

Call for Papers

Decolonizing Fitness: Women of Color, Feminism, and the Politics of “Fit” Bodies

Deadline for Abstracts: May 1, 2014

Notifications: May 30, 2014

First Draft Due: October 1, 2014

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Several works have broken ground in critical feminist approaches to fitness, including Leslie Heywood’s *Bodymakers: A Cultural Anatomy of Women’s Bodybuilding*, Shari L. Dworkin and Faye Linda Wachs’ *Body Panic: Gender Health and the Selling of Fitness*, Sarah Hentges’ *Women and Fitness in American Culture*, and, notably, Kimberly Lau’s ethnography *Body Language: Sisters in Shape, Black Women’s Fitness, and Feminist Identity*. However, no single book has heretofore gathered the voices and experiences of women of color to discuss the intersections of feminist theory and the study and practice of fitness.

The question “What does it mean for women of color to engage in the pursuit of fitness?” is at the core of this edited interdisciplinary anthology that seeks scholarly and creative non-fiction essays by women of color on the (cult)ure of fitness, feminist approaches to exercise and sport, representations of “fit” bodies, and, more generally, the racial, gender, class, sexual, and ableist implications of the fitness and exercise industry.

In addition to this key question, submissions may address issues such as: What assumptions do fitness media make about bodies? Class? Environment? Beauty ideals? How and to what extent does the

neoliberal logic of healthism/fitism create tyrannies of health and aesthetics that colonize the meaning and “look” of fitness?

This anthology welcomes submissions that discuss the use of social technologies to expand definitions of fitness, dispel myths about health and exercise, and build supportive communities around the social and material realities of women of color. Additionally, the anthology encourages essays that discuss local and (intern)national fitness movements and initiatives, as well as works on the use of group fitness to build community.

Topics can include but are not limited to women of color and the following:

- Neoliberalist Rhetorics of Healthism/Fitism
- Hegemonic Representations of “Fit” Bodies in the media
- Racialization of fitness/exercise
- Rhetorics of fitness
- Fitness and academia
- The “spectacle” of gym/outdoor exercise
- Fitness and social justice activism
- Fit bodies as moral/good bodies
- Exercise as meditation
- Integrative strategies (i.e. meditation and health)
- Fitness and consumerism
- Competing cultural constructions of beauty
- Fitness clothing and women of color bodies
- Body shaming, as it relates to fat, fit bodies, lean bodies, and muscular bodies
- Fitness blogs/Facebook pages
- Healing from trauma through exercise
- Fitness collectives and communities
- Cultural myths about fitness/sport
- Tyranny of aesthetics
- Fitness and citizenship/belonging
- The built environment
- Folklore around health and fitness

Please send in a Microsoft Word file (docx):

1. An abstract of 150-250 words that summarizes the main arguments and themes of the essay, as well as the contributions of the piece to Feminist/Women’s Studies,
2. A list of 5-7 keywords included after the abstract.
3. A brief biography (50-75 words) and contact information.

Abstracts must be submitted electronically to decolonizingfitness@gmail.com no later than midnight May 1, 2014.