in which people do not have explicit intentions, but act nonetheless. I argue that those who do not have (or know) their intentions are *the most suited* to become addicts, relative to those who are aware of their intentions. When those who are without intentions become addicts, they involuntarily, or unintentionally, contract unreliable intentions. Relative to those with established intentions, those without established intentions more easily develop new intentions that pave the way to addiction, due to the power of suggestion. I will call this process *induced appetite*: whereby if you don't know what you want, someone can bring you to want something. I will argue that, when it comes to subject-company dependence, the process of induced appetite is both inevitable and can cause object-company addictions. We cannot get rid of this process, so it is in our best interest to be aware of it in order to minimize the negative consequences. I will also argue that commercial capitalism induces appetite on an unmanageable scale—often nonconsensually pushing unreliable dependencies onto people—and thereby facilitates a system that can make a profit from addicted consumers. This is important because I have thus far associated the development of addiction with having an explicit intention, but here we will see that a lack of intention expedites one's proclivity toward company addiction, via the unintentional development of new intentions. Thus, in order to support commercial capitalism

without simultaneously facilitating the capitalization, and thus maintenance, of addiction, one must make reliability their top priority.

The way that a company gets someone interested in being dependent on the company, like working for it or buying from it, is by selling people an identity. According to Dependence Theory, this makes sense because all dependencies contribute to identity. Think of Pepsi commercials, for instance. Naturally, Pepsi is ultimately selling containers filled with Pepsi, but that is not what their commercials advertise. A Pepsi commercial is dedicated to showing an audience *the kinds of people* who drink Pepsi. They'll show, for instance, Kendall Jenner drinking Pepsi next to police officers who, among an array of talented minorities, are enjoying a block party (Yadav). Pepsi hopes that the people they show are *you*. If you see yourself with a bunch of other people you like all drinking Pepsi, it might make a container of Pepsi sound more important to what it means to be your best *you*. They are selling you an attractive version of what they want you to see as your future self. They want you to desperately latch on to whatever products they tell you are good, hardy, and reliable—just like you are. Pepsi commercials get you sold by an identity, not the chemical contents of the soda. If they wanted you to care about the chemical contents of the soda, the commercial would be about the nutritional value of carbonated water, high fructose corn syrup, and sugar—which is a hard bargain to drive.

Part 1: Induced Appetite

If you don't know what you want, someone can bring you to want something. That's induced appetite, and companies or corporate entities have the opportunity to take advantage of it the most of anything else I can think of. Commercial capitalism induces appetites by hijacking

the intentions of consumers. There are two main ways that commercial capitalism interacts negatively with one's intentions: what I call "honest scams" and "dishonest scams."

An honest scam is a scam that blatantly reveals what it has stolen. For example, at first, you may feel that you are buying that seven-day cruise of the Bahamas, but gosh darn it, the money was filtered into some untraceable grifter's bank account. You lost money, and you know exactly how much you lost. The grifter does not expect you to come away from this scam thinking that you are still going to the Bahamas, or that you have not lost money, or that you have lost more than money and a trip to the Bahamas, so this scam is an honest one. I believe we find it relatively easy to recognize these types of scams because of their explicitness. Perhaps they are difficult to avoid, but after the scam is complete, they are easy to recognize.

Dishonest scams are more elusive. It is this elusiveness that allows dishonest scams alone to induce appetites. Honest scams cannot induce appetites because they are too explicit.

Before I move on, I would like to emphasize how important it is that we are considering *commercial* capitalism in this discussion of scams. It is *commercial* in that people mass-advertise products. Advertisements include those on television, billboards, newspapers, computers, and so on. This grand form of promotion of oneself (one's products/company/brand) exists within capitalism. Within capitalism, not only can one mass-advertise themself, but one may advertise "better" or "worse" than other people. If one does "well" enough, they can use significantly more money than other people and, as a positive feedback loop, continue to increase their advertisements and profit. The more this happens, the more they profit. Chomsky and Herman agree that such power of propaganda means that "The global balance of power has shifted decisively toward commercial systems" (Chomsky and Herman xv). The bottom line is that we currently live in an economic system that encourages both genuine betterment and deceitful

competition. These two things together—genuine betterment and deceitful competition—allow there to be the existence of scams because scams rely on someone's desire for genuine betterment coupled with the market's drive to deceive.

A dishonest scam is a scam that never wants you to think about everything that it has taken from you. It wants you to think it has taken *x,* when really it has taken both *x* and *y*. You may *never* notice that you are losing *y*. Once you do notice, however, you need to decide if you are going to continue depending on this unreliable company. The company is now unreliable because it was giving you more than you sought for without your consent. If you keep depending on this company, and the company remains unreliable, then you are now addicted to the company. Back when you thought you were just getting *x*, before you knew that you were being given both *x and y*, you were not an addict. In that stage, your appetite was being induced. Once you became aware of your induced appetite, found yourself displeased with it, but remained connected to the company still, you became an addict. For instance, imagine that all the fat-content that would be healthy for you to have in one day is in the double-shot pumpkin vanilla latte from Starbucks that you have each morning. It is not that you don't know that statistic. It is that Starbucks does not want you to drive away from the drive-thru thinking about it. Starbucks steals the space in your body that other foods later in the day should have had, and undermines your intention of consuming the right amount of fat. This is a dishonest scam because Starbucks wants you to think that it only asked for your money. To be fair, I do not think that Starbucks would deny that it occupies this nutritional space in your body. It is simply that they do not *promote* that particular nutrition fact. Yet this bodily space is arguably more valuable than the $6 you spent on the latte. Indeed, often *y* is more valuable than *x*, which is often the incentive behind not revealing *y*'s place in the transaction. Starbucks makes you pay $6 *and* the

cost of excess fat. While some people consent to this tradeoff, some people follow through with the transaction unaware of the tradeoff. Dishonest scams induce appetite because they take advantage of those without intentions by getting them to nonconsensually, or secretly, dependent on unreliable products and services. In the Starbucks example, the lack of intention is the lack of intention to consider fat intake. As such, Starbucks induces an appetite for excess fat.

Part 2: Inertia

A simple solution to avoiding induced appetite is: if you do not know why you are doing something or all the risks involved with the activity, then do not do it. However, consider people who pay to attend college: sometimes someone starts off with an intention and then loses it. In any school, not having an intention for attendance is like starting a meal without being hungry. It takes effort to attend school. Without a motive, the effort to attend school is exhausting and painful. Nevertheless, I have met people who are going into tens of thousands of dollars of debt to attend college and when I ask them why they are at college, they say “I don’t know.” I think it would be impractical to abandon projects as soon as one starts to have ambiguous intentions with them, or as soon as anything unexpected happens. If we did that, I am afraid little to nothing would get done. Great projects can come from changing your goals halfway through, through learning lessons along the way, and having grit and endurance to keep going against obstacles. However, while there is great benefit in *sticking with the program* (so to speak), endurance to stay with a program/company that is proving to be unreliable is ultimately continued unsuccessful dependence. In other words, remaining a student when one does not know why they are at college may be an addiction to the college. Dependence Theory asserts that, through a lack of intention, dependence on any company (or program) can lead to addiction to that company.

Dependence Theory sees the effort to stay in school without a reason to be there, or to stay working in a company you think is shady, as an appetite that has been induced. These students/workers will both feel the pain of working and not really know why they are remaining dependent on their college or company, and yet they will remain at the college or company. Chomsky and Herman write about this same concept but in the field of entertainment. They explain that people will watch certain entertainment that they ultimately would rather not watch:

> People watch and read in good part on the basis of what is readily available and intensively promoted. Polls regularly show that the public would like more news, documentaries, and other information, and less sex, violence, and other entertainment, even as they do listen to and watch the latter (Chomsky and Herman xix).

People do not always want to watch the news, documentaries, and other informational shows while they watch sex and violence. People can indeed get what they want from entertainment. However, addiction is a durational process, so, over the course of time, sometimes people will get what they intend to get from entertainment and sometimes they won't. While I concede that there is a spectrum of degrees to which a company will try to sell you unreliable products, I do not think there are a significant number of companies (especially megacorporations), if any, that avoid unreliability completely. Little by little, a company may try to get you to buy something that you did not originally come for. I am arguing that if all the consumers that fell into the sort of consumerism that Chomsky and Herman describe—those dealing with an induced appetite—removed themself from the company or program that they were involved with, then these companies or programs would lose a significant number of consumers. Since companies massively benefit from people using their products and services who ultimately would prefer something else, or who are unaware of their intentions, companies can rely on addicts.

It seems to me that subject-company addiction relies on what I will call *consumer inertia*. Inertia, in general, is the physical law that an object in motion will stay in motion unless acted

upon by an external motion. Consumer inertia, therefore, is the marketing concept that a consumer in a transaction will stay in the transaction unless acted upon by an external transaction. The fight to get consumers uninterested in external transactions, thus increasing their consumer inertia, is the goal behind monopolization because monopolies eliminate external transactions. The internet has played a key role in this process. According to Dependence Theory, the internet is a prime example of how dependency between consumers and brands causes both problems of what is considered private, and problems of small-brand visibility.

> The Internet is not an instrument of mass communication for those lacking brand names, an already existing large audience, and/or large resources. Only sizable commercial organizations have been able to make large numbers aware of the existence of their Internet offerings. The privatization of the Internet's hardware, the rapid commercialization and concentration of Internet portals and servers and their integration into non-Internet conglomerates—the AOL-Time Warner merger was a giant step in that direction—and the private and concentrated control of the new broadband technology, together threaten to limit any future prospects of the Internet as a democratic media vehicle (Chomsky and Herman xvi).

This way, when the company feeds you something, you just take it. Sometimes you might love it. Sometimes you may not love it. Your liking of it does not matter to the company as long as you are not relying on other companies. A monopoly wants you to think that you do not have a better option. Thus, you lose yourself to the company by allowing the intentions of the company to be your intentions; whatever the company intends to sell is what you intend to buy. That is induced appetite. Subject-company addiction hijacks one’s dependencies through induced appetite. These companies may often give consumers something they enjoy having. I am not arguing that consumers become addicted to companies no matter what. My point here is that if consumers are continuously sold something they did not intend to buy and do not enjoy, but these consumers nevertheless keep relying on their unreliable companies, then these consumers would be addicted to their companies through induced appetite.

Dishonest scams are not always bad. Returning to the example of the college or university, inducing appetite is a school's *purpose*. Schools, while they have the potential to be dishonest scams, the induced appetite is for the benefit of students. People are expected to go to school with open minds. Many people start college without a declared major—thus they lack intention of what to study and are thus open to suggestions. When I attend classes, my intention is to take suggestions for my improvement; that is, for what my intentions should be. Even the tools I have for vetting information were developed from dependency on others. Education is our society's attempt to collect and distribute good, filtered suggestions, hoping that open-minded people can find suggestions that they may successfully depend on. The risk of a system like this, despite its benefits, is that, because the consumers (the students) are unable to determine the validity of these filtered suggestions, then if the suggestions are ultimately poor suggestions, the consumers (the students) will probably unsuccessfully depend on the suggestions, and thus the consumers (the students) will risk becoming addicted to the education system or specific college. The education system is our best attempt at providing reliable suggestions, and even *it* can lead to addiction though induced appetite. This flaw in the education system is analogous to the flaw of companies in general. Similar to the reality that many people attend school with a rightfully pliable mind, and students do not have the means for vetting much of the information they are told, subjects depending on companies are the pliable consumers of commercials selling allegedly good products and services. You may find the right school for you. You may find a company you can trust. However, if you enter into one of these dependencies without an intention in mind, you increase the risk of your eventual addiction to them.

To summarize, a commercial has two parts. On the one hand, it is supposed to show you something potentially beneficial that you may not have otherwise known about. Secondly, it is

supposed to be *persuasive*. There are two extreme reactions to this system: abstinence and addiction. On one end of the spectrum, we find reactionary people who never trust commercials and never buy anything new because they fear commercials prioritize persuasion over benefit. On the other end, we have people who overindulge commercialism and buy into it, thinking that commercials prioritize benefit over profit. On the spectrum between abstinence and overindulgence, people have leaned toward indulgence, which means that there are billions of people who depend on companies. A company does not have to depend on addicts, but when it does, it can be very successful. Again: companies can make consumers into addicts by providing more than what the consumer intends to get from the company. If the consumer continues to depend on this company despite knowledge of the company's unreliability, the consumer is addicted to the company. Since companies *can* rely on addicts, billions of people are poised for addiction.

> Shopping channels, infomercials, and product placement are booming in the global media system. McChesney adds that "it should come as no surprise that account after account the late 1990 documents the fascination, even the obsession, of the world's middle class youth with consumer brands and products." (Chomsky and Herman xiv).

This obsession coupled with the interaction between monopolization and dependence fostering selfhood means that the middle class youth of the late 1990s literally devoted pieces of themselves to brands. According to Dependence Theory, dependencies build upon selfhood. So since the middle class youth of the late 1990s depended on brands and products, their very identities were devoted to these brands and products. Chomsky and Herman note that this devotion puts into question the autonomy of the consumer, and thus the efficacy of democracy (xiii). It seems that subject-company dependence leads to a sort of diffusion of oneself into the agenda of the company.

CHAPTER 5: Concluding Thoughts

The “American dream” is framed in a way that makes the dreamer imagine themself as self-sustaining. The dream is referred to as “independence.” We romanticize being one’s own boss and selling one’s own creations. All of this concerns what I consider to be a fetishization of independence. However, I want to close by considering just one instance of it (one of the many major root causes of this fetishization): The Declaration of Independence (D.I.). The D.I. is an iconic representation of celebrated, and I would argue, overhyped, independence. People rarely think of the D.I. as promoting dependence; but considering it carefully can draw attention to forms of dependency we cherish that exist even in the roots of our fetishization of independence.

The D.I. is born from people wanting to “dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another” (“Declaration of Independence: A Transcription.”). This represents a single area of one’s life being independent of something. The reason that the document is called “The Declaration of Independence” is due to what was then a radical shift from political connection to disconnection. The colonies were under British rule for 169 years, deeply politically connected to the British, so it makes sense that political independence from the British would be a cause for celebration, and make independence seem like a groundbreaking virtue. One way to read the D.I. centuries later is as a recognition of the possibilities that come with political independence from unhealthy relationships. However, this quote from the second paragraph of the D.I. emphasizes a kind of dependency that is equally essential to America’s self image, and that we cherish:

> That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing

> its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness ("Declaration of Independence: A Transcription.").

In other words, the founding fathers wanted a group of people to organize themselves and depend on each other to do certain jobs—ultimately leading to a sense of secure happiness. Thus, their happiness is dependent on their societal organization. The bottom line is that while the D.I. emphasizes independence through its title and praise of governmental change, it clearly endorses politico-social dependence as well. This is why it is so important to specify the domains of dependence and independence. Independence from Britain entails dependency on others.

Today in the U.S. we live in a two-party political system. There are technically more parties, but only two of them ever get to the front of the presidential race: the Democrats and the Republicans. Periodically, the people of this country vote for certain other people to take positions of power and push either a Democratic or Republican political agenda. If you depend on this country to have a Republican future and it keeps ending up Democratic, but you are still a voting citizen in the U.S., then you are addicted to the U.S. political system. The same goes inversely for Democrats. Put another way: nobody can guarantee you that the next president will be in your party. So, you cannot have your life in the U.S. depend on the maintenance of a certain political party in power. According to Dependence Theory, if you remain in the U.S. on the account of a certain political party being in power, despite its recurrent losses, this is due to your *addiction* to our political system. The vote of the U.S. is not in any one person's control—each person must make their own prediction and, unless everyone transitions to one party, it is a mathematical impossibility that everyone will get their wish. In reality, we cannot expect everyone to transition to one party. In our form of government and social engagement, our disagreement, diversity, and compromise are quintessential features. However, one cannot successfully depend on a system that encourages conflict because it is unreliable *by design*. This

means that we should not make our lives in the U.S. dependent on which political party is in power, unless we are prepared to suffer.

In our treacherous mix of normal uncertainty and widespread communication, people are often scared of telling others, and oneself, to depend on things. However, due to the inevitability of dependence, it is necessary for us to accept dependence into our lives. Ultimately, the best advice we can give ourselves or each other is: You are going to be dependent on something, so make that thing reliable. Then it is ultimately a personal decision about what is reliable. If we accept that everyone engages with dependence on a daily basis and that this is not detrimental, and we also find ourselves wanting to help others, the next step would be to work together to figure out how to recognize reliable domains. The danger at hand is not that we are dependent, but that the popular discussion around dependence has led to inconsistent concepts of how to be dependent. In order to have healthy relationships with all the domains that matter to us, we must love our dependencies.

Appendix:

DSM-V criteria for substance use disorders:

i. The substance is often taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended.
ii. There is a persistent desire or unsuccessful effort to cut down or control use of the substance.
iii. A great deal of time is spent in activities necessary to obtain the substance, use the substance, or recover from its effects.
iv. Craving, or a strong desire or urge to use the substance, occurs.
v. Recurrent use of the substance results in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home.
vi. Use of the substance continues despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of its use.
vii. Important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced because of use of the substance.
viii. Use of the substance is recurrent in situations in which it is physically hazardous.

In the DSM Fifth Edition, there is one criterion by which there are eight features of dependent personality disorder. The disorder is indicated by at least five of the following factors

1. Has difficulty making everyday decisions without an excessive amount of advice and reassurance from others.
2. Needs others to assume responsibility for most major areas of their life.

3. Has difficulty expressing disagreement with others because of fear of loss of support or approval.
4. Has difficulty initiating projects or doing things on their own (because of a lack of self-confidence in judgment or abilities rather than a lack of motivation or energy).
5. Goes to excessive lengths to obtain nurturance and support from others to the point of volunteering to do things that are unpleasant.
6. Feels uncomfortable or helpless when alone because of exaggerated fears of being unable to care for themselves.
7. Urgently seeks another relationship as a source of care and support when a close relationship ends.
8. Is unrealistically preoccupied with fears of being left to take care of themselves

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