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# America's Burning Issue: Is the Oreo Addictive?

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*The Chicago Tribune* today features a massive article devoted to the great question: Are Oreos addictive? Here's how the article begins: "Churned out in ovens the size of football fields, the Oreo reigns as the best-selling cookie in the world and a signature snack of Kraft Foods Inc. In recent years, though, the treat has become a symbol of another sort. To some it is a nutritional time bomb, emblematic of the junk food fueling America's obesity crisis, particularly among children. It is the kind of sugary snack that research suggests can trigger the same brain impulses as addictive narcotics." The same brain impulses as triggered by addictive narcotics?

Here's my open admission: I've dropped a few Oreos in my time. Ok, maybe more than a few. My Oreo habit, kept from public view until now, is supplemented by a milk habit that's even harder to break. Oh yes, I've become highly adept at hiding my Oreo habit, though some may argue that the effects are more difficult to hide. My local Oreo pusher, a.k.a. "Sugar Dude," hangs out at the local grocery store, lurking right by the cookie aisle. His nefarious accomplice, "The Milk Man," pushes his white poison in the dairy department. I work hard at hiding my habit. Oreo addicts must be especially careful about those pesky dark crumbs and the real give-away, the milk moustache. Many's the time I've had to duck in for a quick appointment with the tooth brush, hoping against hope that no one would see the dark stains on the brush. My secret is out.

Well, maybe the Oreo isn't the most important culinary invention of modern times, but it must rank right up near the top. We all know that Americans eat too much "junk food" and the nation may well face an obesity "crisis." But is addiction the right explanation for this phenomenon? Is it not tiresome to see every social ill described as the latest addiction? Americans are said to be addicted to violence, video games, television, work, leisure, sugar, and now Oreos. There are persons seriously struggling with all kinds of habits and unhealthy patterns of life — not to mention those physically addicted to dangerous substances. In the end, however, we may all be addicted to addictions, especially if the concept of addiction takes the responsibility off of us.

Gotta go. Sugar Dude and the Milk Man are looking for me.

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