



Social Media Hedonism and the Case of 'Fitspiration': A Nietzschean Critique

Aurélien Daudi

To cite this article: Aurélien Daudi (2022): Social Media Hedonism and the Case of 'Fitspiration': A Nietzschean Critique, *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, DOI: [10.1080/17511321.2022.2121849](https://doi.org/10.1080/17511321.2022.2121849)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17511321.2022.2121849>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 09 Sep 2022.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 168



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Social Media Hedonism and the Case of 'Fitspiration': A Nietzschean Critique

Aurélien Daudi 

Department of Sports Sciences, Malmö University Faculty of Education and Society, Malmö, Sweden

ABSTRACT

Though the rise of social media has provided countless advantages and possibilities, both within and without the domain of sports, recent years have also seen some more detrimental aspects of these technologies come to light. In particular, the widespread social media culture surrounding fitness – 'fitspiration' – warrants attention for the way it encourages self-sexualization and -objectification, thereby epitomizing a wider issue with photo-based social media in general. Though the negative impact of fitspiration has been well documented, what is less understood are the ways it potentially impacts and molds moral psychology, and how these same aspects may come to influence digital sports subcultures more broadly. In this theoretical paper, I rely on the insights of Friedrich Nietzsche to analyze the moral significance of a culture like fitspiration becoming normalized and influential in structuring and informing self-understanding, notions of value, and how to flourish in life. Using two doctrines central to Nietzsche's philosophy—The Last Man and his conception of the 'higher self' – I argue that fitspiration involves a form of hedonism that is potentially harmful to the pursuit and achievement of human flourishing. Through fitspiration, desire is elevated to a central moral principle, underlying the way users both consume and produce its content, catering simultaneously to their desires for external validation and instant gratification. It thereby creates conditions which foster a culture in adherence to the ethos of The Last Man. In doing so, I argue it impedes the cultivation of the virtues and higher values which define the higher individual, regarded by Nietzsche as essential for human flourishing. However, drawing on the ethical framework of the higher individual provides the philosophical and psychological resources with which resisting and overcoming the more harmful temptations of these trends may be possible.

KEYWORDS

Social media; hedonism; fitspiration; human flourishing; Nietzsche

1. Introduction

The digital triad of the Internet, social media, and smartphone technology has become central to human communication, fundamentally changing society and acting as a window through which we view, engage, and interact with the world. While long-term effects are currently unknown, it is clear digital media is currently transforming us,

CONTACT Aurélien Daudi  aurelien.daudi@mau.se  Department of Sports Sciences, Malmö University Faculty of Education and Society, 205 06, Malmö, Sweden

© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

younger generations especially, into digital addicts. Although there are many advantages and possibilities inherent to such technologies, they have also been shown to have potentially serious effects on well-being (Haidt and Twenge 2021; Twenge 2018). Such is the case for the photo-based social media fitness culture, an Instagram phenomenon referred to by scholars as ‘fitspiration’ (an amalgamation of the words ‘fitness’ and ‘inspiration’). While its ill-effects are well documented (e.g. Anixiadis et al. 2019; DiBisceglie and Arigo 2021; Donovan, Uhlmann, and Loxton 2020; Tiggemann and Zaccardo 2015), the scholarly literature has yet to grapple with the subtler, yet potentially equally deleterious ways it impacts and molds moral psychology. That is, how fitspiration affects self-understanding, notions of value, and of human flourishing. What are the broader implications of this? Drawing on the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, I will argue that fitspiration involves a form of hedonism that is potentially harmful to the pursuit and achievement of human flourishing. Fitspiration arouses our inclinations towards self-congratulation, our desire for instant gratification, and our almost infinite appetite for distractions. In doing so, it prevents the cultivation of the culture, virtues, and adherence to higher values that Nietzsche takes to be central to a well-lived life.

As Rosenberg (2008) and Tuncel (2016) point out, Nietzsche is rarely associated with philosophy of sport. Yet, fitness, for instance, has potential to facilitate Nietzschean moral virtues as a representation of the rational, form-giving Apollonian force (Aggerholm and Højbjerg Larsen 2018), and, like traditional martial arts (Monahan 2007), as a practice of aesthetic embodiment. Elsewhere too, sports become projections of humanity’s both naturalistic and cultural drives, and can cultivate discipline and ascetic self-enhancement (Markula and Pringle 2006). As such, they hold a great deal of potential to be explored by greater engagement with Nietzsche’s philosophy. With the advent of social media, sport subcultures have gained an avenue that impacts and transforms the way practitioners, fans, and observers engage with and relate to them. By combining digital and physical aspects of one such culture in new and previously unexplored ways—resulting in occasionally problematic and inhibitory expressions, legitimized by the sporting activity in question—fitspiration is uniquely positioned to illustrate some of the deeper implications following from this emerging avenue. This article attempts to show that the Nietzschean ethos¹ affords compelling philosophical and psychological resources for doing so.

The developments surrounding fitspiration reflect broader cultural and attitudinal shifts. A pathology that defines current times, according to Trueman (2020), is that the pleasure of the instant—pleasure as an end-in-itself—and the psychological satisfaction of the present, has become central to how human purpose is perceived. Stated differently, elements of hedonism have come to permeate many aspects of Western culture. This process is seemingly facilitated on and through social media. It is within this context that the present paper is situated. Though some arguments also may apply to other sports-based digital subcultures, in addition to photo-based social media in general, this paper centers specifically on fitspiration as a particularly illustrative example of the issue at hand. As such, it does not concern fitness itself, but rather the social media behavior associated with the culture surrounding it. Additionally, while short videos also figure as part of fitspiration, they are not the focus here, as videos have hitherto been mostly overlooked in the research. Moreover, videos are both harder to categorize, as one can feature several motifs, and tend not to be subject to the same level of augmentative practices, i.e. angles,

filters, effects—aspects which make photos particularly conducive to the problem with which this paper is concerned.

The argument proceeds as follows. First, I outline what fitspiration is, how it is enacted over social media, and argue that it involves a form of hedonism with two defining elements: exhibitionism and voyeurism. Second, I then introduce a critical perspective on the relationship between fitspiration and hedonism via two doctrines central to Nietzsche's philosophy—The Last Man and the 'higher self' – ending with its implications in relation to his thesis on the death of God. Although these may seem to be more general philosophical ideas with no immediate bearing on fitspiration, I suggest that they are both relevant and important for understanding how these digital phenomena can undermine human flourishing, and how one can successfully overcome its more harmful temptations.

2. Fitspiration and Social Media Hedonism

Among the more notable developments following the rise of social media are the provinces of self and body exhibitionism that have emerged in relation to various sports and social arenas, but manifest with particular perspicuity within fitspiration. In 2022, searching the Instagram hashtags #fitspiration, and its derivative #fitspo, yields approximately 20 and 75 million posts respectively. Clearly, this digital sporting subculture enjoys tremendous popularity, and as such, has the potential of being a force for good by inspiring people towards healthier and happier lives.

However, though one can easily conceive of this as plausible—and while, for many, it probably holds true—rarely has it been scientifically demonstrated. While fitspiration promotes health and fitness, it tends to primarily emphasize bodily appearance. Users post photos of their lightly dressed bodies, or view those of other people's bodies, the majority of which have tended to be female (Carrotte, Prichard, and Lim 2017; Tiggemann and Zaccardo 2018). Posts usually link conspicuously to fitness through caption conventions, hashtags, and representative attire, but tend to feature suggestively posed bodies, accentuating various physical features rather than actually 'performing' fitness. They may be portrayed to signal fitness-related progress, intentions to commence the prerequisite training for such progress, or simply allude to things altogether unrelated. In either case, a vast majority of studies report on the near-ubiquity of self-sexualization and self-objectification (e.g. Murashka, Liu, and Peng 2020; Santarossa et al. 2019), legitimized by the body-centeredness inherent to the fitness context. In an unfortunate subversion of its positive potential, fitspiration invites individuals to indulge their narcissistic desires, often to the detriment of themselves and consumers of their narcissistic displays (Daudi 2022). Thus, whatever positive effects *could* derive, and are promoted as doing so, are often mitigated by negative comparison issues and appearance-related anxieties (DiBisceglie and Arigo 2021; Easton et al. 2018).

Although self-sexualization in sports are sometimes argued to constitute forms of choice and empowerment, performed *not* in reference to anyone but oneself (Davis and Edwards 2021) – as acts of self-empowerment—this ought not apply for fitspiration. Self-sexualizing on photo-based social media explicitly presupposes an intended observer for whom the act is performed; it can have no meaning without one. As an extension of contemporary fitness and gym culture, fitspiration as a cultural practice is qualitatively

distinct from it. Paradoxically, while the former contains elements that are explicitly Nietzschean in nature, the latter, as I will argue, is decidedly anti-Nietzschean. Fitspiration derives its legitimation from fitness but exists within a paradigm of its own, adhering more to the logic of photo-based social media than fitness. This logic is inherently self-objectifying (posting photos of oneself explicitly to be viewed by others) (Tiggemann and Zaccardo 2015). Here, fitspiration especially stands out in exacerbating individuals' natural narcissistic tendencies, thereby promoting a narcissistic culture that fosters behaviors of self-sexualization and -objectification (Daudi 2022). This qualitative delineation between a particular sport and the digital subculture emerging from it makes fitspiration particularly interesting for sports philosophy, as it reveals an often-overlooked aspect of the interaction between body-centered sports, and the seductive potential of the inherent logic of photo-based social media.

2.1. Hedonism

Hedonism is derived from the Greek *hedone*, meaning 'pleasure', 'enjoyment' or 'delight'. As a theory of value, hedonism holds that the only valuable and non-valuable things are pleasure and pain, respectively (Weijers 2012). Without expounding on the details of its various derivative theories, hedonism, by and large, holds the attainment of both mentally and physically induced sensations of pleasure as life's ultimate goal (Griffin 1986). A life lived hedonistically therefore entails consciously striving towards maximizing pleasure while minimizing resistance and discomfort, because well-being is regarded as directly correlated with the quantitative balance of pleasure and discomfort experienced. Discomfort or pain is thus as integral to the conception of hedonism as pleasure, if only contrasted as its opposite and as that which is to be avoided at all costs. An uneven distribution in favor of pleasure amounts to a better life; and the more uneven the distribution, the more well-being that automatically follows.

Regarding whether the hedonistic ethos is in fact beneficial or detrimental, philosophers' views diverge. Among those considered historically prominent proponents are Epicurus, Bentham, and Mill (Griffin 1986; Weijers 2012). Less convinced that hedonism offers a virtuous and empowering way of life is Nietzsche, whose ethical outlook informs this paper. While theories on pleasure and desire tend to be philosophically treated as distinct, delineations of the relationship between them are seldom devoid of ambiguity (Weijers 2012). Here, they are considered intimately related insofar as pleasure is taken to include indirect, non-physical forms, such as the satisfaction of desire itself. Additionally, for the value of pleasure to command the supreme status construed by hedonism, it must also be the ultimate object of desire. Hedonism makes implicit the assumption that pleasure is always good, thereby declaring it as the ultimate value. Since we are desirous by nature, the object of desire being various forms of pleasure, hedonism infallibly deems the fulfillment of desires superior to any alternative. This simultaneously declares pleasure as the standard of valuation for all conduct—as Epicurus does in *Letter to Menoecus* (Hicks 2016). But doing so is to regress into intellectual and philosophical abdication, because the standard of valuation becomes necessarily derived from desires and emotions, and thus irrationally based and capricious. Consequently, hedonism subordinates rational self-governance to emotional satisfaction. This view is incompatible with Nietzsche's philosophy of life (Jonas and Yacek 2019). If our capacity for rationality

(while not liberating us entirely from irrationality) is what separates us from other animals, then one could argue, as can be inferred from Nietzsche, that the hedonistic ethos causes the very lessening of human potentiality.

To see how hedonism relates to fitspiration, in the following two sections I will outline the main elements of what I call social media hedonism. These are not necessarily joint conditions, but can figure to varying degrees, independently of each other.

The Exhibitionistic Element

There is arguably an inherent element of hedonism in the psychoanalytic notion of narcissism, displayed in the way it manifests within fitspiration. The term narcissism was first postulated by Freud (2014) and derives from Greek mythology and the story of young Narcissus. Narcissus withered his life away in obsessive self-admiration after catching his own reflection in a pond. Though upon closer reflection, we can deduce that it was in fact succumbing to his own hedonistic drive, i.e. the pleasure derived from reveling in his own splendor, which drove Narcissus to his demise. Any behavioral manifestations of narcissism—such as the dominant form of self-expression within fitspiration, i.e. exhibiting one's body for public viewing—are always directed externally towards others, whose favor is the target. If one desires the pleasurable sensation of this affirming attention, then within the unbridled exhibitionism of oneself as the sexualized object, legitimized and normalized by fitspiration (Daudi 2022), one has found an appealing outlet for that desire. Centered around the production of content, this is the *exhibitionistic element* of the hedonism manifested through fitspiration. By exhibiting one's body, legitimized in its overt self-sexualization through the body-centeredness inherent to fitness, its attentional potential is maximized. Self-sexualization and -objectification in this way are behavioral responses to an urge to satiate narcissistic desires. However, the nature of the narcissistic desire is that such expressions of narcissism cannot satiate it (Bard and Söderqvist 2014; Daudi 2022). Instead, it results in the ephemeral 'narcissistic pleasure' derived from exhibiting oneself and whatever qualities for which one desires affirmation. Since it remains ephemeral, it must continuously be sought. As such, manifestations of narcissism necessarily involve hedonistically seeking this pleasure and its fleeting satisfaction.

Rare is the individual who is exempt from the desire for recognition and affirmation, along with the knowledge of and subsequent sensation hailing from maintaining an advantageous social standing. Though variable by personality in how it manifests, from an evolutionary perspective, it is a necessary part of ensuring group cohesion and cooperation (Haidt 2013). The pleasure derived from it, pleasure as the internal reward for fulfilling the desire of attaining the crowd's favor, is not necessarily inherently different than the pleasure sought in other types of experiences. Overindulging in the pursuit of this pleasure as a nurturing of the ego—excessively appeasing one's narcissistic desires by abandoning oneself to its impulses—should therefore be regarded as an expression of hedonism.

The Voyeuristic Element

The other pertinent element in the context of social media hedonism can be referred to as *voyeuristic*, and is centered around content consumption. Postman (2005) argued that perpetual entertainment underlies the logic of television, redefining cultural life into a means of effectively amusing ourselves to death. The same logic of the pleasures of

entertainment underlies the voyeuristic element of social media hedonism. But due to its portability, accessibility, and ever-updating stream of content, photo-based social media arguably outshines even television in this regard.

Like most mammals, we are naturally predisposed towards seeking novelty (Kakade and Dayan 2002). Novel stimuli activate our dopamine system (Schultz 1998), and research shows that even mere exposure to novel images achieves this (Bunzeck and Düzél 2006). Acting as positive reinforcement, dopamine induces subtle sensations of pleasure that the brain can eventually become adjusted to expect and associate with specific behaviors, thereby conditioning individuals to those behaviors. Once sufficiently accustomed to them, avoidance can even induce withdrawal responses (Schultz 1998), further pushing individuals to repeat them. Due to its effects on the dopamine system, and the amount of time people spend using it, social media has been linked to addictive behaviors similar to those of substance and gambling addictions (He et al. 2017; Turel et al. 2014). Via photo-based social media's integration with fitness, unlimited supplies of these pleasures of novelty have become accessible. Concisely, fitspiration becomes a boundless source of content that is inherently alluring, and chemically rewarding in its voyeuristic viewing when paired with the following: firstly, with individuals perpetual tendency and need for social comparison (Festinger 1954, often cited in the research on fitspiration), for which endless streams of images of other people is the ultimate enabler; secondly, with their tendency for that social comparison to be especially centered around the body (e.g. Myers and Crowther 2009); and thirdly, with their natural or otherwise developed curiosity towards sexual displays. Hence, to excessively yield to the inevitable impulses of a behavior one has been habitually conditioned to associate with pleasure, i.e. the amusement of social media scrolling, also becomes an expression of hedonism.

Contrary to many other addictive indulgences, photo-based social media enjoys the benefits of mass endorsement. There will always be comfort in conformity with dominant trends, through which photo-based social media quickly achieved a level of societal normalization and integration such that even excessive use of it, as is common among young people (Bányai et al. 2017), fails to arouse much reaction. However, consensus and normalization should not be confused with benignancy and harmlessness. In fact, one of the great ironies of the struggle for survival in all species is how easily they can be harmed by what they desire (Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi 2002). Fitspiration, and its associated behaviors of social media hedonism, simultaneously enjoy the benefits of normalization, and correspond to human desires; but as noted, the psychological ill-effects associated with engaging with them are numerous, as reported by a majority of the studies heretofore conducted. However, unreflective conformity is often the path of least resistance, and is also, as we shall see, integral to Nietzsche's criticism of hedonistic modern culture. To define the moral implications of the social media hedonism propagated through fitspiration, and to outline the philosophical and psychological resources with which countering them may be possible, it is to Nietzsche we now turn.

3. A Nietzschean Critique of Fitspiration

As technological innovation and prosperity continually expand our freedom to direct our own time, a crucial question arises: What end should it serve? To simply achieve enjoyment and pleasure, as ends-in-themselves? Or is there something else, something higher,

towards which those who are able should be striving? For Nietzsche, this question was essential; for us, equally so. Nietzsche's philosophy constitutes an endeavor to express an ideal of human flourishing, and the vibrant, noble culture necessary for achieving it (Jonas and Yacek 2019). Accordingly, he regarded the sickness with which he diagnosed Western culture as posing a threat, both to the realization of human potential, and to the very health of society, which, consequently, ailing with diseases of the mind, would be capable only of perpetuating that which is weak and sickly. Eventually it would extinguish forever the seeds of true cultural flourishing. And so, he asked despondently, 'Today—is greatness possible?' (Nietzsche 2003, §212).

3.1. *Fitspiration and Nietzsche's Conception of the Last Man*

The Last Man represents a social condition: the gradual regress into a state of being in which nothing that wants to be greater is ever born. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Nietzsche 1974), Nietzsche warned of the 'existential vacuum of modern man' (Frankl 2006), following the aftermath of the death of God; of the social condition that a culture crippled by the amputation of the yearning for higher values would beget. It would spread in consonance with what Nietzsche refers to as 'the danger of dangers' (Nietzsche 2013, §6), the value system under which the majority are compelled—herd morality. This, he argued, was the scourge of the West, which, if unchallenged, would result in the psychological and spiritual taming of humankind. If not resisted, through a countering of values, it would result in existence, left to the The Last Man, becoming deprived 'of its *great* character' (Nietzsche 1992, XV, §4).

Nietzsche posited that herd morality exerts a powerful persuasive temptation, as deep in our psyches, there sways the force of herd instinct: the desire for the comfort of de-autonomization by merging with the masses. For those apprehensive of the challenges, pain, and solitude associated with striving for the extraordinary, herd morality becomes a seductive refuge. As an inversion of the higher values Nietzsche viewed as essential, it promulgates a conception of man, and a framework of values, which is less demanding and thus appears alluring, but which ultimately debilitates and disempowers the individual. He therefore considered it vital to expose the effects of herd morality to keep kindled the spark of potential for those in whom it still burned, because, beckoning as a Siren's song, herd morality tempts them with retreat from their solitary burden: the responsibility of nurturing greatness. In exchange, it offers submission to the simplicity of the mediocrity commanding the many, granting the comfort of individual dissolution into the anonymous masses, where responsibility is absolved. There, they can seek fulfillment only in sensory pleasure and comfort, submerged in the 'herd', in accordance with the principles of hedonism.

Epitomizing the characteristics of herd morality—and, as we can see, clearly embodying the tenets of hedonism—The Last Man is the antithesis to Nietzsche's transcendent ideal, the higher self (a concept more relevant to his corpus than the infrequent mentions of the hyperbolic *übermensch* (Leiter 2002)). Like the higher self, The Last Man is not an inborn essence, but the consequence of gradual cultural and character decline. Being a virtuoso, not of any power born of creativity, ambition, or vitality, but of the pleasures of consumption, he longs for nothing but comfort and pleasure. A life well-spent is for him a frictionless existence. Here, again, is the hedonist's elevation of pleasure to the central

criterion against which all is evaluated and of discomfort to the ultimate determinant of all that ought to be avoided.

If the condition of The Last Man were finally emerging through fitspiration and similar trends, it seems uncertain whether we would recognize it as such. Given their demonstrated mass appeal, would we even care? While, according to Nietzsche, the process has long been ongoing, few societal developments seem as proficient in facilitating it as the rise of photo-based social media. The addictive nature and hedonistic behaviors which I have associated with fitspiration foster a conception of life congruent with the condition of The Last Man and antithetical to the Nietzschean prescription for self-overcoming in the pursuit of human flourishing. It manifests both through the voyeuristic and exhibitionistic elements of hedonism. Firstly, as we have seen, the voyeuristic element fosters passivity at the hands of a never-ending stream of endlessly entertaining and addictive content; its evident allure matched only by its intrinsic irrelevancy, as a picture usually flashes by, never to be seen again. One comes to serve the desire for pleasure, transfixed by the trivial, constantly seeking entertainment as a way of securing the persistent psychological satisfaction of the present. Secondly, the exhibitionistic element fosters continual submission to impulses for acquisition of quick and easy validation through the public exhibition of one's own pampered and sexualized body, along with the rewards associated. Together, this social media hedonism might provide both pleasure in moments of discomforting boredom and pleasurable appeasement of compensatory, narcissistic desires, but they facilitate no self-mastery, no higher values—only a steady descent into the social condition of The Last Man.

As technological advancements have relieved us of past burdens, people today are free to wholeheartedly pursue what has collectively been deemed the supreme values in Western culture: comfort and psychological satisfaction (Trueman 2020). However, Kass and Kass (2000) note, the more people integrate into themselves the freedom to regulate their time and attention only as they see fit, the more they come to perceive obligations other than to merely self-indulge as possessing scant intrinsic value, and thus reject them. If such is the case, no incentive remains to not engage with phenomena like fitspiration whenever the impulse arises, either to peruse the unending stream of sexualized bodies or contribute oneself to it. Given no incentive for abstaining, the call for pleasure will never go unheeded. For many everyday indulgences that exert universal temptation, but are indulged at a cost, common sense restrictions usually apply. But for photo-based social media, no such general view exists. However, while the effects are often far less conspicuous, ceaselessly yielding to these impulses nevertheless alters aspects of one's being with potentially even greater consequences. Insatiably distracted by self-indulgence in desirous pleasures, like those afforded by fitspiration, the prospect of higher aspirations in the Nietzschean sense necessarily diminishes. It becomes obscured and repeatedly hindered by the hedonistic drive to continually enjoy the present: the alleged path to happiness of The Last Man. However, this hedonistic 'happiness' will always be fleeting, i.e. in need of perpetual reinvoking through the stimuli from which it emanates, so as not to let the induced stupor fade, thus forcing individuals to face the reality of their nihilistic predicament.

The Externalization of Life

Contrary, perhaps, to contemporary sensibilities, Nietzsche regarded authentic pride in oneself as something that could only be earned through overcoming and bettering

oneself. The ethos of The Last Man, however, entails rejecting the ideals of self-overcoming and self-mastery. Doing so means the internal conditions necessary for elevating oneself and cultivating virtues worthy of genuine pride, and of mastering the passions and desires which prevent them, must eventually be relinquished; as ‘a lack of self-mastery in the small things bring about a crumbling of the capacity for it in great ones’ (Nietzsche 1996, §305). In response, narcissistic compensation necessarily escalates as one becomes increasingly dependent on the validation of others, and begins seeking in others what one cannot provide oneself. In externalizing the locus of self-actualization, and the sense of self-worth expected to derive from it, attaining approval from and being perceived favorably by others becomes imperative. We see this especially in the bodily exhibitionism of fitspiration, but also in the form of moral exhibitionism, or grandstanding (Tosi and Warmke 2016), within social media at large. It is an intrinsic feature of social media, exaggerated through the exhibitionistic element of hedonism: self-becoming through the eyes of others (Daudi 2022). This externalization of life is engrained in the fabric of social (media) culture. The implicit emphasis on defining oneself through others, and the excessive orientation towards matters outside of oneself which this necessitates, perpetuates herd morality and prevents the development of independent selfhood called for by Nietzsche. Instead, the basis of the self is externalized, where it cannot solidify and is thus rendered perpetually dependent on continual external reinforcement.

Inspired by Nietzsche, this is what Carl Jung regarded as the sickness of Western man, as ‘the externalization of life turns into incurable suffering, because no one can understand why he should suffer from himself’ (Jung 2014, §962). And while Jung, like Nietzsche, was no advocate of repressive asceticism, he recognized that one whose interests are always only directed outside, to external conditions of life, and never inside, towards the beautification, strengthening and mastering of inner selfhood, will always remain in bewildered discontentment (Jung 2014).

In the Western world today, physical suffering is reduced to historically incomparable lows (Pinker 2018). While Nietzsche does not subscribe to dualistic metaphysics separating body and mind, one might still have expected some correlation between this and similar developments regarding the suffering of the mind. However, data indicates this is not the case. Most assuredly, the causes are multifaceted and complex, but reports of social media contributing heavily to this development in recent years abound (Twenge 2018), especially regarding fitspiration. To the question posed earlier about the purpose of the freedom granted by contemporary society, the prevailing attitude within the emergent social condition seems to be that it is the freedom to do anything one wants, in adherence to the whims of desires (Trueman 2020): the freedom to be happy—the freedom *from* self-restriction, boredom and discomfort. Unfortunately, for many, young people especially, the effects of this cultural imperative seem to be reversed. How, then, can such effects be counteracted? What moral, philosophical, and psychological tools may be drawn upon to reinvigorate the potential of human flourishing? For this, let us consider Nietzsche’s notion of higher selfhood.

3.2. *Fitspiration and Nietzsche’s Conception of ‘The Higher Self’*

Nietzsche anticipated that a culture bereft of higher values, without a commitment to a philosophy of life devoted to ‘higher problems than the problems of pain and pleasure’

(2003, §225), would become sick, unwittingly adopting self-harming behaviors. It appears this is what the social media hedonism of fitspiration represents today, indeed, perhaps much of self-representational photo-based social media: covertly venomous attitudes of narcissistic self-congratulation and self-destructive indulgence. Though fitspiration currently constitutes its most conspicuous manifestation, the normalization of sexualization incurred by it will likely continue to affect other subcultures centering physicality and athletic bodies, i.e. sports cultures. It also represents the hegemony of self-governance through desire and the psychological satisfaction of the present, shaped by the hedonistic ethos of *The Last Man*. To remedy this trajectory of decline, Nietzsche championed the higher self: 'Once they thought of becoming heroes: now they are sensualists. [...] I entreat you: do not reject the hero in your soul! Keep holy your highest hope!' (Nietzsche 1974, I, §8).

To formulate a cohesive vision of Nietzsche's conception of the higher self, with Leiter (2002), we can identify five characteristics distinguishing such an individual: (1) he is solitary, in the sense that the many can affect little of what concerns him; (2) he shoulders self-responsibility and thrives on it, in pursuit of a unifying project; (3) he is healthy, defined not as absence of ailments but rather as mental resilience in the face of them, and in having overcome and mastered himself, harnessing his drives for power in the realization of human excellence (Jonas and Yacek 2019); (4) he is life-affirming, the ultimate expression of which is the ability not to be governed by one's desires; and (5) he has genuine self-reverence. To what degree all or some combination of these characteristics are necessary to develop may be debated, but together they allow the higher individual to separate himself from the conformism and concerns that dominate among the many; from the clutches of herd morality—the unreflective, culturally fettered ordering of norms to which fitspiration belongs. He cultivates the willingness to explore even the darkest frontiers of the mind for the sake of developing inner unity and self-reliance—what Jung (2014) would later call the integration of the shadow—then channel it into self-elevation and a pursuit of self-mastery unfeasible to *The Last Man*. As described by Nietzsche, 'one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star' (Nietzsche 1974, P, §5). Hence, embodying this ideal entails neither allowing oneself to be governed by passions, nor suppressing them entirely, but rather disciplining oneself to master and sublimate them into their most prosperous expressions (Kaufmann 2013). Initially, this is likely neither pleasant nor painless. But for Nietzsche, it is here one eventually finds the source of meaning and greatness that would constitute the means of redemption for a culture on a decadent decline (see Huddleston 2019; Kaufmann 2013, ch. 7–8). Living in accordance with and striving towards the ideal of the higher individual would ennoble not only individuals themselves, but also society at large, by creating exemplars of greatness towards which everyone may become inspired to reach (Conant 2001; Jonas and Yacek 2019).

For Nietzsche, the noble culture through which the potential for human flourishing may be maximized is characterized by its stimulation of great individuals. Such greatness 'entails being noble' and 'having to live independently' (Nietzsche 2003, §212), unclouded by herd morality and its derivative norms. To be noble, in turn, is to 'instinctively seek heavy responsibilities' (Nietzsche 2017, §944). Only by bearing the responsibilities and overcoming the struggle and sacrifice necessitated by accomplishments of true greatness is it possible for a higher individual, proud of the heroic potential he harbors, to develop

deep, genuine reverence for himself. Such self-reverence can never arise through mere praise or validation in the external, irrespective of likes accrued, but can only originate from within when it has truly been earned. 'Unaffected by praise or censure' (Nietzsche 2017, §962), he would summon a love of self upon which no external force holds sway, and in turn sever any dependence on others for constructing and validating his self-perception. Someone whose psychological constitution is elevated towards that of the higher individual therefore recognizes that whatever form of social appraisal can be gained from the mechanisms of fitpiration is by the very nature of its external dependency automatically dispossessed of value.

As opposites on the philosophical and psychological continuum, The Last Man alleges to have found happiness and meaning in basic sensory pleasure and submission to his desires, whereas the higher individual knows these indulgences alone are antithetical to it. The higher individual knows that by opting not to restrict himself in the fulfillment of his desires, The Last Man, rather than escape discomfort or suffering, invites it to manifest as afflictions of the mind. That lasting happiness is desirable is not disputed; however, for Nietzsche, such things are mere byproducts derived from discovering meaning and challenging and overcoming resistance (Nietzsche 1924, §2), including internal ones. As Frankl (2006), referencing Nietzsche, aptly underscores: it cannot be pursued—it must *ensue*. These are expressions of what appears to constitute eternal truths by which humans are fundamentally ruled, recognized by thinkers across the ages, according to Haidt (2006). Here, the author interprets the legacies of ancient wisdom, collected from Eastern and Western traditions, synthesizing them with revelations of modern psychology. From this, several principles emerge, one of which is precisely the psychological necessity of overcoming adversities.

If adversity, and the discomfort and suffering inherent in overcoming it, is indeed necessary for finding meaning, and attaining deep and lasting satisfaction, then the hedonism of The Last Man becomes its greatest obstacle. Thus, the greatest obstacle to flourishing is not external, but internal; desire itself is the obstacle (Jonas and Yacek 2019, 70). And if the form of engagement endemic to fitpiration indeed represents the elevation of desire to a central moral principle, then this too must be overcome. Realizing the exacting necessity of actively resisting his inclinations toward pleasure, and the behaviors they engender, the higher individual therefore bravely strives to 'learn to see as beautiful what is necessary in things' (Nietzsche 2010, §276). That means affirming and loving all of life, including the inevitable suffering inherent to struggling, and overcoming the adversity that is one's own desire. That something is painful 'is no argument against it but its essence' (Nietzsche 2010, §318). To endure the discomforts of intellectual strain, of resisting temptations of constant entertainment and externalization through self-congratulatory exhibitionism, becomes not only necessary, but desirable in-itself. Fully embodying this ideal of higher selfhood is undoubtedly challenging. But he who wishes nothing to be different of 'what is necessary', embracing it instead, gains unparalleled mental resilience to it. Pain ceases to be contrary to well-being, whereby the dichotomous and debilitating struggle between suffering and happiness, construed by hedonism, can be transcended. Thus, to willfully confront necessary suffering is to safeguard the highest quality of humankind, and through its retention, the source of its greatest joy; to uncritically accommodate instinctive desires, on the other hand, is not. Engaging with life in this heroic fashion, the higher individual would be able to forge his way, discerning

his proper code of conduct based neither on merit of short-term pain or discomfort, nor on the fashionable trend du jour, but solely on its contribution to true flourishing. In the self-representational, digital derivative of fitness, he would see nothing to aid him in his goal, only a reflection of that pettiness within him common to all humans, but which he ‘despise[s] and discard[s]’ (Nietzsche 2017, §962).

Fostering an ethics in line with Nietzsche’s conception of the higher self would thus render the very prospect of social media hedonism and its manifestation through fitspiration undesirable; not through any form of coercion, but through a ‘reevaluation of values’.

3.3. *Fitspiration and Nietzsche’s ‘Death of God’*

With the loss of the sacred leaving the world impotent in the face of the monumental task of restoring the sense of meaning that was its greatest casualty, Nietzsche believed a deep-rooted, lethargic nihilism would overtake the hearts of men. Devoid of greater purpose, convinced of having tamed happiness, they would live day by day, seeking happiness in the moment in pursuit of desires and fleeting pleasures. If the Nietzschean analysis of social media hedonism and fitspiration is sound, we are experiencing a cultural development increasingly defined by such an ethos. No amount of compensatory narcissistic exhibitionism will likely be able to alleviate the consciously denied, but unconsciously felt, anguish of the resulting existential vacuum—living sans higher purpose beyond the fleeting pleasure of the present. It festers concealed behind the fraudulent façade of herd morality, whereby, according to Nietzsche (2013), weakness becomes confused with strength, and strength with weakness—the rationale for never having to adapt, never having to impose or restrict oneself, and, as such, rendered incapable of realizing one’s potential for flourishing. As fulfillment is then sought from external validation via the body-centered subcultures of social media, the self-reverence and strength of mind achieved from cultivating the noble self and independent character belonging to the higher individual, for whom neither praise nor blame emanating from the many has any effect, is placed ever beyond reach. Nietzsche believed this was the route to misery and psychological suffering *par excellence*, and ultimately, when adopted en masse, to the slow death of the culture.

As a warning to posterity, Nietzsche declared although God is dead his shadow will remain in caves for a thousand years (Nietzsche 2010, §108), meaning the symbolic and psychological space occupied by the divine will remain long past the point of exclusion from our consciousness. From this, a dissonance follows, which, it seems, haunts us still. By erasing the sacred, we were obliged to take its place. Because without reverence for something higher, there is only us. We can only worship ourselves; as attested by numerous scholarly accounts of the spread of narcissistic culture (e.g. Dedousis 2021; Twenge and Campbell 2009). What festivals (Nietzsche, §125) would have to be created to justify this? As Tuncel (2013) writes, ‘With the death of God, one festival is over; another festival is yet to start’. I propose that the dynamics of fitspiration, its incentivization structure—afforded by its host medium—have come to represent such a festival: the festivals of celebration in honor of our professed splendor—broadcasted into the digital infinitude of equivalent justificative celebrations. But can we escape the guilt of it not being real; the realization that perhaps, in our current state, most of us, steeped in the prevailing condition, might not be worthy of that reverence? This is a recipe for self-loathing and, to disguise and compensate for it, solipsistic narcissism, resulting in a culture of wretchedness.

As Nietzsche foresaw, humankind succumbs to nihilism through crises of meaning, if, by severing all ties to higher authority, it also loses reverence for the higher itself. All that remains is the sensualists wallowing in base pleasures. However, being possessed of strong, innate tendencies of religiosity (Bard and Söderqvist 2014; Becker 1997; Haidt 2013), we require some manner of psychological and philosophical ethos allowing for genuine reverence, even if it is to be directed merely at ourselves. Precisely such an ethos, I argue, is found in Nietzsche's conception of the higher self. If we are to be our own idols, revered as such, we must strive towards ideals worthy, and capable, of authentically cultivating it.

4. Conclusion

This article has attempted to further deepen our philosophical understanding of fitspiration and its potentially deleterious implications on moral psychology. Using Nietzsche's doctrines of The Last Man and the higher self, I have attempted to show how fitspiration is part symptom and part cause of developments that have a crippling effect on the pursuit and achievement of human flourishing. At the core of this process, is a form of social media hedonism, manifesting both in the consumption and production of its content. As sports cultures and associated practices continue to be shaped by social media, these elements may come to exert an increasingly large influence, gradually conditioning them to the hedonistic engagement so conducive of the medium, and thus strengthening their sway on society at large. While sports have the potential of promoting virtues encouraged by Nietzsche's moral philosophy, those values may suffer detractions if the emergent cultures surrounding them—constituted by the masses, not the elite few—succumb to the ethos of The Last Man. Studying the deeper implications of this, and considering ways of mitigating its detrimental effects, should be an ongoing task of sports philosophers going forward.

Admittedly, though the need to do so grows, heeding the words of Nietzsche is becoming increasingly difficult. Can his exacting exhortations finally constitute the cure of which he once prophesized? Was it ever a possibility? We are, after all, circumstantially constrained, unable to dislodge ourselves from the social (media) conditions of our time. But if we want to retain a sense of the higher, and a chance at realizing the noble culture capable of producing an abundance of flourishing, perhaps we must strive to do so *despite* the innate propensities of our minds to compel us otherwise: accepting—welcoming even—the discomforts which doing so imposes. The desirous mind, oftentimes more foe than friend, must be disciplinarily mastered, willfully restrained, and consciously and purposefully led: *not* by 'the hypnotized consent of the majority', but by detachment from the very same—in short, by becoming Nietzschean.

Social media hedonism, and the venues of self-display and -indulgence giving rise to it, shine new light on the relevance of the Nietzschean dichotomy of The Last Man and higher self within our present era, as they illustrate its real-life implications with rare clarity. In approaching the social condition of The Last Man, becoming transfixed by the trivial, the potentiality of the future is sacrificed for the vanity of the present. As we do, our capacity for realizing the potential of the higher self diminishes, because it is incompatible with Nietzsche's prescription for individual and cultural flourishing. The social and psychological mechanisms through which fitspiration has risen to cultural prominence are anti-Nietzschean. With global mental health seemingly in deterioration—symptomatic of the heralded crisis of meaning—and fitspiration attracting users by the millions, the social

media hedonism that defines it may come to expand into the new norm. But by adopting the ethos of the higher self, a reformulation of values could be instituted through which the debilitating implications of these trends are counteracted.

Note

1. In this paper, I align myself with the burgeoning Nietzsche scholarship attributing him the status of virtue ethicist. Although this might initially appear ill-fitting for the self-ascribed ‘first immoralist’ (Nietzsche 1992, XV, §2), it is a reading of ample tradition. Beginning with Walter Kaufmann (2013) and continuing through more recent decades, Nietzsche’s status as a proponent of virtue ethics enjoys substantial support (e.g. Alfano 2013; Brobjer 2003; Hunt 1993; Jonas and Yacek 2019; Slote 1998).

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their thorough readings and invaluable suggestions for improvements on this paper.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Aurélien Daudi  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4322-9916>

References

- AGGERHOLM, K. and S. HØJBJERRE LARSEN. 2018. Bubbles & Squat – did Dionysus just sneak into the fitness center? *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* 45 (2): 189–203. doi:10.1080/00948705.2018.1481415
- ALFANO, M. 2013. The most agreeable of all vices: Nietzsche as virtue epistemologist. *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 21 (4): 767–90. doi:10.1080/09608788.2012.733308
- ANIXIADIS, F., E.H. WERTHEIM, R. RODGERS, and B. CARUANA. 2019. Effects of thin-ideal instagram images: The roles of appearance comparisons, internalization of the thin ideal and critical media processing. *Body Image* 31: 181–90. doi:10.1016/j.bodyim.2019.10.005
- BÁNYAI, F., Á. ZSILA, O. KIRÁLY, A. MARAZ, Z. ELEKES, M.D. GRIFFITHS, C. ANDREASSEN, and Z. DEMETROVICS. 2017. Problematic social media use: Results from a large-scale nationally representative adolescent sample. *PLoS One* 12 (1): e0169839. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0169839
- BARD, A. and J. SÖDERQVIST. 2014. *Syntheism - Creating god in the internet age*, edited by J. Wright. Stockholm: Bookmark Förlag
- BECKER, E. 1997. *The denial of death*. New York: Free Press
- BROBJER, T. 2003. Nietzsche’s affirmative morality: An ethics of virtue. *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 26 (1):64–78. doi:10.1353/nie.2003.0020
- BUNZECK, N. and E. DÜZEL. 2006. Absolute coding of stimulus novelty in the human substantia Nigra/VTA. *Neuron* 51 (3): 369–79. doi:10.1016/j.neuron.2006.06.021
- CARROTTE, E.R., I. PRICHARD, and M.S.C. LIM. 2017. “Fitspiration” on social media: A content analysis of gendered images. *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 19 (3). doi:10.2196/jmir.6368
- CONANT, J. 2001. Nietzsche’s perfectionism: A Reading of Schopenhauer as Educator. In *Nietzsche’s Postmoralism: Essays on Nietzsche’s Prelude to Philosophy’s Future*, edited by R. Schacht. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: pp. 181–257

- DAUDI, A. 2022. The culture of narcissism: A philosophical analysis of “Fitspiration” and the Objectified Self. *Physical Culture and Sport: Studies and Research* 94 (1): 46–55. doi:10.2478/pcssr-2022-0005
- DAVIS, P. and L. EDWARDS. 2021. Derby girls’ parodic self-sexualizations: Autonomy, articulacy and ambiguity. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*: 1–18. doi:10.1080/17511321.2021.1965199
- DEDOUSIS, K. 2021. Doping as a Manifestation of a Narcissistic Civilization. *Sport, Ethics, and Philosophy* 15 (1): 88–102. doi:10.1080/17511321.2019.1638960
- DIBISCEGLIE, S. and D. ARIGO. 2021. Perceptions of #fitspiration activity on Instagram: Patterns of use, response, and preferences among fitstagrammers and followers. *Journal of Health Psychology* 26 (8): 1233–42. doi:10.1177/1359105319871656
- DONOVAN, C.L., L.R. UHLMANN, and N.J. LOXTON. 2020. Strong is the new skinny, but is it ideal?: A test of the tripartite influence model using a new measure of fit-ideal internalisation. *Body Image* 35: 171–80. doi:10.1016/j.bodyim.2020.09.002
- EASTON, S., K. MORTON, Z. TAPPY, D. FRANCIS, and L. DENNISON. 2018. Young people’s experiences of viewing the fitspiration social media trend: Qualitative study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 20 (6): e219. doi:10.2196/jmir.9156
- Epicurus. 2016. *Letter to Menoeceus*, edited by Hicks, R.D. Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
- FESTINGER, L. 1954. A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations* 7 (2): 117–40. doi:10.1177/001872675400700202
- FRANKL, V.E. 2006. *Man’s search for meaning*. Boston: Beacon Press
- FREUD, S. 2014. *On narcissism: An introduction*. Redditch, UK: Read Books Limited
- GRIFFIN, J. 1986. *Well-Being: Its meaning, measurement and moral importance*. Oxford: Clarendon Press
- HAIDT, J. 2006. *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*. New York: Basic Books.
- HAIDT, J. 2013. *The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion*. London: Penguin Books
- HAIDT, J. and J. TWENGE 2021. *Social media use and mental health: A review*. Unpublished manuscript, New York University. Available at <https://tinyurl.com/SocialMediaMentalHealthReview>
- HE, Q., O. TUREL, D. BREVERS, and A. BECHARA. 2017. Excess social media use in normal populations is associated with amygdala-striatal but not with prefrontal morphology. *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging* 269: 31–35. doi:10.1016/j.psychresns.2017.09.003
- HUDDLESTON, A. 2019. *Nietzsche on the Decadence and flourishing of culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- HUNT, L. 1993. *Nietzsche and the Origin of Virtue*. London, UK: Routledge
- JONAS, M.E. and D. YACEK. 2019. *Nietzsche’s philosophy of education: Rethinking ethics, equality and the good life in a democratic age*. London: Routledge
- JUNG, C.G. 2014. *Psychology and Religion Volume 11: West and East*, edited by R.F.C. Hull. London: Routledge
- KAKADE, S. and P. DAYAN. 2002. Dopamine: Generalization and bonuses. *Neural Networks* 15 (4):549–59. doi:10.1016/S0893-6080(02)00048-5
- KASS, A.A. and L. KASS. 2000. *Wing to Wing, Oar to Oar: Readings on courting and marrying*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press
- KAUFMANN, W. 2013. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*. Princeton: Princeton University Press
- KUBEY, R. and M. CSIKSZENTMIHALYI. 2002. Television Addiction is no mere metaphor. *Scientific American* 286: 74–80. doi:10.1038/scientificamerican0202-74
- LEITER, B. 2002. *Routledge philosophy guidebook to Nietzsche on morality*. London: Routledge
- MARKULA, P. and R. PRINGLE. 2006. *Foucault, sport and exercise. Power, knowledge and transforming the self*. London: Routledge
- MONAHAN, M. 2007. The practice of self-overcoming: Nietzschean reflections on the martial arts. *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* 34 (1): 39–51. doi:10.1080/00948705.2007.9714708
- MURASHKA, V., J. LIU, and Y. PENG. 2020. Fitspiration on instagram: Identifying topic clusters in user comments to posts with objectification features. *Health Communication* 36 (12): 1537–48. doi:10.1080/10410236.2020.1773702

- MYERS, T. and H. CROWTHER. 2009. Social comparison as a predictor of body dissatisfaction: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 118 (4): 683–98. doi:10.1037/a0016763
- NIETZSCHE, F. 1924. *The Antichrist*, edited by H.L. Mencken. New York: Alfred A. Knopf
- NIETZSCHE, F. 1974. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, edited by R.J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin Books
- NIETZSCHE, F. 1992. *Ecce Homo: How one becomes what one is*, edited by R.J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin Books
- NIETZSCHE, F. 1996. The Wanderer and his shadow. In *Human, All-Too Human*, edited by R. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 301–395.
- NIETZSCHE, F. 2003. *Beyond good and evil*, edited by R.J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin Adult
- NIETZSCHE, F. 2010. *The Gay science: With a prelude in rhymes and an appendix of songs*, edited by W. Kaufmann. New York: Random House
- NIETZSCHE, F. 2013. *On the Genealogy of morals: A Polemic*, edited by M.A. Scarpitti. London: Penguin Books
- NIETZSCHE, F. 2017. *The will to power*, edited by M.A. Scarpitti and R.K. Hill. London: Penguin Books
- PINKER, S. 2018. *Enlightenment now: The case for reason, science, humanism, and progress*. London: Penguin Books
- POSTMAN, N. 2005. *Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business*. London: Penguin Publishing Group
- ROSENBERG, M. 2008. Nietzsche, Competition and athletic ability. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 2 (3):274–84. doi:10.1080/17511320802475671
- SANTAROSSA, S., P. COYNE, C. LISINSKI, and S.J. WOODRUFF. 2019. #fitspo on Instagram: A mixed-methods approach using Netlytic and photo analysis, uncovering the online discussion and author/image characteristics. *Journal of Health Psychology* 24 (3): 376–85. doi:10.1177/1359105316676334
- SCHULTZ, W. 1998. Predictive reward signal of dopamine neurons. *Journal of Neurophysiology* 80 (1): 1–27. doi:10.1152/jn.1998.80.1.1
- SLOTE, M. 1998. Nietzsche and virtue ethics. *International Studies in Philosophy* 30 (3): 23–27. doi:10.5840/intstudphil199830353
- TIGGEMANN, M. and M. ZACCARDO. 2015. "Exercise to be fit, not skinny": The effect of fitspiration imagery on women's body image. *Body Image* 15: 61–67. doi:10.1016/j.bodyim.2015.06.003
- TIGGEMANN, M. and M. ZACCARDO. 2018. 'Strong is the new skinny': A content analysis of #fitspiration images on Instagram. *Journal of Health Psychology* 23 (8): 1003–11. doi:10.1177/1359105316639436
- TOSI, J. and B. WARMKE. 2016. Moral Grandstanding. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 44 (3): 197–217. doi:10.1111/papa.12075
- TRUEMAN, C.R. 2020. *The rise and triumph of the modern self: Cultural amnesia, expressive individualism, and the road to sexual revolution*. Wheaton: Crossway
- TUNCCEL, Y. 2013. Nietzsche, mass/social media, and the question of education and spectacle. *The Agonist* 6 (1, 2): 46–56.
- TUNCCEL, Y. 2016. Nietzsche, sport, and contemporary culture. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 10 (4):349–63. doi:10.1080/17511321.2016.1275352
- TUREL, O., Q. HE, G. XUE, L. XIAO, and A. BECHARA. 2014. Examination of neural systems sub-serving facebook "Addiction". *Psychological Reports* 115 (3):675–95. doi:10.2466/18.PR0.115c31z8
- TWENGE, J.M. 2018. *iGen: Why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy—and completely unprepared for adulthood—and what that means for the rest of us*. New York: Atria Books
- TWENGE, M. and W. CAMPBELL. 2009. *The Narcissism epidemic: Living in the age of entitlement*. New York: Free Press
- WEIJERS, D.M. 2012. *Hedonism and happiness in theory and practice*. Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington