

My First Half-Century in the Iron Game

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Hitler, I believe, said it first . . . “If you tell a big enough lie and tell it enough times, it becomes the truth.” (Or words to that effect.) Joe Weider, for his part, has been stating in his ads he has been “The Trainer of Champions since 1936.” Or 1938, depending upon which ad you read. If so, then he gained that title when he was fourteen years old. Personally, having observed his career from the moment he first came on the scene, I would be more inclined to call him the “Bilker of Chumps.”

In his first magazines, which were nothing short of pitiful even by the standards of the time, Weider frequently used himself as a model to demonstrate exercises; but he was very careful not to identify the pictures as being of him, probably because he was a very skinny kid with about as much muscle as a survivor of one of Hitler’s death camps.

Over the years Joe has had quite a lot to say about the “Weider Research Clinic,” which, in fact, is a figment of his imagination, since nothing of the sort ever existed. If Weider has ever invested as much as a dime in research it has not come to my attention; nevertheless, he has not been at all hesitant about giving himself full credit for having discovered everything from sex to money, including fire, the wheel and damned near anything else you can name.

Shortly after I introduced the first Nautilus machines in 1970, together with the truly rational approach to the subject of exercise, Joe published about six long articles that were nothing short of savage attacks on me; according to him, everything I said was not only a lie but was a dangerous lie. Why? I don’t really know why, and asking Joe would not get you the answer because Joe apparently makes it a practice to never tell the truth about anything. But I suspect that he was afraid that I might steal some credit away from him, might expose a few of his lies for just what they were.

But, following Hitler’s advice about lies, Joe has managed to survive and grow, and has managed to convince millions of poor fools that he was the solution to their problems. And, strangely enough for Joe, being a Jew, he seems to actually admire Hitler; but, if not, then just why does he have his house crammed with Nazi symbols and souvenirs?

I read Hitler’s book, *Mein Kampf*, in the original German very shortly after it was published, and later read it in English; but I did not do so because I admired him, did so rather because even then I realized that he was a very dangerous man. If people like Roosevelt and Churchill had read it, and paid careful attention to what he said, millions of lives might have been saved, because he clearly spelled out his plans long before he had the power to carry them out.

And while his crimes are only now coming to light, Stalin was even more dangerous than Hitler; while Hitler was killing an estimated six million people in his death camps, Stalin killed more than twenty million of his own people.

Fortunately, Joe Weider has never quite managed to get his hands on anything close to the power that Hitler and Stalin had, but he has managed to lead a few million people down the Primrose Path of his false promises, while getting rich in the process. The only thing that now confuses me about him is just how he managed to stay out of jail for so long; over the years he has been charged with criminal fraud several times, but so far as I know nothing ever came of these charges although proving them would have been very easy.

Truly meaningful research, none of which Joe has ever even attempted, is a very difficult undertaking, requires a lot of time, money and hard work, and usually leads to failure; at best, usually teaches you one or more things that don’t work, while seldom telling you just why they do not work. In the field of exercise, meaningful research was even more difficult than it was in other fields of interest; primarily because it was simply impossible until fairly recently to measure the results of any exercise program. Nevertheless, thousands of people tried, and all of them failed; but very few of these failed researchers would even admit that their work was a failure.

Instead, they published hundreds of utterly stupid theories while suggesting all sorts of things that were not only worthless but were sometimes dangerous. And, of course, almost every time some new and utterly stupid theory came to his attention, Joe started claiming credit for it.

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As of the moment, June 28, 1995, I have invested more than \$100,000,000.00 in research on the subject of exercise; and, as of the moment, I have never had so much as a dime in the way of a return on that investment. Not directly, at least; although I have learned a lot of things that did eventually help to produce some income. Not all of this research was performed by me or by people employed by me, but all of it was paid for by me; at a total cost to me of many millions of dollars, more than sixty different large-scale, long-term research programs have been conducted at the School of Medicine of the University of Florida, Gainesville.

But, apart from paying for this research, I have had no slightest influence on it; I did not design the research programs, did not have anything to do with any of these programs while they were ongoing, did not have anything to do with the evaluation of the results, was not involved in writing up the results for publication and made no attempt to influence this research in any manner. I was not, in fact, even aware of these programs until after the fact, until after they had been completed and submitted for publication to some journal. My involvement was strictly “hands off,” conducted at “arms length.”

After the fact, after these studies were written up for publication, I did not always agree with the stated conclusions, usually because the researchers had overlooked something that I knew that was outside their range of knowledge; but even then I made no attempt to change the published results, even when I knew that some of their conclusions were wrong.

Totally apart from the research at the University in Gainesville, I have performed and paid for several other major studies over a period of more than twenty years: in 1972 I conducted a long-term research program in DeLand, Florida, in an attempt to determine the value of “Negative-only” exercise; in 1973, at Colorado State University, I conducted the so-called Colorado Experiment; at the United States Military Academy, West Point, in 1975, I conducted large-scale research using military cadets as subjects; and, apart from those studies, I have either performed or funded several other research projects in a number of different locations.

Most of this research was simply wasted, time and money down the tube to no purpose; but that, unavoidably, is the nature of research, you never know for sure until you actually try it. And then you still don't know anything of value until you have the tools that are required to produce meaningful, accurate, specific tests of human functional ability, strength, ranges of motion and muscular endurance. None of which tools even existed when I first started this research; the tools that did exist were worse than worthless, were incapable of performing any of their intended functions.

So, since such tools did not exist, I set out to design and build them; a program of research and development that was started in January of 1972 and is still ongoing now more than twenty-three years later. It took us fourteen years and more than \$40,000,000.00 to develop the first tool that worked properly; while, in the meantime, hundreds of other people continued to perform scientific research with utterly worthless tools. Tools that are still being used by hundreds of idiots who are so stupid that they should be locked up in a cage in order to protect the public.

I was no longer a “spring chicken” when I started this research, and because of the time that it took to develop the first, and still the only, meaningful tools for our intended purpose, it is almost certain that no benefits of my work and investment will ever be forthcoming within my lifetime; but, so be it, eventually millions of people will benefit from these developments. But there is probably only one thing that we can count on for sure: eventually, if he is then still alive, Joe Weider will attempt to take full credit for my lifetime of work. And if not him then there will be a long list of others trying to claim the credit. Count on it.