

What I'm Reading (Jan. 3)



By Chuck Dinerstein, MD, MBA — January 3, 2020

It's a New Year and we begin with watermelon-flavored Oreos (huh?) ... a look at now and then ... and the mainstream media finally realizes that the opioid epidemic was not about prescribing pain medications for pain.



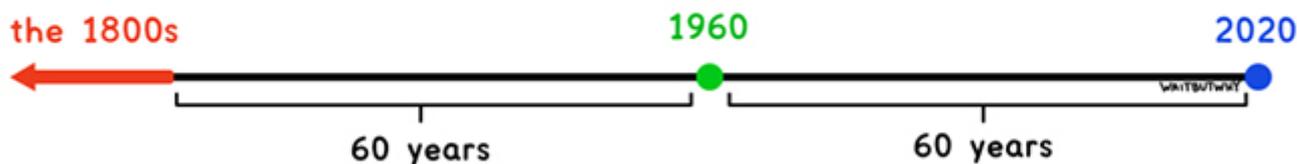
You have to admire their concentration.
Image courtesy of i410h1r on Pixabay [1]

“Shopping focus groups typically tell us what works. However, four researchers discovered precisely the opposite. They identified a group that gets it wrong every time. As they explained, “The people who are buying failures keep buying failures.” What’s odd though is that it’s not just one item. They do it throughout the supermarket. They buy a doomed new shampoo and then an ill-fated soda flavor.”

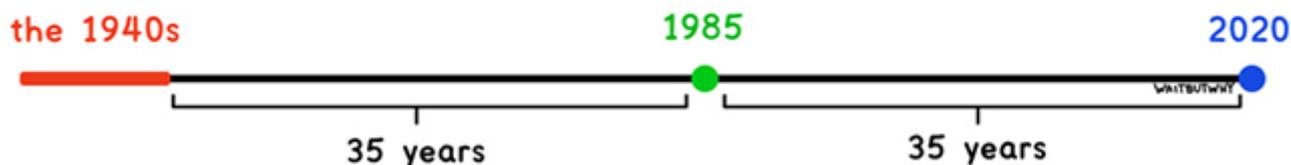
From the always helpful Elaine Schwartz’s Econlife, [The People Who Loved Watermelon Flavored Oreos](#) [2] The [summary](#) [3] of the actual research is worth the quick read.

For some reason, the New Year makes me feel a bit older, a belief that my bodily aches reinforce. But this graphic caught my eye

As for you, if you're 60 or older, you were born closer to the 1800s than today.



Today's 35-year-olds were born closer to the 1940s than to today.



Old indeed. You can see the other comparison here at the website, Wait, but Why? in a post entitled [It's 2020 and you're in the future](#). [4]

“In 2015, Jennifer Silva, a professor of sociology and anthropology at Bucknell University, began interviewing people in the coal region of northeastern Pennsylvania. She was working on a project, which would become the book *We’re Still Here*, about how poor and working-class Americans were affected by the collapse of the coal industry—the major job provider in the region.

She was curious how the regional decline might have shaped her subjects’ politics. But she quickly noticed a startling trend alongside the growing unemployment: Her subjects and their families were struggling with opioid abuse.”

The ACSH has been at the forefront of discussing how the opioid crisis was not about prescribing pain medications for chronic pain, it was about diversion and fentanyl. In this issue of the Atlantic, which takes as its starting point a new JAMA study demonstrating a linkage between unemployment and increased opioid use, the socioeconomics of the opioid plague are becoming clearer. [The True Cause of the Opioid Epidemic](#) [5]

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Links

[1] <https://pixabay.com/photos/toddler-reading-kids-fashion-3995508/>

[2] <https://econlife.com/2019/12/unusual-demand-for-new-products/>

[3] https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/the_customers_you_do_not_want

[4] <https://waitbutwhy.com/2020/01/its-2020-and-youre-in-the-future.html>

[5] <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/01/what-caused-opioid-epidemic/604330/>