1-1-1997

Exercising authority: A critical history of exercise messages in popular magazines, 1925-1968

Dahn Edward Shaulis

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EXERCISING AUTHORITY: A CRITICAL HISTORY

OF EXERCISE MESSAGES IN

POPULAR MAGAZINES

1925-1968

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

Department of Sociology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
August 1998

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The Dissertation prepared by

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Exercising Authority: A Critical History of Exercise Messages in

Popular Magazines, 1925-1968

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

Examination Committee Chair

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze exercise messages in American popular magazines. A critical perspective and historical sociological methods were used to examine more than 500 magazine articles published from 1925 to 1968. A common factor in many articles was the use of ideology mixes. Magazines used biomedicalization, materialism, nationalism, and patriarchy in several combinations to authorize restrictive exercise norms. Exercise norms were stratified by age, class, gender, and race, but changing ideology mixes and exercise norms often reflected changes in society. Biomedicalization authorized doctors as gatekeepers. It prescribed moderate activity for affluent men, but discouraged vigorous exercise for physical laborers, women, and people over 40 years of age. Biomedicalization initially discouraged vigorous activity for boys and men then prescribed it for cardiac patients. Patriarchy promoted women’s figure consciousness and authorized relaxing or passive exercise and dieting to attain changing standards of beauty. Patriarchy also reminded women of parenting and housework obligations which provided exercise as work. Materialism authorized greater social support and exercise commodities for affluent people, but intellectuals used materialism to trivialize exercise as alienating low-class work. Racism was rarely overt, but status quo racism was implied by the invisibility of minority images and materialist exclusion by class. Nationalism commanded male youth to exercise for survival, and it promoted female youth
for national security, but it had limited influence during peacetime. The analysis indicates that messages varied between exercise promotion and deterrence before exercise gained greater legitimacy in the 1950s and 1960s. However, media messages continued to reinforce sedentary behavior and contemporary resistance against exercise. Exercise messages have: (1) been restrictive and contradictory, (2) promoted negative myths regarding exercise in its relationship with productivity, health and weight loss, and (3) reinforced consumer desires and expectations for “fast and easy” results. Judging the power of magazine messages is problematic, however. Many poor people were not privy to magazine messages, and magazine consumers likely ignored or defied various messages by reading selectively. Further research should identify contemporary ideology mixes in sophisticated health and sedentary media messages. Practically, the ultimate goal is to advance consumer awareness and decision-making.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank many people for their support in this scholarly “exercise.” Dr. Andy Fontana, my dissertation advisor, allowed me to select an undervalued topic. He also offered key insights regarding aging and medicine. Dr. Jim Frey taught me the rigors of research and provided vital information on sport. Dr. Barb Brents provided key information on historical sociology, critical theory, and aging and helped me focus on well-defined, manageable research questions. Dr. Cynthia Carruthers provided a valuable “outsider” perspective with scholarly insights on leisure. I also thank UNLV Sociology Department members for their assistance. Veona Hunsinger and Lynne Wolfe helped me brave the university bureaucracy countless times. David Dickens and Simon Gottschalk provided information on critical theory, popular culture, and qualitative methods. Maralee Mayberry and Lynn Osborne provided key insights on gender and class, and Donald Carns helped me critically analyze statistics. Outside of the department, I thank Lawrence Golding and John Lucas for sharing their love of exercise and sport and UNLV librarians Maurice Ware and Christine Wiattrowski for their professional wisdom and patience. I thank Jan Johnson at Audit Bureau of Circulations and Dr. David Altheide for their information on magazine circulations and media influence. Most importantly, I thank my wife Lynn Shaulis and best man Jerry Lopez for their love, understanding, and support.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

America is largely a sedentary culture. That is, most Americans devote large portions of their lives to sitting: monitoring computer screens, watching television, and riding automobiles between sitting venues. Once a status of the professional elite, sitting is a common position to all classes (Collins 1954). People continue to labor under high stress and fatigue, but in a culture of mechanized work, transportation, and leisure: step saving homes, power tools, drive-through businesses, remote control televisions, spectator entertainment, computers, and reclining chairs (Mergenhagen 1997; Griffin 1997; Haskell 1996; Fitzgerald et al. 1994; Goldstein 1992).

As a consequence of this sedentary culture, society is plagued by expensive health problems. Morbid obesity, lower back pain, high blood pressure and cholesterol, diseases of the heart, lungs, and blood vessels, type II diabetes, osteoporosis and mental depression are classified as diseases, but they also represent symptoms of a widening sedentary population (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1996; Galuska et al. 1996; Landers 1997). Medical and pharmaceutical treatments for these conditions are available, but with great economic and social burdens attached (Powell and Blair 1994; Serow and Sly 1992; McGinnis 1992; Keeler et al. 1989).
Some cultural messages call for people to exercise to reduce the high costs of sedentary behavior. Physical educators, health researchers, government epidemiologists, and some doctors claim that exercise is a low-cost method to reduce the impact of many lifestyle diseases and disabilities for all ages and ability levels (Shephard 1997; McPherson 1994; Jones and Eaton 1994; Fiatarone, O'Brien, and Rich 1996; Gettman 1996). These messages are highlighted by the first Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health that outlined Americans' sedentary behavior and the benefits of regular physical activity for everyone (Department of Health and Human Services 1996). Thousands of television programs, magazine articles and books extol the benefits of exercise for all (Koop 1995). Exercise participation, however, appears to have declined since the 1980s (Taylor 1991; Robinson and Godbey 1997).

Exercise proponents claim that exercise may allow many elders to live more independently, with a higher quality-of-life. Researchers use the terms “compressed morbidity,” “increased health span,” and “successful aging” to describe the potential for reducing disability, and identify exercise as a vital component in the process (Spirduso 1994; Rowe and Kahn 1987; Fries 1990). Exercise researchers and physical therapists believe that many disabled elders may be able to regain strength, endurance, and coordination essential for activities-of-daily-living (ADLs) when they receive exercise therapy (Fiatarone et al. 1996).

Surveys indicate, however, that people over 65 years of age are least likely to engage in regular exercise and their inactivity is reinforced by their beliefs. Sedentary elders often assume that their activity levels are sufficient to stay healthy or that exercise is too costly (Clark 1995; Richter et al. 1993; Vertinsky and Auman 1988). Others believe they
are too old, disabled, or unwell to begin exercise and that their disability is a normal part of aging (Chogahara et al. 1998; Rice and Okun 1994; Ostrow 1984; Wilcox 1992; Rudman 1989). Preventive visits by physicians encouraging exercise may not convince elders to become more physically active (Burton et al. 1995). Worse yet, elder subgroups most likely to benefit from exercise (e.g. women, ethnic minorities, working-class) appear least active (Yusuf et al. 1996; Clark 1995; Yeager et al. 1993).

Critical social scientists believe that some differences in exercise behavior may be related to stratified cultural messages. For example, women and older adults have been historically excluded from various forms of exercise and exercise promoting messages. Exercise deterring messages in medical literature reflected and reinforced this exclusion (Vertinsky 1991). When deterring messages were internalized, women would maintain these messages as lifetime personal beliefs (Vertinsky and Auman 1988). Historical analysis is one method of identifying differing exercise messages. Although this type of research has been limited to a few studies, it has the potential for helping researchers understand social aspects of exercise behavior not usually measured in surveys (Vertinsky 1995; Park 1995; Henderson et al. 1989).

**Purpose of the Dissertation**

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine exercise messages in American popular magazines, using a critical sociological perspective and historical methods. This project examines magazines from 1925 to 1968 as primary sources with supporting evidence from Historical Statistics, Gallup Polls, and other surveys, and professional journals and books in sociology and history. Age, class gender, and race are examined as potential factors in stratified exercise messages. More than an academic study, this
dissertation should help health professionals and health researchers understand why it may be difficult to convince large segments of the population to exercise regularly.

The dissertation is organized into four sections to facilitate social-historical understanding of the problem. The first section explains and describes the critical methodology and social-historical methods of this study. The second section reviews secondary sources in sport history, sociology of sport and leisure, sociology of aging, and history of magazines that give historical and sociological background to the study. The third section analyzes popular magazines from 1925 to 1968 as primary sources for exercise messages. This segment shows how magazines employed ideologies to promote stratified exercise norms by gender, class, age, and race. Their impact is placed in a wider social context and across three periods to examine continuity and change. Conflict between ideologies and resistance to exercise messages are analyzed. The final section synthesizes information from the three periods and explains how past exercise messages are relevant to current health policy and exercise promotion, for women and men, elders and children, working-class laborers and racial minorities, in an increasingly sedentary society.
CHAPTER 2

METHODS

Critical Methodology

Historical sociology is sociological analysis of historical information. Theoretically, it differs from history by constructing generalizations about society rather than by describing unique events. Historical comparative methods are social science methods used to define, classify, describe, and measure historical data in establishing sociological explanation (Smelser 1976). Critical researchers, however, note the limitations of historical methods for making sociological generalizations (Tuchman 1995; Gotham and Staples 1996). Critical researchers have different disciplinary and philosophical backgrounds, varying research agendas, and divergent ideas on policy (Morrow and Brown 1994). Despite lack of consensus among critical researchers, several methodological assumptions have been attributed to critical research. This chapter describes assumptions and methods of the critical paradigm and discusses how historical-comparative methods will be applied in this study within a critical framework.

Three major assumptions guide the critical paradigm. The first assumption of the critical paradigm is that social change is possible through social awareness and social action. Critical theorists have recommended a variety of ways to create social change,
ranging from the personal (critical reflection) to the macro-social (revolution). This assumption does not suggest that social change is easily or simply done. Rather, the second assumption of the critical paradigm is that dominant ideologies and power structures constrain progressive social change. People are raised in a social system, internalize its rules, and often accept society as it exists. Overarching structures such as economics, and institutions such as corporations, public education, media, and families profoundly affect our lives, whether we support or oppose the laws, norms, and values that the system generates, depend on the resources that the system allocates, or attempt to oppose ideologies that support the system. The third assumption directs authors to challenge dominant systems and ideologies that oppress people despite their power and influence. Social critics in the past have played roles in confronting the oppressive qualities of capitalism, fascism, patriarchy, materialism, and media control. By challenging dominant systems and ideologies, and providing information to oppressed groups, sociologists can assist in social change, hopefully for the betterment of society (Fay 1987; Kincheloe and McLaren 1994).

Following the aforementioned assumptions, three methods serve the critical paradigm. These methods are immanent critique, quasi-causal laws, and reflexivity. Immanent critique is a means of detecting societal contradictions and challenging authority (Held 1980; Antonio, 1981). Immanent critique may be used to highlight the contradictions between the ideals of equal opportunity and the reality that opportunities are distributed unequally among social groups. Quasi-causal laws affirm that patterns of social activity exist. Unlike modern social science laws, quasi-causal laws are not acknowledged as permanent patterns. Instead, they are viewed as historical tendencies that describe reified
Patterns exist only as long as people act according to a particular ideology, but when people think and act differently, society can change (Fay 1975; Fay 1987). Reflexivity indicates that all people are influenced by their social surroundings, and thus the methods that one uses, the conclusions that one produces, and the policies that one favors are all "value mediated" social and historical products (Guba and Lincoln 1994). Reflexivity directs that sociologists understand their authorial positions and carefully consider the consequences of their works (Mills 1959). This does not mean that the author produces a self-absorbing text. Rather, reflexivity should mean the author addresses one's biases to produce a text that is relevant, particularly to those who have been oppressed (Fay 1975; Leonard 1990; Kincheloe and McLaren 1994).

Historical-Comparative Methods and Their Limitations

Historical-Comparative (H-C) methods have a long but problematic tradition in sociology. Classical theorists such as Karl Marx and Max Weber used H-C methods to formulate significant ideas about society (Lloyd 1988). Contemporary theorists such as Charles Tilly, Theda Skocpol and Gaye Tuchman have used similar methods to reinterpret social history. Despite this tradition, a generation largely dismissed H-C methods as primitive techniques. Since the 1980s, however, H-C methods have regained some popularity and legitimacy (Smith 1991).

Historical-Comparative methods are an array of strategies to examine and interpret society and social change. These methods are often qualitative and inductive, though they may include quantitative and deductive elements. Researchers have tentative thoughts
about the subject area, but they usually analyze multiple sources before establishing generalizations (Skocpol 1984). For the H-C researcher, examination involves reading a variety of sources and immersing oneself in historical and cultural remnants that are available. Yet researchers focus on a manageable area of time, space, and culture, because sources are seemingly infinite and resources such as research time and money are finite (Neuman 1994).

Contemporary H-C methods cannot generate “valid” social scientific answers (Gotham and Staples 1996). Rather, H-C analysis is an interpretive process seeking a narrative of trustworthy and credible answers. Contemporary theorists reexamine historical records, bring in new historical sources, and reinterpret earlier social histories. Unfortunately, many works are published in an unreflective narrative that fails to explain the author's role in collecting, examining, and interpreting records (Sparkes 1995). The result is that readers are uninformed in how specific historical research is conducted, or how one should conduct H-C research in general. Methods texts, however, shed some light on how plausible research should be conducted (Neuman 1994).

Writing a social historical text is difficult. Two general guidelines, however, improve a researcher's odds of creating a trustworthy product. First, critical historical methods require a difficult balance between subjectivity and objectivity. Authors should recognize and account for biases that might affect the outcome of the results. They should also at least briefly acknowledge their biases in the text to inform their audience (Sparkes 1995). At the same time, researchers should have some degree of objectivity. That is, they should not allow their world-views completely predetermine the conclusions (Reitzel and Lindemann 1982). This balance between subjectivity and objectivity also applies to
critically evaluating historical groups and individuals. Researchers must consider the
world-views of authors and the deeds of historical actors in social historical context or “on
its own terms” (Park 1983), yet not “deny or deflect” past misdeeds (Lyman 1996: 623).
Likewise, researchers should balance the historical role of social structures and ideologies
with the possibility of human agency (Stryker 1996) and contingency (Quadagno and
Knapp 1992). In other words, one should recognize that social change is possible, but that
individual and group action are required. Most importantly, social scientist should not
blindly accept the rhetoric of contemporary authors even when there are personal or
political advantages for doing so (Stryker 1996).

The second general guideline for historical analysis is to acknowledge the
complexity of social history and address the limitations of doing historical research. In this
study, for example, merely attempting to define key concepts such as exercise, work,
leisure, sport, recreation, and middle-class is contingent on factors such as time and social
circumstances (Shivers and deLisle 1997; Craven 1958; Parker 1983). Surveys that have
asked information regarding exercise are difficult to compare not only because survey
questions have changed, but because the meanings and expectations of the respondents are
contingent on fluctuating social-historical forces (Robinson et al. 1993). Words can change
meaning from one generation to the next, and be different to people within a generation.
Age, class, gender, and race are some factors in cultural meanings. Thus the process of
defining concepts requires critically analyzing individual documents while developing a
broader context for the sources.

The process of locating materials and analyzing information is not as systematic as
one might believe from reading a social history. Readers usually see a polished text that
fails to mention the pitfalls of conducting research. For the sake of those untried in historical methods, Reitzel and Lindemann (1982) provide a brief description of the process:

Researchers first make a mental catalog of their information and sources. Then they frame questions that will guide them in their preliminary research. On the basis of this research they form several hypotheses, or to use the term by historians, interpretations. With these they try to analyze the preliminary data. Then they undertake more intensive research to check their interpretations. As they progress in their research, they discard some theories, and on the basis of new information they refine their interpretations or frame entirely new ones (p. 170).

Reitzel and Lindemann (1982: 171) allow a glimpse of the arcane methods of historical research when they acknowledge that "standards are learned by analogy and practice in the course of a lengthy 'apprenticeship.'" The process involves an interaction with teachers: studying examples of good and bad scholarship, developing analytical skills, writing papers, and developing special research skills in particular areas of history. Bibliographic skills, such as finding source indexes, bibliographies, and knowing key words, are essential for locating primary and secondary sources.

Historical-comparative concepts and assumptions are continuously reshaped in a dialectical process that includes orientation reading, organizing concepts, and subdividing areas to guide research (Neuman 1994). Orientation reading includes an analysis of secondary sources from sociology and history presented in chapter three. Supporting evidence is obtained from government and corporate records, newspapers, books, and journal articles from a variety of disciplines. Popular American magazines indexed in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* serve as the primary sources for observing...
exercise messages. The various sources are compared throughout the research process rather than in a strictly serial fashion.

In most studies research is constrained by time and other resources, and samples are used to make generalizations. One of the most difficult tasks of this project was gathering sources with a meager budget. With librarians' assistance, the university library was sufficient for gathering some sources. I was able to gather information via interlibrary loan, and online catalogs and indexes such as Sport Discus, Sociofile, Medline, Academic Index, and ERIC.

Though random sampling is not possible in this study, sampling procedures are still important for establishing plausible historical interpretations. Ideally the historical researcher attempts to gather an exhaustive number of sources to compensate for the inherent problems of sampling (Neuman 1994). As a researcher, I acknowledge this study as one story among a myriad of possible interpretations, and attempt to use a variety of sources for this text.

Bowdlerization and naive unit comparison are two traps that make historical analysis problematic (Neuman 1994). Bowdlerization means that historical sources may only give us one side of a story, thus images that we find may not reflect the social situation. Documents do not demonstrate the truth. They only present us with information, painted by the biases of the authors and interpreted through the biases of the reader. Unit comparison suggests that words and objects have different meanings in different cultures and in different periods and that comparing participation statistics may be problematic. One reason for performing this study is because the definition of exercise has been
historically and socially ambiguous, even in social scientific research (Robinson et al. 1993).

Specific Methods for This Study

In this project, articles listed in the Reader's Guide under the heading "Exercise" are considered the primary sources or sample. Random sampling cannot be achieved in this study for at least two reasons other than time and resource constraints. First, the universe of cultural remnants in this project is unknown. Even the best researchers are unaware of documents or resources that may be used in establishing interpretations. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the available sources are not representative of the population, because select groups often control information dissemination (Reitzel and Lindemann 1982)

As a critical researcher, I must examine, and acknowledge to readers, biases that may affect my interpretations. Ideologies and stratification are not merely theoretical constructs, but real factors in my life chances. As a happily married, middle-class White American, male heterosexual, Baby Boomer, with no children, financially supported by his wife, I have had privileged opportunities for sport and other life chances. My life as a suburban and rural lower-middle-class boy in the 1960s and 1970s, baseball and basketball dropout in the 1970s, track and field All-American in the 1980s, student in sociology, history, sport science, and exercise physiology, cashier, military officer, youth soccer coach, university women's cross-country assistant coach, mining claim-staker, hot-stamp, printer, gym worker, graduate assistant, Las Vegas Track Club member, and Senior Olympic volunteer have also given me biased perspectives on exercise and culture, both

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grounded and theoretical, but always physically active. My work on the Ph.D. has also
given me the opportunity to experience sedentary culture for the first time. While I spend
untold hours in sedentary reading and writing, I “try to find time” to keep my 38-year-old
body and mind balanced, by running, riding a stationary bicycle-arm machine to radio
programs, playing basketball with university students and professors, doing housework,
lifting weights irregularly, and “finding excuses” to walk to the library as often as possible.

One question that readers may ask regarding this study is “Why did the author
select popular magazines from 1925 to 1968 for his analysis?” First, I wanted to examine
the temporal and perhaps generational nature of exercise messages. Examining more than
four decades of exercise messages would cut across at least two generations. While
researching earlier eras would be historically interesting, it would also be of nostalgic
interest to elders who have experienced these times. Second, this analysis bridges the gap
between previous works. In my opinion, recent books and journal articles have interpreted
key ideas regarding exercise before 1925 and after 1968. In regard to the use of
magazines, I selected this medium because it provided a systematic national sample with an
available list. I used the New York Times Index and other indexes for supporting evidence,
but a systematic analysis of newspapers throughout the nation would require a herculean
effort. My analysis was limited only to articles listed in the Reader's Guide to Periodical
Literature under the heading “exercise.” Heading areas using key words such as physical
education, sport, recreation, leisure, physical fitness, diet, and health would have been
helpful in generating a greater understanding of exercise, but time was a constraining
factor. Another limitation in this research is that is that the Reader's Guide did not
catalogue some popular exercise magazines, such as Physical Culture, nor did it index many articles that one might consider exercise articles.

A key weakness of analyzing magazines by themselves is that they often reflected middle-class bias (Reissman 1954; Ohman 1996). Therefore, I used other sources, such as Historical Statistics of the United States (1975), the Gallup Poll Index (1972), the U.S. Nationwide Recreation Surveys (U.S. Department of the Interior 1983), articles from Current Biography, and other recreation, sport, leisure, and health surveys as supporting evidence. Seminal works by sociologists Lundberg et al. (1958), Pitirim Sorokin (1939) and Jesse Steiner (1933), essays of mass leisure edited by Larrabee and Meyersohn (1958), and time budget studies by John P. Robinson since 1965 (Robinson and Godbey 1997) were also vital. My secondary sources began with works in sociology of sport, sociology of leisure, sociology of aging, and sport history. Edited works by David Wiggins (1995) and Eisen and Wiggins (1994) provided a limited amount of information on race and ethnicity and sport previously unavailable but still lacking in quantity. Reading continued with bibliographies of leisure science by Rolf Meyersohn (1969) and sport and physical education history by Earle Zeigler et al. (1971), and a limited number of Black and minority histories, urban and suburban histories, and histories of social trends and fads.

Several concepts must be defined for this study. In this study, an ideology is defined as a cluster of beliefs, values, and norms used as a form of social control and justification for social interests and power. When accepted and internalized, these ideas become part of social consciousness and affect group behavior (Mark 1973; Larrain 1979; Eagleton 1992:1-2). Patriarchy is defined as the ideology supporting male power (Marshall 1994:383). Biomedicalization is defined as the ideology supporting the power of
medicine and science (Marshall 1994:321). Materialism is defined as the ideology supporting capitalism, class stratification, and consumption (Marshall 1994:315-317). Nationalism is defined as the ideology supporting national loyalty and national identification (Marshall 1994:347-348). Racism is defined as the ideology supporting racial inequality (Marshall 1994:435). Stratification is the basic sociological concept for identifying inequality in the distribution of power and resources. Resistance, however, points to the ability to challenge ideological hegemony and perhaps create progressive social change (Gruneau 1983; Sage 1990; Dunning and Rojek 1992). Substantive examples of these ideologies are presented in the review of literature.

Historical-comparative analysis is used to compare and contrast exercise messages and identify stratification in exercise messages. Forms, instances, sources, and questions provide a framework for developing plausible historical interpretations and for providing a lens into social history (Tilly 1984). As noted in Figure 1, the forms of (a) biomedicalization, (b) materialism, (c) nationalism, (d) patriarchy, and (e) racism are distinct bins in the file. Age, class, gender, and race serve as dividers within each bin. Instances (e.g. magazine articles) are substantive cases that fill the bins chronologically. Historical instances may relate to more than one form or social group. Therefore, recorded instances are coded for cross-referencing (Tilly 1981). Primary sources will be compared to secondary sources to determine whether previous interpretations are plausible, or whether they should be modified (Reitzel and Lindemann 1982). Social changes in exercise messages will be compared to larger events and movements in 20th century American history, as noted in Figure 2.
Figure 1. Forms, Dividers, and Instances
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Sport and Physical Education</th>
<th>Leisure</th>
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<tr>
<td>1925-1936</td>
<td>Segregation and Stratification</td>
<td>Physical Education Laws</td>
<td>Automobile</td>
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<td>Post World War I</td>
<td>Prosperity and Reduced Work</td>
<td>Golden Age of Sport</td>
<td>Radio and Movies</td>
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<td>Urbanization</td>
<td>Industrialization and Unionization</td>
<td>Athletic Heart</td>
<td>Dancing</td>
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<td>Mechanization</td>
<td>Taylorism and Fordism</td>
<td>Limited for Women</td>
<td>Public Recreation</td>
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<td>Women’s Suffrage</td>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>Budget Cuts</td>
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<td>Depression</td>
<td>Government Work Programs</td>
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<td>1937-1953</td>
<td>Wartime: Work Hours Increase</td>
<td>Color Barrier Broken</td>
<td>Television</td>
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<td>Depression</td>
<td>Married Women and Paid Work</td>
<td>Budgets Increase</td>
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<td>World War II</td>
<td>Home Appliances and Labor Saving</td>
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<td>Consumption</td>
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<td>Suburbanization</td>
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<td>Post-Industrial Work</td>
<td>President's Council on Youth Fitness</td>
<td>Private Recreation</td>
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<td>Cold War</td>
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<td>Private Youth Sports</td>
<td>Fitness Craze</td>
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<td>Civil Rights and Feminism</td>
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<td>Televised Sports</td>
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<td>Post-Industrial</td>
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<td>Women's Sports</td>
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Figure 2. Tentative Time Line
External and internal criticism also help this study develop more trustworthy and credible explanations (Neuman 1994). External criticism asks the question: Is this piece of information authentic? Four questions are used to probe external criticism: (1) “When was it written?” (2) “Where was it written?” (3) “Why did it survive?,” and (4) “Who was the real author?” By answering these questions, the critical researcher understands that documents are often created or censored by certain groups with the power to affect ideas, and that resistance and opposition in the community may not be revealed. Internal criticism asks the question: What is the meaning of this information within the context of history? Five questions to probe internal criticism are (1) “Is this an eyewitness or second-hand account?” (2) “Why was it written?” (3) “What is the literal meaning?” (4) “Is this document internally consistent?” and (5) “What are the connotations of this document? (Neuman 1994:387).” Understanding that a document is satiric rather than plainly serious, or that the text was restricted to certain groups, may be of vital importance in understanding the connotations of a historical document (Reitzel and Lindemann 1982).

In summary, my goal is to create a trustworthy, credible interpretation of exercise messages in popular American magazines. A variety of sources are compared and using a critical sociological perspective and historical sociological methods. The analysis will include an examination of social control and ideologies, social stratification, and resistance in exercise messages and in the larger culture across time. This process involves sub-group comparisons of exercise messages and universalizing or variation trends. Age, gender, class, and race are four subgroups to be analyzed and biomedicalization, materialism, nationalism, patriarchy, and racism are five ideologies to be examined. External and internal criticism of sources will be used to judge the credibility of the interpretations.
CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Exercise Movements, Exercise Messages,
and Social Controlling Ideologies

Secondary sources provide historical background and sociological concepts for the study of exercise messages in popular magazines. The first section in this chapter presents a brief history of exercise movements in America, as interpreted by historians, physical educators, and sociologists. This section shows how exercise promoters and their messages have been a vital part of American cultural history, reflecting various social interests. The second section places exercise messages in a critical sociological context, using evidence from leisure sociology, sport sociology, and sociology of aging. These sub-disciplines examine the social system and ideologies that lead to social control and social stratification in exercise. On a micro-sociological level, these disciplines help us explain how we interpret exercise through beliefs, values, and norms. The third section explains the socializing impact of magazines in popular culture, particularly in targeting audiences such as women. Together these sections suggest that exercise messages have: (1) existed for more than a century, (2) demonstrated social control and social stratification, and (3) reflected and reinforced social beliefs, values, and norms.

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Richard Worsnop (1997:849) claims that interest in exercise dates back approximately 5,000 years. Citing research now accepted as history, Worsnop noted that "organized physical education activity," occurred in ancient Crete circa 3000 B.C. and two thousand years later in Greek city states. The author stated that Athenian exercise functioned in several ways: as military training and sport, but also as a "broader quest for human excellence" illustrated in the Olympic Games. Exercise was also perceived as a vital element for health in ancient Greece. Hippocrates, circa 400 B.C., wrote that exercise was a necessity for human health.

Interest in exercise and physical training has existed in many forms and in many cultures (Spears and Swanson 1978: 13-59), but Worsnop (p. 849) credits the early nineteenth century German system of gymnastics as the beginning of "the modern physical fitness era." Elements of the German system, known as the Turner Movement or Turnverein, influenced physical education in Europe and America, but as others point out, the American system was highly influenced by English sport and its own frontier culture (Spears and Swanson 1978). Worsnop's review leaves many unanswered questions, but it serves to illustrate the enduring but often forgotten history of exercise and exercise messages in society.

According to James Whorton (1982) and Michael Goldstein (1992), American exercise messages can be traced back to the nineteenth century health reform movement. Led by New England ministers in the 1830s, the movement was ideologically religious. On one level, the reform was the benevolent attempt to improve humanity through proper health habits. Physical culture or exercise was one of these proper habits. According to some proponents, physical culture was the proper training of the body, to glorify God in
Muscular Christianity. On an earthly level, the movement was a remedy against physical inactivity and increasing leisure time. Though lack of hard labor was not a problem for the working class, a growing number of city dwellers were experiencing the effects of an increasingly sedentary life. Although its stated purpose was to socialize youth into religion via exercise, it could also be said that the movement functioned to regulate the social behavior of the city, particularly young male immigrants, but females as well (Cavallo 1981; Baker 1994). The YMCA and YWCA imported from Britain in the 1850s and 1860s is a living reminder of the health reform movement (Mjagkij 1997).

Health reform may have begun as moral crusade, but according to Harvey Green and Patricia Vertinsky the movement developed into competing industries supporting materialism, biomedicalization, and patriarchy. Physical culturists such as Benarr McFadden and Eugene Sandow were entrepreneurs who gained wealth by hawking exercise devices and patent diet cures that became part of the material culture (Green 1986; Park 1987). Allopathic doctors or M.D.s were a competing group who would gain structural and ideological dominance over American health (Green 1986). Both groups authorized women to exercise moderately, but rarely vigorously. The suggestive power of medicalization and the persistent myth of female frailty has been described by Carol Tavris (1992) in *Mismeasure of Woman*. The term *biomedicalization* refers to this increased authority of medicine and technology in modern society (Vertinsky 1991).

The recreation and physical education movements were part of a progressive but socially controlling and stratified culture. University exercise programs and public playgrounds can be traced to the 1860s and 1880s respectively. In the late nineteenth century, university physical education was available for young women as well as men. Few
people, however, had the opportunity for secondary education. According to Dominick Cavallo, playgrounds brought healthy exercise to city children but it was also used for social control. The playground, like the YMCA, was also used to regulate urban youth, especially males (Cavallo 1981). Philanthropists were the first to sponsor playgrounds, but local governments soon took primary responsibility for maintaining youth recreation.

According to several sport historians, exercise opportunities were further institutionalized in the professionalization of physical education (Park 1987), the compulsory education movement (Spears and Swanson 1978), and the inclusion of school sports in the early twentieth century (O’Hanlon 1995). The professionalization of physical education beginning in the late nineteenth century legitimated a modern curriculum of physical education and athletics. Compulsory education meant that more children would have physical education opportunities, though the opportunities would not be equally distributed (O’Hanlon 1995). Susan Cahn noted that physical education was both emancipatory and stratified. Physical education gave enhanced professional opportunities for women, but the distribution of resources was unequal. High school and college athletics were practiced by an elite few, usually males (Cahn 1994).

Goldman and Dickens noted the progressive but socially controlling phenomenon of adult recreation in early twentieth century industry. Capitalists sponsored formal recreation as an important tool for developing productive, healthy, and compliant workers. Similar to the physical education and playground movements, industrial recreation’s resources were often unequally distributed. Company sponsored sports provided legitimate exercise for some workers, but many programs were reserved for elite athletes (Goldman and Dickens 1984).
S.W. Pope (1997) and others assert that exercise messages gained prominence when authorities used nationalism to promote exercise during World War I. Recognizing that enlistees were physically unprepared for military service, officials considered inactivity a problem of national interest. As a short-term strategy, government agencies took advantage of growing nationalism by developing messages that being sedentary was unpatriotic. As a long-term remedy, some states passed laws for the compulsory physical education of school children (O’Hanlon 1995; Weston 1962). Physical educators considered sport an important aspect of socializing boys and girls. While girls’ school sports attempted to be democratic and not overly competitive, boys’ sports continued to be competitive and exclusionary (O’Hanlon 1995).

Donald Mrozek identified the nationalistic promotion of a “culture of toughness” after World War II. Identifying the low fitness of citizens, government officials encouraged people to engage in exercise and sport. According to these authorities, sedentary culture had allowed youth to become physically unfit for military service and industrial labor during the Cold War. In response to the problem, the President’s Council on Youth Fitness was formed in 1956 and continues today as the President’s Council of Physical Fitness and Sports (Mrozek 1995).

By the 1960s, doctors presented the message that sedentary behavior was causing a plague of heart disease among middle-aged men. According to Richard Crandall, medical treatment was primarily composed of surgery, hospitalization, and drugs, but exercise was also prescribed by growing numbers of doctors in the 1970s. Stephen Figler (1981) and George Sage (1990) note that exercise fads became a significant part of American popular culture, particularly among youth. There were also indications that middle-class adults
were becoming more physically active as a reflection of a large movement of "self actualization" (Eisenman and Barnett 1979) and "self-sufficiency (Rader 1991)."

In the 1970s and 1980s, authorities presented messages regarding "lifestyle disease" to identify the costs of smoking, eating fatty foods, and sedentary behavior. According to Howard Stein (1982) and others, government planners, scientists, health advocates, and businesses communicated a fearful lesson that millions of people would be unhealthy and dependent as a result of sedentary behavior. Skeptics, however, resisted increasingly aggressive social pressures to be physically active and maintain healthy lifestyles (Ehrenreich 1989; Stein 1982; Edgley and Brisett 1990).

Critical Interpretations of Exercise and Fitness Trends

Scholars have interpreted contemporary exercise and fitness trends with approval, skepticism, and even contempt. Physical educators Patricia Eisenman and C. Robert Barnett (1979) believed the fitness revolution was a product of 1960s unrest and subsequent interests in individual rights. Compared to earlier nationalistic attempts to increase exercise, the current fitness boom was a grassroots movement of millions who became more interested in health and "self-actualization." The trend grew as scientists verified the benefits of exercise, and age and gender barriers to exercise were eliminated.

Sport historian Benjamin Rader (1991) interpreted the fitness phenomenon as a middle-class quest for "self-sufficiency." Although medicine had succeeded by decreasing contagious diseases, it was not capable of retarding the effects of human lifestyles. Symbols of this trend toward self-sufficiency or "self-help" were rampant in popular culture. The fitness craze gained legitimation as corporations accepted the trend. Exercise was
perceived as an instrument to increase worker productivity, but it was also beneficial for women as the strong athletic woman symbolized resistance against male oppression. According to Rader, the results of the fitness movement weren't altogether functional. Fitness became a new symbol of status and power leading to a preoccupation with self-presentation.

Critical social scientists found the fitness movement restrictive and even oppressive. Barbara Ehrenreich (1989) was skeptical about the fitness movement, calling it a middle-class obsession rather than being an emancipatory exercise. Conforming to moral discipline and the work ethic, exercise was a counteroffensive against softness, a penance for the sin of eating, and an outlet for simulated work. Exercise was a simulation of play, but only in a context of conspicuous consumption. Exercise equipment and apparel became status symbols supporting materialism. The fit body itself was a commodity, a product of expensive health clubs, expensive sports equipment and the time to indulge in play.

Others voiced contempt of the fitness movement. Howard F. Stein (1982) referred to the movement as a form of social Darwinism, a neo-conservative ideology promoting hatred of people who did not meet standards of public health. Charles Edgeley and Dennis Brisset (1990) were also contemptuous of the movement, calling it a form of oppression, and referring to some adherents as “Health Nazis.” Health Nazis used a variety of techniques to bully others into acceptable health behavior. Good health was perceived as a moral imperative, and those who were not healthy were stigmatized as “the unfit.” Ultimately, zealous Health Nazis would use the unfit as scapegoats for the rise in medical costs, even if the costs of poor health habits were unsubstantiated. Edgely and Brisset
(1990) noted that this form of social control might make more converts, but it could also backfire. Being sedentary might be considered attractively rebellious.

**Definitions of Leisure and Sport in Sociology:**

**Ideology and Stratification**

Definitions of leisure and sport illustrate the complicated, subjective, and contingent nature of exercise and related human behaviors. Leisure alone has more than twenty authorized definitions (Shivers and deLisle 1997:193). A convenience sample of definitions illustrates how ideologies influence and often reduce the legitimacy of exercise. Sebastian DeGrazia's definition of leisure, for example, illustrated a stratified system of leisure reflecting ageism and materialism. DeGrazia (1964) divided leisure into a hierarchy of play, recreation, and calling, projecting an image of legitimate and less legitimate forms of activity. Play was a childish activity. Adults sometimes played, but it was on a less muscular, more intellectual manner. Recreation was slightly more legitimate, but was essentially an adult diversion from productive labor. DeGrazia lamented that the popular definition of leisure was merely time away from work, and yearned for a more highly cultured and productive leisure. Calling, the most legitimate leisure, was a sublime state of production without toil, a condition traditionally found in the sedentary and intellectual professions.

DeGrazia's definition of leisure illustrated that leisure was only understandable in relationship to other concepts. Work was one concept intertwined with the meaning of leisure. In relating leisure to work, the author identified an irony of modern life. Work gave people statuses and identities, and it dominated their thoughts and behaviors, yet many
loathed work. The irony was that workers fought for overtime labor in jobs they detested, in the belief that it would allow them greater leisure. This irony illustrated the value conflicts between work, leisure, and materialism in contemporary culture. Time, technology, and production were other concepts related to leisure. DeGrazia noted that people were programmed to be time conscious. Like clockwork, people lived with alarm clocks and work time clocks, synchronized throughout their lives. The author pondered that if all time spent away from work was labeled leisure, should people consider time spent eating, commuting, sleeping, raising children, volunteering, and going to church as leisure? DeGrazia (1964:310) forcefully claimed that “technology is no friend of leisure.”

Modern life promised more leisure, but when legitimate free time was expensively packaged, few could participate. Ironically, in efforts to spend free time with commodities, many could not afford leisure. In addition, modern leisure was difficult to legitimate. Leisure was perceived as a nonproductive activity in a production society. Leisure as freedom existed, but it was not valued as highly as work, or leisure with consumer goods. According to DeGrazia, there were a small number of people who had true leisure, not necessarily the wealthy, but “those who love ideas and imagination.”

Definitions of sport, consciously or not, reflect stratification and the ideologies of materialism, biomedicalization and patriarchy. John Loy (1968) defined sport by placing it in the broader domain of physical activity. Loy established four types of sport that were functional for society, ranging from informal social interactions to highly organized contests with sponsorship. By briefly noting that some sports could enhance health, the authors allowed for the biomedical legitimation of purposeful exercise. Harry Edwards’ (1973) narrow definition of sport made sport more exclusionary. His materialist definition
discriminated sport from less legitimate forms of activity such as play, recreation, contests, and games. Characteristics of games and sport overlapped, but play and sport shared no common characteristics. Play involved fantasy, lack of competition, and individualism, while sport involved opposing characteristics: rules, competition, social orientation, and productivity. In this hierarchy of activities, Edwards trivialized some activities by labeling them “pseudosports.” This materialist definition would place athletic exhibitions and sporting entertainment and participant sports at a low level, perhaps unworthy of a sport sociologists’s attention.

In defining leisure and sport, authors have examined and differentiated related concepts such as work, production, time, play and recreation. Apparently, definitions of leisure and sport can only be understood in relation to other social activities. These definitions also reflect beliefs, values, and norms that influence the legitimacy of various activities for adults, including exercise. Factors such as ageism, materialism, and elitism have reflected the appropriateness of various leisure and sport activities for adults.

Racism and Racial Stratification in Leisure and Sport

Racism has been a significant factor in American cultural patterns. According to Kelly and Godbey (1992), academics in the 1940s theorized that race differences in leisure were merely a result of different social backgrounds or ethnic subcultures (Kelly and Godbey 1992). By the 1970s, critical researchers recognized that leisure differences resulted from widespread racial barriers and economic marginality (Philipp 1995). Critical social-historical analysis of racism and leisure may be found in thousands of cultural

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histories and primary sources, but it has generally been ignored by leisure scientists who deal with present conditions (Hutchison 1988; Bialesckki 1998).

Leisure scientists have examined ethnic differences in leisure preferences and participation by using surveys. In a survey of racially integrated neighborhoods in a southeastern metropolitan area, Steven Philipp (1995) identified differences in activities that appealed to people, and the degree of comfort they experienced in leisure activities. Blacks had greater appeal than Whites for fishing, watching television, going to fairs, and attending sports, and less appeal for camping, skiing, and going to zoos and museums. Blacks were less comfortable than Whites in participating in camping, picnicking, going to the beach, and bicycling, going to country clubs, dining out, and visiting zoos and museums. Blacks, however, were more comfortable than Whites in going to malls and fairs. Michael Woodard (1988) reported differences in leisure participation within a Black sample of a Chicago suburb. Income was a significant factor associated with attending symphonies, eating out at restaurants, traveling for pleasure, attending formal balls, and attending conventions. However, the region of birth, the number of children in the household, and the feeling of discrimination and prejudice were also associated with activity participation.

Using secondary analysis of a national telephone survey, Kimberly Shinew et al. (1995) found that leisure preferences of lower-class Black women were different than Whites and middle-class Black men. Preferences of Black middle-class men and White middle-class men were similar, however. Shinew et al. (1996) also reported that higher-class men and women shared similar leisure preferences, but lower-class Black men and
women did not share similar preferences. Consequently, the authors recognized social class as a significant factor in Black women's leisure preferences.

Though some research has related leisure to race, Ray Hutchison (1988) criticized the field for its theoretical and ethical deficiencies. According to Hutchison, the leisure profession ignored classic studies of Black communities, inappropriately conceptualized the meanings of race and ethnicity, and ignored ethnic groups other than Blacks. Currently, critical leisure research regarding ethnic and racial minorities is lacking, but recent efforts illustrate that the complex and changing interactions of race, class, and gender should be researched (Russell and Stage 1996; Bialeschki 1998).

Newspaper writer Jack Olsen (1968) and sport sociologist Harry Edwards identified racism in sport during race recognition in America. Both authors noted that despite achievements by Black men in sport, widespread racism still existed. Though a representative proportion participated in professional sports, minority athletes were prevented from central or authority positions in a phenomenon called “stacking.” The stacking hypothesis has been confirmed in studies regarding Black and Hispanic male athletes (Loy and McElvogue 1981; Ball 1981; Gonzalez 1996). Perhaps more importantly, Olson and Edwards noted that Black participation in professional sports was not indicative of minority life chances in society. Both remarked that there was a danger in directing attention on success in sports— that the focus might direct Black males into false expectations of wealth and prestige through sports, away from power and opportunities in other social institutions.

Sociologist have recently illustrated how media culture, biomedicalization, and materialism reproduce racism. Laurel Davis (1990) identified White preoccupation with
racial differences in sport, and described the racist undertone of media language used by powerful news anchor Tom Brokaw in “Black Athletes--Fact and Fiction.” Davis reported that “objective bioscientists” were used to legitimate the notion that Blacks were physically superior to Whites, and that people who refuted this theory, Harty Edwards included, were trivialized by the media representation. Othello Harris (1994) surveyed Black and White summer league basketball players, and found that Black athletes received more social support for participating. Harris also noted that support for Black players was correlated with the players' professional sport aspirations. Interestingly, the author found that support for Black athletes to play did not come from parents, but from friends, coaches, and teachers. Harris' study, therefore, would indicate that materialism was a key factor with racism for increased support.

Structural racism in the American sport business is reported in the Racial Report Card authored by Richard Lapchick (1996). Each year, the report has broadened its focus of ethnic minority and gender under-representation in the sports entertainment industry. In this expanded view of the sport business, minority representation in positions such as team physicians, coaches, managers, administrators, and owners are critically assessed. The Racial Report Card serves as a worthwhile example of sociology as a practical player in society.

Despite its record of acknowledging racism, American sport sociology has been criticized for focusing only on racism against Black males (Birrell 1989). Several articles, however, have expanded the focus of race and ethnicity in sport, with works pertaining to Latino Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. In “The Great American Football Ritual” Douglas Foley (1990) used a cultural studies perspective to examine an
enduring community ritual in Texas-high school football. Rather than focusing on race, Foley identified the environment in terms of ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Foley’s grounded description of events (e.g., pep rally, homecoming bonfire and dance), and school/community members: the booster club, ex-players, female cheerleaders, “band fags,” “brains,” “farm kids,” and “nobodies,” acknowledged status reproduction, with some resistance and change. Mark Grey’s (1992) account of ethnic relations in one high school identified the pressure for athletic Asians to participate in mainstream sports rather than traditional or “minor” sports such as soccer. Although soccer was established, the absence of a recognized and funded soccer team was indicative of the marginality of immigrant students. Newspaper writer Kevin Simpson’s account of “Sporting Dreams on the Rez (1996)” highlighted the difficulties with athletes attempting to straddle two worlds: the material world of the White man, and the fatalistic life of living on the reservation. Simpson’s account contextualized the Native American in sport with greater social woes: high alcoholism and suicide rates, and stereotypes that all Native Americans were doomed to fail in the White system.

One area of racism that has drawn some attention is the use of Native American stereotypes as mascots. According to Jay Coakley (1994) many schools and professional sports teams have used Indian caricatures as symbols of violent savagery. The actions of mascots and fans with tomahawk chops and mock war chants also perpetuate the stereotype of Native American cultures that reinforce “powerlessness, poverty, unemployment, alcoholism, and dependency (p. 258).” Coakley notes that one organization, Concerned American Indian Parents, works to raise awareness regarding these racist images.
Patriarchy and Gender Stratification in Leisure and Sport

Feminist assessments of leisure emerged in England in the 1980s. Rosemary Deem (1986) noted the paucity of information on women and leisure, and the problems with research. Deem remarked that previous studies of leisure had concentrated on men and male work, and that the history of women's leisure had focused on bourgeoisie women who worked at home. Deem explained that contemporary meanings of leisure were problematic. In essence, she stood leisure on its head by recognizing it as a women's burden rather than free-time. Definitions of leisure as free-time from paid work, she stated, ignored the enormous unpaid domestic work that women performed. If activity involved obligations such as preparing food and arranging suitcases, could it accurately be called leisure?

Deem related her local survey of women and leisure with national studies of leisure time activity. In unstructured interviews of approximately 200 women, the author identified social barriers related to leisure and gender. Fear and social support appeared to be major factors in women's leisure. Fear of harassment and assault when walking alone or visiting a man's territory (e.g. a tavern or sporting event) restricted women's leisure choices. Single women, particularly, found difficulty in leisure activities at night or without an escort. Married women found that lack of support by husbands and families were limiting factors. A husband's demands that his wife perform all home chores and not leave the house alone restricted her leisure choices. When women could leave, they more safe and comfortable with women. Thus, women's leisure pursuits were often restricted to acceptable female activities. Deem also noted that age and class were related to the type of women's leisure. Having children, for example, made outside leisure difficult. Low social class, low pay,
long shifts, and lack of transportation also made leisure prohibitive for working class
women. Deem's conclusion was that women did have various leisure alternatives, but that
their leisure choices were often forced choices, built upon structural and ideological
oppression.

Compared to Deem, American Karla Henderson presents a more voluntaristic but
evolving interpretation of women's leisure. Henderson's texts included a history of women
in American leisure and a review of recent literature on women's leisure constraints.
Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw, and Freysinger (1989) noted that women often had fewer
choices and more obligations that restricted them from leisure. Though they noted that
racism and classism were factors in leisure choices, there was limited mention of how these
factors related to women's leisure history and inequality. The authors added that women's
lack of leisure was often because women didn't feel entitled to leisure. They suggested that
women should work on emancipating themselves and fight for social change to improve
leisure opportunities. Though Henderson was initially less critical of social structure and
ideology than Deem, her text explains how internalized ideology continues to oppress
women even after barriers are reduced or eliminated. Henderson has expanded her feminist
critique of leisure, suggesting that diversity within women should be recognized.
According to Henderson (1996:150) "leisure researchers are only beginning to uncover the
numerous dimensions of not only gender but also class, race, disability, sexuality,
geographic location, and a multitude of other dimensions that can contribute to inclusive
theories about leisure behavior."

Two notable research areas related to gendered leisure are time studies and gender
identity research. Several books and articles have been written regarding women's double
**day or second shift.** Both concepts relate to the burden of working away from home, then coming home to domestic chores (Hochschild 1989; Firestone and Shelton 1994). Using time use data from 1981, Firestone and Shelton (1994) found that working women worked less time than men at paid work (35 hours versus 46 hours), but they worked more hours at unpaid home work (24 hours versus 13 hours). It has also been observed that women do chores while said to be involved in leisure, and under greater time pressure to get certain tasks done (e.g. Is dinner ready?). Although many men do assist with domestic chores, they are often more fun tasks than women’s duties. A classic case of the domestic division of labor happens when dad takes the children to the park while mom scrubs the floors. Money and age however were other factors associated with leisure activities. More affluent women and men found more time for non-domestic leisure. Older people, however, spent more time in domestic leisure than young people (Firestone and Shelton, 1994).

Studies of playgrounds and television shows are used to illustrate the stratified and ideological nature of leisure and leisure messages. In *Boys Whistle, Girls Sing*, Margaret Peters (1994) reported that gender, age, and class stratification were important factors in playground socialization. The segregated nature of dolls and sports, the impact of older bullies, and the separation of low and high schools were all elements to reproduce the status quo. According to Peters (1994:144) “the culture of children’s play...teaches powerful lessons about social power, practices, and values which are...reinforced by discourses and pedagogies of home and school.” O’Connor and Boyle (1993) identified the gendered nature of television sports and soap operas. Although both forms of leisure had been identified as a separate space for women and men, the authors explained that the two
genres were similar. Both leisure forms evoked emotional responses, moral polarization, suspense, and identification with key players. Both also confirmed gender identity: soap operas for femininity and sports for masculinity. The authors stated that women watched men's sports for several possible reasons: for “national identity,” to be involved in a public spectacle, and to gaze at men's bodies.

Articles from Australia have described the influences of gender, class, and generations. Using in-depth interviews and of veteran tennis players, Shona Thompson found both restrictive and emancipatory aspects of older women's involvement in sport. According to Thompson (1992:272) “sport is embedded with inequalities and ideological problems for women. Nevertheless, it is a site where much is challenged and where women can experience great joy and power.” Thompson's summary of the dominant Australian tennis culture gave the work social historical context. The author called the influence of patriarchy and materialism the “logic of heterosexual coupledom.” Women's tennis interests were often “bounded by the interests of men.” For example, many women played tennis because their husbands played. On the other hand, women who worked in paid labor often did not have time to play. For middle-class women with children, finding a time for tennis could be difficult, but not impossible. Children were often taken to the court by their mothers, where the court became a familiar site. Tennis, for these women, became the family game—and a way of life in their gendered, middle-class lives.

More critical of status quo sport, Maree Boyle and Jim McKay's (1995) observations on lawn bowls illustrated patriarchal culture in society, leisure, and sport. In lawn bowls, a popular sport among Australian elders, the gendered division of labor included women as “ancillary sporting labor.” Women's tasks were catering and cleaning,
and raising revenues with fashion parades, bingos and raffles. Men, on the other hand, were responsible for allocating the greens privileges and managing club finances. Women and men are assigned these tasks based on their “natural affinities” for the tasks. Women were not encouraged to take part in general meetings nor were they given a fair share of the funds raised. The title “You Leave Your Troubles at the Gate” expressed women’s obligations to conform to the patriarchal culture. Although the authors showed that some women resisted domination, they noted that “the handful of dissenters have to contend with both the men who have a vested interest in maintaining hegemonic masculinity and the women who are complicit in sustaining femininity that helps to reproduce it (Boyle and McKay 1995:572).”

Two recent studies on women’s leisure have presented unique social and historical perspectives of women and color. Russell and Stage (1996) problematized leisure as a “burden” among Sudanese refugee women. Conducting fieldwork in a refugee camp, the researchers classified women’s leisure as: (1) abundance of time, (2) changing roles, and (3) assistance dependency. With unlimited time, but no roles or resources, women had little to do other than domestic work and sleep. Male refugee role loss was also associated with domestic violence. M. Deborah Bialeschki had more optimistic conclusions in her historical analysis of Black women tobacco farmers and White women textile workers, circa 1910 to 1940. In her analysis of fifty oral histories, the leisure researcher reported that Black women had fewer leisure opportunities. However, their leisure was meaningfully constructed by church and community interaction, and later by union activism. According to Bialeschki (1998), Southern black women’s leisure was limited, but it was profoundly important in social change and quality of life.
M. Marie Hart's 1971 article *On Being Female in Sport* (Hart and Birrell 1981) was one of the first efforts to identify how women's sport roles were trivialized and constrained. Hart explained that social beliefs often prevented girls and women from participating in sports. Girls were often fearful of entering sport for fear of becoming muscle bound or being recruited into lesbianism. Although these myths may seem ludicrous today, they likely had an impact on women's sport and exercise participation.

Patriarchal ideology and gender stratification of media images have been critically examined by Margaret Carlisle Duncan and others. Messner, Duncan, and Jensen (1993) compared the language of women's and men's NCAA basketball coverage to determine whether women athletes were treated differently. According to the researchers, women were trivialized in several ways. First, women were treated as “others.” In this case, the men’s NCAA finals were merely called the “final four” while the women’s finals were called “the women’s final four.” Second, women were trivialized by a “gendered hierarchy of naming.” Women were often infantilized as “girls” and “young ladies” but the men were never called “boys.” Women were frequently called by their first names while men were usually called by their last names. Third, commentators tended to attribute certain traits such as strength and size to men while women were often treated as failures in confidence and control.

In *Feminism and Sporting Bodies*, M. Ann Hall (1996) wove together feminist and postmodern theory in explaining sport and sport sociology. The text chronicled Hall's journey from a positivist perspective to a cultural or relational feminism. Hall identified the complex and interactive nature of gender, class, race, sexual orientation, and nationality in sport across time. Cutting across disciplines, Hall identified works in sport history and
feminist and postmodern philosophy that explain the social construction of women in sport, physical education, and exercise. She noted that various discourses determined how women perceived their bodies, resulting in impressions that were both emancipatory and restrictive.

Michael Messner (1993) has contested patriarchy, gender norms, and gender stratification in his research on male identity in sport. Although he does not use the word patriarchy, he explains how the social system and sport teaches men that they must be goal-oriented, successful breadwinners, incapable of close attachments. Messner notes, however, that changes in the system have created a crisis of identity. Many men, for example, cannot fill the traditional breadwinner role. This social change may be emancipatory however. Messner adds that progressive social change is possible as some contemporary males in mid-life have redefined masculinity, parenting roles, and sport participation.

Sport historians have also identified social factors related to sport and gender stratification. From 'Fair Sex' to Feminism, edited by J. A. Mangan and Roberta Park (1987), was a compilation of social-historical works regarding women in sport. Using primary sources from the colonial period to the 1980s, the authors identified how the patriarchal structure and ideology of sport influenced women's participation in sport. Specifically, the works showed how institutions such as family, education, and medicine legitimated or marginalized sport for girls and women of different classes. Another significant work was Patricia Vertinsky's (1991) project on the biomedicalization of sport for women. Vertinsky's work was particularly thorough in explaining how the medical profession has been a sanctioning or legitimating agency, restraining women, particularly
older women, from participating in vigorous physical activity. Vertinsky used popular books and magazines to illustrate that these medical proscriptions against sport and exercise became part of popular culture.

**Social Control and Ideologies in Sport and Leisure Socialization**

Sports enthusiasts have traditionally believed that sport builds good character and functions to educate children to be more productive and successful citizens (McMormack and Chalip 1988; Berlage 1986; Coakley 1994). Social scientists and physical educators in the past legitimated these beliefs by describing the functional aspects of play, games, and sport for learning and psychological development (McPherson 1978; Sutton-Smith 1986; Van der Kooij 1989; Ibrahim 1989). Against this current of functionalism, muckraking and radical authors such as Thorstein Veblen (1953), John Tunis (1928), and Harry Edwards (1973) critically analyzed leisure and sport, stimulating questions regarding the true functions and consequences of leisure and sport socialization. Reflecting critical theory, this section describes the socially controlling and ideological aspects of socialization, not only for youth but for all ages.

Topics in socialization research include social determination of play, socialization through sport, socialization in sport, and disengagement from sport. Social determination of play refers to childhood social learning and psychological development through activity (Sutton-Smith 1979). Socialization in sport refers to institutions and groups that promote youth participation, and socialization through sport refers to life chances or outcomes affected by sport participation (Snyder and Spreitzer 1978). Disengagement from sport
relates to retirement from sport and loss of the athlete role. The following paragraphs summarize sport and leisure socialization research.

Brian Sutton-Smith (1986) reviewed the meanings of play as interpreted by philosophers (e.g. Dewey and Huizinga), psychologists (e.g. Freud and Piaget), and sport sociologists (e.g. Brohm and Novak). According to Sutton-Smith, philosophers idealized play as a character builder or a free form of expression, while psychologists idealized play as an essential function of child development. In either case, play was perceived as a meaningful and productive activity. Though he did not dismiss its emancipatory possibilities, the author suggested that play's latent function was to support social control and stratification. Dewey's support of playgrounds to keep children off the streets, for example, could be interpreted as a means of social control of the lower classes. This idealization of play may have also functioned to keep women away from competitive sport and into more virtuous play. Sutton-Smith noted that play can be emancipatory and productive, but it can also be passive idling, work, or exploration, constrained or coerced education or non-activity, an opportunity for agency, political negotiation among child and care giver, a socialization tool for nurturing caregiving or a device for teaching war. Thus, determining the functions of play is problematic, and relative to the researcher's standpoint (Sutton-Smith 1986).

Critical analysis of sport socialization has also yielded a complex picture of social control, stratification, and ideologies. Contrary to functionalist beliefs, Ogilvie and Tutko's (1971) survey of athletes challenged the assumption that sport socialization promoted good character. The researchers instead suggested that sport was an elitist process that rejected those who could not conform to the system. Thus, those who stayed
in sport had "stronger personalities," while those who could not handle the competition were systematically excluded. In short, sport did not build character, it merely eliminated non-conformists.

Edward Devereux (1976) remarked that formalization of youth activities limited children's potential to learn social skills. Comparing informal activities to Little League, Devereaux lamented that "Little Leaguism" excluded children from learning vital skills developed through games. Social functions of games included establishing rules, experimenting, developing strategies, and dealing with conflict. In contrast, the structure of Little League promoted bureaucratic inflexibility and a small number of specific skills. In his final analysis, Devereaux questioned America's overemphasis on winning and elitism in youth activities—a system that stigmatized children who did not measure up. Other researchers have remarked that youth sport is overly competitive and interferes with moral development (Gelfand and Hartmann 1978; Chissom 1978).

Howard Nixon (1984) addressed sport socialization throughout American society, not only youth sport. His critique of sport included essays on adult controlled and bureaucratic youth programs, elitist and anti-intellectual high school and college sports, and the varied leisure opportunities related to social class. Nixon stated that sport excluded less powerful groups and overemphasized winning. He also contested the notion that sport allowed more economic and social opportunities for those who participated. Despite his criticism, Nixon did not believe sport was merely a means of social control, rather it was a reflection of society's negative and positive characteristics.

Other authors disagreed with a critical focus on socialization in youth sport. Rainer Martens (1978) stated that sport socialization could be positive or negative factors for
social development. According to Martens, the quality of socialization depended on how adult supervisors acted. Adult aggression, hypocrisy, and overemphasis on winning were traits that children could model, but virtuous characteristics such as generosity could also be emulated. Gary Alan Fine's (1987) ethnography of Little League socialization referred to the phenomenon as a mixture of play, work, and socialization, where boys learned to be men. According to Fine, sport could be joyful, and sometimes fun, but it could also promote hard work, seriousness, and intense emotions necessary for boys to conform to the work world. The symbolic interactionist stated that “part of Little League rhetoric involves the issue of control. Like production line workers, Little Leaguers must come to recognize that they are under control of management (Fine 1987:48).” In Little League, boys learned to adjust their emotions: to accept injuries, to be tough, to have self-control, and to manage their criticism of others. They also learned to conform to pre-adolescent culture: to publicly insult and humiliate others, to occasionally resist authority, and to play boyish pranks. Although Fine mentioned moments of racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of elitism, he was not particularly critical of the intolerant behavior.

Traditionally, disengagement has been considered a functional aspect of sport and leisure socialization. Disengagement theory applied to sport means that retirement is an expected event, functional for the individual and for sport. Leisure disengagement implies that common patterns of reduced activity with age are also mutual and functional. Studies have shown that leisure physical activity and sport do decline with age (Kelly 1986; Iso-Ahola et al. 1994). Though some researchers have held that sport retirement is an opportunity for athletes to engage in happier pursuits (Burton 1992), others have
suggested that retirement may or may not be a difficult transition (Coakley 1983; Werthner and Orlick 1986).

Some social scientists have criticized disengagement theory, recognizing that disengagement may be neither voluntary nor socially beneficial. Adults who desire physical activity face socio-cultural barriers restrained further by poor health (McGuire, et al. 1986). Growth in “lifelong involvement in sport” (Snyder and Spreitzer 1979) and “serious leisure” (Hastings et al. 1995) have prompted alternative ideas, including leisure activity theory and sport participation across the life cycle. Technically, leisure activity theory is not a theory, but a statement that leisure activity is associated with well-being (Kelly, 1986). Likewise, the concept of sport participation across the life cycle is only a starting point to challenge disengagement theory, biomedicalization, and stratification by age, class, gender, and race (McPherson 1984; McPherson 1994).

Materialism, patriarchy, ageism, and social control are strongly embedded in most of these studies of socialization. These beliefs and values are often taken for granted by sociologists and thus they are difficult to critically analyze. For example, critical research on the sociology of aging in sport and leisure is extremely limited in number and quality (McPherson 1994). Socialization research in leisure and sport socialization reflects values and beliefs of the larger culture that promote sports and leisure for some groups to the exclusion of many others.

Materialism in Leisure and Sport

Leisure consumption is a social phenomenon. Globally, billions participate in some form of leisure or sport activity. Television watching, in particular, has become a world-
wide phenomenon transmitting American culture. From baseball caps to exotic tours, sport and leisure are a factor in the global economy. A single sports franchise may be valued in excess of $100 million, and the largest sports franchise, the Olympic games, generates billions of dollars with its logo and events. In America alone, leisure business reportedly exceeds four hundred billion dollars per year, or approximately eight to nine percent of the GDP, more money than is spent on national defense (Kraus 1995; Shivers and deLisle 1997:121). In addition, according to Goldman and Dickens (1984:299) leisure has the paradoxical function of maintaining social control and a sense of individual freedom in the consumer society.

Sociologists use concepts such as “commodification,” “globalization” and “Americanization” to explain widespread economic and cultural trends in leisure and sport. Commodification refers to the commercialized nature and profound economic objectification of social life. Richard G. Kraus (1995), for example, asserted that play, legitimated only for child development, now functioned as a market for adults and children, representing millions of American jobs. The commercial play market includes movies, television, publishers, shopping malls, sporting goods manufacturers, sports stadiums, and theme parks. Commercial play products include high-tech sports equipment, CD-ROMs, fun centers, and casinos. Although commodified leisure is perhaps most highly visible in America, it exists in all post-industrial and industrial countries. Newspapers, televisions, movies, satellite dishes, computers, spectator sports, and packaged vacations can be found throughout much of the world (Cushman et al. 1996).

According to Richard Kraus (1995) and George Sage (1990), the social consequences of commodified leisure are dependent on status, social structures, and
ideologies. Commercialized play may give some opportunities, but those chances may promote violence and "cultural pollution." Commodified leisure does not promote equal opportunities, it only promotes opportunities for those who can afford access. George Sage (1990) has placed commercialization in context with dominating structures (e.g. economics and politics) and hegemonic ideologies (e.g. capitalism, racism, sexism). Referring to sport as a commodity, Sage stated that the "profit-maximizing" motive of sport and leisure production reinforced capitalism and consumption. Sage lamented that sports had changed from an ethos of play to an ethos of work. Professional sports decisions, even in the Olympics, were reduced to bureaucratic corporate decisions, subverting traditional ethics for the sake of crude capitalism.

The concepts of "globalization" and "Americanization" describe the global transformation of society. According to Peter Donnelly (1996) globalization refers to a restructuring of political, economic, and cultural spheres. With the fall of communism, market capitalism in China, and the continued power of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and United Nations, the world seems to be heading towards political and economic, and cultural globalization. Cultural globalization is mentioned in two ways: as cultural imperialism or as cultural hegemony. Both concepts indicate an Americanization of leisure and sport. American sports are telecast around the world, transmitting capitalism and American values. Even when Americans are not involved, the idea of commercialized or "show-biz" sport is reproduced in a "global sport monoculture (Bale and Maguire 1994)."

The concept of cultural hegemony, rather than cultural imperialism, explains that counter-forces resist and can alter dominant ideologies. Jean Harvey et al. (1996) suggest
that globalization of information may create new communities and alliances, rather than one homogenized world community. American products reflect resistance and pluralism as well as assimilation. Jazz and blues, for example, have reflected Black resistance in America (Sharma 1995). Sport was still contested in 1990s America as youth skateboarders resisted mainstream sports (Beal 1995). Barrie Houlihan (1994) noted sports in Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand that have resisted hegemony. Houlihan added that Japanese baseball was not the assimilation of American culture, but a pragmatic strategy to improve international relations and support existing values such as national pride and teamwork.

**Sociological Perspectives of Aging**

Leisure sociology and sport sociology have traditionally accepted age stratification, ageism, and disengagement as functional aspects of their research domains (McPherson 1994). Sociology of aging, therefore, is crucial for critically examining exercise messages. This section outlines theories and concepts of aging and old age that illustrate ageism, age stratification and inequality, and adaptation to inequality. Social problems related to old age show that changing social policies and exercise messages alone may not enable older people to exercise, particularly those who have experienced deep-rooted discrimination.

Age stratification theory is particularly useful for providing critical concepts related to this project. According to Matilda White Riley, the major premise of age stratification theory is that society is structured by age groupings or strata, and that age is a vital factor in determining social status and roles. *Age grading* is a term that denotes age differences in expectations and rewards within the social system. The term *cohorts* refers to specific age
groupings that pass through the age structure during a specific period. Ageism and age stereotypes describe ideologies and language that promote age inequality. Generations and cohort flow are two more useful concepts, explaining that people born during the same period in the same culture experience similar events that affect their lives. Depression Babies and Baby Boomers, for example, are considered different generations, and their cohort flow sets them on different paths (Riley 1987; Ferraro 1990).

Referring to dysfunctions in the contemporary social system as “structural lag,” Riley has recognized that aspects of society have not kept pace with profound changes in life expectancy and women’s work roles. Subsequently, she has suggested policy changes in education, work, and leisure to create a more age-integrated society (Riley et al. 1989). Although age stratification theory may be used to highlight age inequality and dysfunctions in society, the theory has been criticized for its structural-functional underpinnings that ignore power and class influences (Marshall 1995; Quadagno and Street 1996).

Three other theories, disengagement theory, activity theory, and continuity theory express conflicting assumptions about aging in society. Disengagement theory has been recognized as the explicit sociological theory of aging. This theory proposes that disengagement from society is normal for the elderly and functional for society. The theory follows that elderly disengagement is mutually accepted by the elderly and the young. Activity theory’s premise is that activity is needed for better adjustment in old age. Researchers have indicated that activity levels and life satisfaction are sometimes positively related, though results have been inconclusive (Kart 1994). Continuity theory posits that people adjust best to aging by following patterns similar to their youth while substituting for lost roles. Each of these theories has been criticized for ignoring underlying social
inequality related to activity patterns, and for not addressing the needs of people who do become less active—such as the newly retired, disabled, or widowed (Kart 1994; Hooyman and Kiyak 1988). Nevertheless, their ideas may help readers understand common and traditional beliefs regarding aging.

The life course perspective and political economy of aging provide two more perspectives of aging. The life-course perspective deals with socially constructed meanings of age that influence role patterns throughout one's life. Unlike continuity theory, the life course perspective assumes that behavioral change is alterable, but highly influenced by society. Life course also refers to new trends of adult development, life transitions, and the "blurring" of life stages. In previous generations, social life was highly controlled by age norms and life stages. People ideally conducted their lives in a serial or linear course from birth to death. Adult roles in post-modern culture are considered less predictable and adult developmental tasks are less likely to be contained in one life stage, or in any regular sequence. The life-course perspective is an outgrowth of structural functionalism, but has incorporated ideas from interactionists to establish a macro-micro link in sociological aging theory (Marshall 1996; Quadagno and Street 1996).

Political economy of aging studies social structures and ideologies that define and attempt to control aging and old age (Estes et al. 1996). Political economists have used historical methods and secondary analysis to critically investigate poverty and inequality, socially controlling pension systems and social services, socially controlling industries and political lobbies, and political struggles (Minkler and Estes 1984; Phillipson and Walker 1986; Phillipson 1982; Estes et al. 1983). Though political economists suggest policy
changes related to aging, they do not all agree how social policy is formed, or how it can be changed (Estes et al. 1996).

**Social Control and The Culture of Aging**

Age is contextual. That is, the concept of age is variable within cultures and during different periods, but patterns exist (Sokolovsky 1993). "Old" is a universally recognized concept. However, the concept of old age may relate to several social factors, including economic status, chronology, and capabilities. Elders who are disabled physically, mentally, economically, or socially may be given different labels than elders who are functional. Folk tales and myths give researchers insight into cultural aspects of aging, but researchers should be aware that they may not reflect social reality. In patriarchal cultures men are often authors, and legends may serve to maintain the status quo. Therefore, gender is an important aspect of cross-cultural analysis:

Within one society, they (women) may be viewed in a variety of seemingly contradictory ways, with images that range from the positive, nurturing matriarch/granny to a mystical shamaness and finally to the feared evil witch (Sokolovsky 1993:53).

Age norms are laws and customs that influence social conduct. Laws may establish minimum ages for driving an automobile and marrying, maximum ages for retiring from work, and formal sanctions to affect social control. People are also influenced by custom. Traditionally, older people, particularly those with higher status, were accorded respect, and addressed by the names "sir" or "madam." According to Cowgill (1972:251), "political etiquette dictates that a young person should help an older person across the street, should assist in retrieving dropped items, and should vacate one's seat in favor of such persons."
The custom of respect was supported by religious invocations to honor one's parents and other elders, but such formalities are fading. Activity norms are rules that encourage or constrain older people to act according to their age and social circumstances (Gubrium, 1973:40-43). According to David Hackett Fischer (1978:5), "every society expects its elders to 'act their age' in some way. But the nature of those expectations has changed remarkably over time."

Socialization is a life-long process of social conditioning by social institutions that reinforce age norms. Public education, for example, was promoted in the early 20th century as a tool for molding good citizens as well as educated workers (Chappell and Orbach 1986). Popular media have also socialized children and adults, telling people how they should look and act, particularly as consumers (Gubrium 1973). For adults, work is a socialization agent teaching workers conceptions of time and status. Family socialization is the process of adults transmitting social information to children, and children passing social information to parents. Elders, for example, may learn how to act in new or untraditional roles, as grandparents, retirees, or college students, through interactions with their children and their parents (Baker 1991).

An important function of socialization is training people for age stratified roles. Anticipatory socialization is the process of preparing people for new social roles, and rites of passage are rituals that mark the passage into the new role (Kart 1994). Army bootcamp, medical internships, and training to be a Catholic nun are examples of anticipatory socialization. Day care may serve as a socializer to prepare children for school and work. For those in middle-age, retirement seminars and paper work remind workers to prepare for their impending retirement. Even the process of dying may serve as a way for
others to prepare for their own deaths (Baker 1991). Rites of passage also occur, from baptism to graduation, retirement parties to funerals (Cowgill 1972).

Statuses, roles, and values play a part in social aging. Age status is one's social position based on age. Unlike ascribed statuses such as gender and race that are relatively stable, aging is a changing status. Victor Marshall consequently has coined the term "status passage" to refer to the changing status of people as they pass through the life course. Age roles are the expectations, obligations, and privileges of filling an age status. Society influences how we schedule our lives, as students, workers, parents, and retirees. In modern American culture, old age has been perceived as an ascribed status, rather than an achieved position, and most old people have had limited roles. Old age has been considered a time of subjective and objective status loss and an ambiguous position. Some older adults also take the chronic sick role, a position of terminal dependence. Although some older adults may have great wealth and power, old age is typically a low age status. Some symbolic interactionists, however, have identified old age as a period of possibilities, leading to emerging emancipatory, active, and negotiable roles. It has been suggested that old age is despised because it conflicts with American values. Values typically mean socially constructed ideas about what is right or wrong, good or bad. According to Harris and Cole (1980), America's old people have had limited usefulness in a society that has historically esteemed youth, work, independence, education, and progress. Ironically, youth and elders experience similar discrimination, because both groups are perceived as unproductive and dependent.
Old Age and Stratification

Since the 1950s, retirees have often been portrayed as the new leisure class (Michelon 1954). Demographic changes in retirement have meant an increase in free time at the end of life, and for some people, affluent retirement. This trend has meant a consumer market of affluent elders buying recreational and luxury vehicles, upscale age-segregated housing, banking services, and vacation cruises (Kaplan and Longino: 390). Retirement patterns in the US, however, are diverse and stratified. Entertainers and athletes, for example, may retire when they reach adulthood or middle-age, but politicians and writers may retire at 100, or never retire. Military personnel and mothers may retire, or start new careers at age 40, 50, and beyond (Dychtwald 1989). Reasons for retirement vary also. People retire to free themselves from boring or stressful work, to enjoy leisure pursuits, and to establish productive careers as volunteers. They may be forced to retire because of disability, ageism, or downsizing. Underlying this pattern of diversity are historical patterns of inequality by gender, race, and class (Perkins 1993; Kim and Perrucci 1994).

Political economists and feminists identify retirement inequalities. Theories of work and retirement have followed the “male model,” with work defined as paid labor. This model reflects traditional gender roles of men and women, and values of material wealth and labor force roles that influence retirement satisfaction. Consistent with this interpretation, it is not surprising that retirement has been labeled a “roleless role,” and that elders sometimes perceive retirement as "status loss (Kart 1994; Ferraro 1990)." Nor is it surprising that the work and retirement patterns of women and minorities have been ignored.
Past and present inequalities of race, gender, class, and age affect retirement patterns and elderly quality of life (Perkins 1993). Historic discrimination of women and minorities by businesses and unions has led to fewer educational opportunities and occupational segregation into low paying and less secure non-union service jobs (Kim and Perrucci 1994). Social Security and pension systems reflect past discriminatory unemployment rates, dangerous and stressful occupations, and pay differentials throughout the life cycle. Social Security may reflect discrimination, but many minorities rely on Social Security benefits for subsistence because they are not part of private pension programs. Poor people may be forced to retire early through disability or downsizing, or forced to work beyond age 65 (Choi 1994). Unskilled older individuals are less likely to find replacement jobs, thus early retirement becomes a fate rather than an option (US Department of Labor 1991).

Indicators of age stratification range from economic assets to life expectancy (O’Rand 1996). One proposition is that aging increases the unequal distribution of resources. With stratified opportunities in education, work, and residence, retirement status reflects an accumulation from one's "status background (Pampel and Hardy 1994).” Ethnic minorities and women with fewer opportunities are disproportionately disadvantaged in old age. This historic discrimination, however, may be masked by another proposition, that death may provide a leveling effect in stratification. When less affluent minorities die at a young age, and affluent minorities survive, there is a racial leveling effect in health and economic status (Pampel and Hardy 1994).
Old Age and Patriarchy

Women, on average, live longer than men, but their quality of life is often reduced in old age. Women in America are more likely than men to become widowed, disabled, and dependent on children or government assistance, such as Medicaid and SSI (Barrow 1996). Women, too, are usually the social and emotional caregivers, nurturing children and elderly and sometimes both generations with little assistance (Barrow 1996). Even when women work outside the home they are often burdened with a "second shift" at home, or "sandwiched" between needs of their children and their elders (Hochschild 1989).

Several structural and cultural factors are related to this phenomenon of poverty. First, women have had fewer economic opportunities than men. Patriarchal ideology in America has traditionally legitimated "separate spheres," a gendered division of labor where men dominated paid work. Until recently, women have rarely received fair remuneration for their work (Lerner 1992). In some states, women were not even allowed to own land, maintain bank accounts, or attain loans by themselves, until the 1960s (Lerner 1992). Thus, the power of the purse strings was firmly in the hands of men. Women with domestic careers have been ignored, women who have worked part-time or in pink-collar occupations have been trivialized, and women in male occupations have been identified as deviants (Calasanti 1993). Many women never retire; they continue to do work and caregiving at home without pay. They may indirectly receive benefits for family service, but these benefits are often reduced or eliminated with divorce, or the death of their spouse. Retirement policies and pension programs have historically trivialized the homemaker role, leaving many widows with limited resources. Although the traditional expectation for women has been to sacrifice their careers for family responsibilities, contemporary
sociologists have associated these gender roles with exploitation across the life cycle (Vincent 1995).

The Biomedicalization of Old Age and Cultural Adaptation

According to the ideology of biomedicalization, old age is a medical problem requiring expensive medical intervention (Estes and Binney 1989). This ideology serves the American medical industry well. Although people over 65 represent 13% of the U.S. population, about $300 billion of $900 billion is spent annually on this group, and per capita expenditures are 400% higher for them than for people under 65. Medical technology may increase longevity, however the U.S. uses more of its resources for healthcare than countries with higher life expectancies. Sweden, for example, has a greater percentage of elders than the U.S., yet only 8% of their GDP is spent on healthcare; the U.S. spends nearly 13% of its GDP on healthcare. As a percentage of the GDP, U.S. healthcare rose 31% from 1980 to 1990, but in Japan, GDP health expenditures rose by less than 2% during the same period (Binstock 1993).

Part of U.S. healthcare inefficiency is attributed to the powerful medical system. The medical-industrial complex consists of conglomerates of for-profit hospitals, technology services, pharmaceutical companies, monopolistic medical associations, and insurance companies striving in the ethic of maximum profit. Deregulation of hospitals in the 1980s allowed greater concentration of ownership, leaving non-profit hospitals less competitive. In philosophy, the medical system became less charitable as the system became more stratified and materialistic. State hospitals have become facilities for the poor, while private hospitals take the lucrative patients. Another problem is that the system is
compensated for reactive treatment rather than prevention. DRGs, for example, mean higher government payments to hospitals for greater disability (Wallace and Estes, 1991:569-588).

Although social structure may be the most important factor in health inequality, sociologists should be aware that cultural beliefs may also be factors in health status. Venessa Wilson-Ford (1992) found that old rural Black women had an assortment of beliefs and behaviors intended to keep than well. Behaviors such as prayer, for example, could help this group cope with its environment. Donald Gelfand (1994) has also noted protective behaviors among ethnic minorities. Traditional diet patterns of Chinese and Japanese people (i.e. low fat, high fiber, vegetables) were beneficial for good health, and folk healing could be beneficial in collaboration with Western modern medicine.

Some folk remedies and other behaviors could be detrimental, however. Gelfand (1994:188) noted that Vietnamese elders may avoid fluid intake when they have the flu, and that Mexican elders may avoid doctors because they attribute illness to demons rather than bacteria or viruses. Surveying Black and White women, James Fitzgerald et al. (1994) found that Black women were more likely to: (1) exercise less, (2) agree that elders should avoid vigorous exercise, and (3) agree that it was difficult to find time to exercise. Although knowledge of cultural beliefs are important for understanding health behavior, researchers should be aware that folk beliefs may be signs of inequality in education and protective behavior when health care access is limited (Wilson-Ford 1992).
Magazines as Primary Sources of Ideologies and Social Control

The following section is important for understanding magazines in American culture. Together, the following works highlight the fluctuating significance of popular magazines during the past century, the power relationships between magazines, advertisers, and consumers, the targeted classes of magazine readerships that reflect age, class, gender, and race stratification, and the cultural relationship between magazines and socially controlling ideologies such as patriarchy, materialism, nationalism, and racism.

Helen Damon-Moore's (1994) *Magazines for Millions* chronicles the expansion of a magazine empire known as Curtis Publishing. The historical biography describes the role of Louisa Knapp Curtis and Cyrus Curtis in targeting magazine audiences. Before this period, many publishers marketed magazines by appealing to all classes and to both men and women. As a social history, the success of Curtis Publishing is placed in the context of macro-social changes from 1880 to 1910. Damon-Moore credits the rise of the White middle-class as a significant factor in the consumption of magazines. Increasing discretionary income among this group enabled larger numbers to buy magazines. According to the author, the average middle-class household in the early twentieth century held three or four subscriptions (Damon-Moore 1994).

Middle-class women's roles in materialism were considered a major factor in the commercial success of the *Ladies Home Journal*. By the early 20th century, the *Ladies Home Journal* became the largest circulating magazine in America, and the first to reach a million circulation. The idea of a gender targeted magazine was successful for the *Ladies Home Journal* and its advertisers. On a micro-level, it is crucial to note that the magazine changed editorship, from Louisa Knapp Curtis to Edward Bok in 1890. According to
Damon-Moore, the magazine reflected ambivalence toward housework and women's work roles in society when Curtis was at the helm. Under Bok, the magazine's new voice became pedantic, moralistic, and prescriptive (Damon-Moore 1994).

Damon-Moore's book is important for explaining the interactive nature of magazines in society. As socializing agents, magazines projected gender and class norms supported by patriarchy and materialism. Editors and writers, however, were required to be responsive to the desires of the readers and advertisers. For example, another Curtis product, the *Saturday Evening Post* floundered as a magazine targeted towards men, and was successfully reformulated to appeal to men and women. As consumers, women were not merely dupes. According to the author, conflicting demands among editors, readers, and advertisers often presented an appearance of contradicting ideas. Some articles might encourage traditional gender norms while others encouraged emancipation. One consistent and prominent idea, however, was the message to buy the goods advertised in the magazines.

Jennifer Scanlon's (1995) *Inarticulate Longings* examines the *Ladies' Home Journal*, from 1910 to 1930. The book is critical of the magazine's messages in promoting a racist, classist, and sexist culture of materialism. Rather than prescribing dramatic social change, advertisements and complimentary articles encouraged women to accept the culture of consumption. Magazines did not attempt to emancipate women's politics, they merely tried to help women with the day-to-day life of managing a suburban family. In other words, the magazine reaffirmed women's gender roles rather than contesting them.

According to Scanlon, the *Ladies' Home Journal* supported traditional gender roles at the same time it avoided race and class distinctions. Though many women readers

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worked outside of the home, there was little mention of working or professional women. Pictures of racial minorities were rare in the popular magazine. The only common images of African-Americans were stereotypical characters in advertisements serving subordinate roles, such as Aunt Jemima in her domestic role and the nameless Negro man servant on Cream of Wheat. (Scanlon 1995). Racism and classism in magazines were thus illustrated by both their inclusion of subordinate images and exclusion of minorities in authority.

Scanlon, like Damon-Moore, notes the complex interactive nature of consumers, magazines, and advertisers. She explains that advertisements were not always successful, and that many readers were not willing to accept outrageous advertising claims. However, she emphasizes the pattern of social control or behavior manipulation that advertisers used to sell their products. Promoting guilt for inadequate consumption and promising success for over-consumption, for example, were successful marketing ploys.

As a local history, Inarticulate Longings describes the women who worked in the women's department of the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency from 1915 to 1930. During this period, the agency made millions of dollars creating and selling advertising for magazines and other media. The writers and editors appeared to be a fairly homogenous group of White, middle- to upper-middle-class women from 22 to 41 years of age, alumna of the most prestigious colleges and universities, and politically active. Scanlon notes the critical irony that women writers wrote messages supporting traditional gender norms, yet they did not always conform to the norms themselves (Scanlon 1995).

Richard Ohman's Selling Culture is a critical analysis of materialism and other ideologies in late-nineteenth century American media. The author characterizes magazine readership as more national and elitist than newspaper readership. Ohman's focus,
however, is the hegemony of the “advertising discourse.” The author places American magazines in the context of elite control of production and the growth of consumer goods oligopolies. Ohman describes nineteenth century social change as movement from self-sufficiency to commodified dependence (Ohman 1996). Ohman's text is primarily a decoding of nineteenth century magazine advertising, from patent medicines to packaged foods. He places the story within the context of an elite concentration of magazine ownership. Ohman also explains how advertising agencies systematically manipulated people. “Ad men” knew about class and gender differences, and values such as nationalism, classism, and racism with which they could manipulate consumers. Although ads might reflect values that consumers already held, they also reshaped these values.

Ellen McCracken's *Decoding Magazines* critically examines the changing landscape of women's popular magazines from the 1980s and 1990s. McCracken (1993) notes the materialistic nature of magazines and their marketing techniques. Magazines, increasingly sophisticated in behavioral marketing, have particular formulas of images and key words to attract targeted audiences: preteen and adolescent girls, fashion and beauty for women 18-34, domestic women 25 to 49, career women, ethnic and minority audiences, health and fitness, and “other” specialties. According to McCracken, even general magazines such as *Newsweek* target affluent women with special advertising inserts.

McCracken notes the blurred distinction between articles and ads, in which the entire magazine becomes an overt or covert ad. Even *Ms.* magazine, a periodical devoted to women's liberation, is said to be a tool for promoting the “normative messages” of consumer culture or materialism. McCracken's text is a significant contribution in detailing the sophisticated nature in which consumers are targeted. Noting that new magazines have
given previously discriminated women (e.g. minorities, large women) a social space, they maintain the one ideology that Damon-Moore, Scanlon, and Ohman also illustrated—materialism.

Three other articles add to a critical understanding of magazines as primary sources. Maria Vesperi (1994), a print journalist and anthropologist, has identified ageist information in print media. Vesperi equates media coverage of elders on the same scale as racism and sexism more than a generation ago. “Age pages,” for example, are sections targeted toward older people that are meant to address their concerns. These columns may be well-meaning, but they are condescending like “women’s” and “colored” print sections of the past. Age is also a regular feature in news coverage despite its questionable value. That is, people in the news are regularly identified by their age, indicating that age must be a reason for their behavior.

Leonard Grillo (1994) examined verbal imagery of aging in three popular newsmagazines: *Time, Newsweek,* and *US. News and World Report.* Cirillo noted that aging has become a more prominent issue in popular magazines. However, it remains stereotypically associated with decay. Consistent with material beliefs and biomedicalization, the aging human body is symbolized as an obsolete and rusting machine while biomedical cures for aging are falsely presented as magic potions or “fountains of youth.” Together these stereotypical themes exalt youth and reduce old age to negative images.

Finally, Patricia Vertinsky's work is important for understanding that the absence of images and information in media culture may be just as important as the images that are presented. According to Vertinsky (1992), active elders were almost invisible in popular
magazines of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Occasionally, moderate exercise was prescribed to younger adults to slow the aging process, but only a few sports and activities were beneficial or suitable for people over thirty-five years of age. Walking and golf, for example, were suitable and not too vigorous for older persons. Generally, however, the idea of older people exercising was not considered an important issue during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Using Secondary Sources to Generate Tentative Questions

The purpose of this study was to critically analyze exercise messages in popular magazines. This review of literature has served to establish and reformulate research questions for this project. In a dialectical rather than serial process, I have compared secondary sources in this chapter to primary and supporting sources: magazines and available survey statistics. The review is not an exhaustive review of sport, leisure, exercise, or media, but it does provide evidence for a critical study of exercise messages.

My critical research question has been “have magazine exercise messages reflected or reinforced unequal exercise opportunities?” Past attempts to define “sport” and “leisure” suggest the problems of defining “exercise.” Critical analysis also indicates the problems of evaluating consumer responses. Readers are not always duped by media messages, particularly if they conflict with their values and interests. These problems, however, are outweighed by the enormous evidence which details the influence of ideologies, stratification, and resistance in sport and leisure. As the review suggests, age, class, gender, and race have been indisputable aspects of social stratification. Moreover, the ideologies of biomedicalization, materialism, nationalism, patriarchy and racism have been
used effectively to control or at least influence American society, and other societies as well. Specific research questions generated later would ask how each of these ideologies and inequalities reflected and reinforced in popular magazine articles and images.
CHAPTER 4

EXERCISE MESSAGES FROM POST-WAR TO DEPRESSION, 1925-1936

Social Historical Context of Exercise Messages

This chapter analyzes exercise messages in magazine articles from 1925 to 1936. The analysis will show how patriarchy, materialism, and biomedicalization were significant ideologies in stratified exercise messages, as nationalism was reduced and racism was hidden. Gender, class, age, and race are identified as four social categories in stratified exercise messages. The messages are contextualized in macro-social trends such as material affluence and economic depression. Thereafter, descriptions of popular magazine articles illustrate the use of ideologies to promote or deter exercise for various groups. A summary of ideologies, stratification, and resistance in exercise messages are compared with secondary sources to create an interpretation of exercise messages and their influences.

Several social trends likely had an impact on exercise messages and increasing sedentary culture during the first third of twentieth century America. First, the nation was becoming urbanized. As noted in Table 1, more people were living in urban areas. Immigrants from Eastern Europe and Italy largely stayed in the cities, and a growing
number of rural people, Southern Blacks for example, migrated to the cities for work and better treatment (Reiss 1989; Hine 1996).

Table 1. United States Population, Percent Urban and Percent Rural, 1900-1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>U.S. Total</th>
<th>Urban (%)</th>
<th>Rural (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>76 million</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>92 million</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>106 million</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>123 million</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>132 million</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>151 million</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>178 million</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Taeuber and Taeuber (1971).

Table 2. United States Occupational Shifts, Paid Work, in Thousands, 1900-1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White Collar</th>
<th>Manual/Service</th>
<th>Farm Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>5,115 (949)</td>
<td>13,027 (3,363)</td>
<td>10,888 (1,008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>7,962 (1,943)</td>
<td>17,797 (4,327)</td>
<td>11,533 (1,175)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>10,529 (4,756)</td>
<td>20,287 (4,115)</td>
<td>11,390 (1,169)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>14,320 (5,648)</td>
<td>24,044 (5,088)</td>
<td>10,321 (908)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>16,082 (8,627)</td>
<td>26,666 (6,419)</td>
<td>8,995 (508)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>21,601 (8,456)</td>
<td>30,445 (7,217)</td>
<td>6,953 (601)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>28,715 (11,831)</td>
<td>34,985 (8,786)</td>
<td>4,291 (390)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>37,857 (11,612)</td>
<td>39,420 (11,612)</td>
<td>2,448 (245)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Female paid work in parentheses. Other numbers include females and males. Source: Historical Statistics (1975).
Second, America was becoming less agricultural as it became more mechanized. Farming jobs, as noted in Table 2, decreased slowly and unevenly as the population expanded, but manual labor and white-collar jobs increased by twenty million within three decades. Manual labor became more boring and repetitive (Bell 1970), but vastly more efficient. Assembly line manufacturing increased production speed by a factor of twenty, enabling Americans to buy more than twenty million cars. Modern technology led to many other consumer products, including millions of radios (Wallechinsky 1996).

Third, with the aforementioned trends, union pressure and suffrage feminism, work and leisure patterns changed for men and women. Industrial labor's average work week was reduced from sixty hours to forty-seven hours, leaving employees with added leisure time (Woll 1933). Women gained some power when they were finally allowed to vote in national elections in 1920. Single women often worked, but a married woman's job was typically taking care of home and children.

Fourth, as Table 3 indicates, the nation was becoming more educated. Most girls and boys were going to public school for at least some elementary education, and high school completion rose from 14 percent in 1900 to 29 percent in 1930. Physical education and sport became part of the modern curriculum, especially in more urban areas. According to a new profession of physical educators and recreation professionals, exercise was necessary for national defense, worker productivity, and assimilation of immigrants and Indians, particularly children (O'Hanlon 1982; Pope 1997; Cavallo 1981; Churchill et al. 1979).

The necessity of exercise was highlighted during World War I, when government officials reported recruit failure rates of 30 to 50 percent (Caulkins 1921; Howell 1970).
Subsequently, physical education was installed in more schools in the 1920s and mandated by 39 states by 1930 (Weston 1962). Even as the nation was becoming urbanized, parks ranging from small city plots to National Parks became more common.

Table 3. Estimated School Completion, in Percent, by Gender and Race, 1900-1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No school years</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years or less</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS: 1-4 years</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS: 4 years</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College: 1-4 years</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College: 4 years</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No school years</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years or less</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>86.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS: 1-4 years</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS: 4 years</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College: 1-4 years</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College: 4 years</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Municipal playgrounds, YMCAs, YWCAs and Young Men's Hebrew Associations (YMHAs) functioned as socializers of city children and parks served as recreation and retreat for working people (Mjagkij et al. 1997; Levine 1992; Cavallo 1981).
apparently less work time and more education and affluence, many Americans were using their leisure time listening to the radio when it became available, reading newspapers and magazines, going to the movies, dancing, driving for pleasure, and exercising (National Recreation Association 1934; More Leisure Time Studies 1934; Nelson 1934; Fisher 1996; Slosson 1996).

By the mid-1920s, exercise seemed to be a popular American ritual. In a survey by Sorokin and Berger (1939:191) 59 percent of their Boston sample walked for pleasure, an average 93 minutes per day. On the beaches of Atlantic City and Long Island, dozens of people in bathing suits exercised in unison to commands of exercise leaders (Ray 1934). Thousands of working-class and middle-class people participated in industrial league sports, company sponsored YMCA recreation programs, church leagues and youth organizations. The programs benefitted businesses and communities and helped immigrant workers assimilate into American culture (Reiss 1989; Gems 1994). Hundreds of thousands more followed radio gymnasium classes transmitted from stations in New York City and Chicago, indicating a mass appeal for home exercise (Boand 1933). Millions more, it is claimed, loyally performed their “Daily Dozen,” a series of popular home exercises by Walter Camp (Kent 1935; Howel 1970). From 1919 to 1921, Camp’s exercise promoting messages for adults appeared in popular magazines such as American Magazine, Woman’s Home Companion, and Collier’s. Doctors Dudley Sargeant (1920), C. Ward Crampton (1920), and Lulu Hunt Peters also authorized exercise for adults in popular magazines and books (Panatti 1991). Sporting goods manufacturers were part of formidable industry (Dyreson 1995) selling an estimated half-billion dollars in commodities annually by the end of the decade (Steiner 1937). Even President Coolidge bought a
mechanical hobby horse for exercise (Gordon and Gordon 1990). As a form of exercise for some participants, a reported half-million or more Americans engaged in tennis while two million people played golf (Duffus 1924). This rise in adult participant sport prompted America's syndicated sports writer and avid golfer Grantland Rice to proclaim that his hobby was an exercise in democracy and equality (Rice 1925; Block 1941).

Exercise and exercise messages may have been more popular and democratic in the 1920s than in the past, but they were far from pervasive or equalitarian. Millions of school children, in fact, were directed to exercise for the nation's defense (Pope 1997) while most Black Americans only had access to lesser funded and segregated schools, YMCAs, YWCAs, playgrounds, golf courses and recreation buildings. Dark-skinned urban Blacks and the rural poor of all races had even fewer opportunities for physical education, sport, and formal recreation, playing informal games with makeshift equipment (Attwell 1921; Colored Children Win New Orleans Playground, 1927; Jones 1970; National Recreation Association 1932; For the Negroes of Orlando 1928; Johnson 1967; Craig 1972; Moore 1979). Formal sport was largely a system that even sports booster Grantland Rice (1943) would acknowledge later as elitist and exclusionary. Girls and women had fewer opportunities than boys and men, social classes had stratified opportunities, and youth activities were more likely to be subsidized by local governments than adult activities (Cahn 1994).

Messages in popular magazines, whether they meant to or not, also indicated that exercise was neither completely voluntary nor equally shared. This chapter traces exercise messages in popular magazines from 1925 to 1936 and describes how they were different or similar for women and men, children and adults, affluent and poor, White and "other."
In women's magazines, family magazines, and one important health magazine, authorities would use the powerful ideologies of patriarchy, materialism, biomedicalization, and nationalism to regulate exercise norms based on gender, age, class, and race.

Exercise Messages for Women: Regulation by Biomedicalization

Exercise messages appeared in a variety of middle-class women's magazines. The Woman Citizen, the Delineator, Ladies' Home Journal, Good Housekeeping, Woman's Home Companion, and Woman's Journal all published exercise pieces in the 1920s or early 1930s. Exercise articles were presented on a semi-regular basis, sometimes as instructional installments. Exercise messages targeted for women also appeared in woman oriented publications such as Parents Magazine, Arts and Decoration, and popular family magazines such as Collier's, the Saturday Evening Post, and Literary Digest.

Biomedicalization played a significant role in promoting but regulating exercise for women. In several cases exercise authorities were medical doctors and physical educators. Gulielma Alsop, the college physician at Barnard College and Fielding Yost, the athletic director at University of Michigan, wrote multiple articles for the Woman Citizen and the Delineator respectively. However, beauty editors and writers such as Hazel Rawson Cades at Woman's Home Companion and Celia Caroline Cole at the Delineator also wrote exercise advice and stories. Bearing provocative titles such as “The Perfect Figure; How to Get It,” “How to Make Exercise a Pleasure Instead of a Grim Duty” and “Stretch and Grow Slim,” women were directed to exercise for their own good (Cades 1931; Alsop 1929; Laurka 1928).
Health was a common theme for promoting women's exercise. Medical doctors and physical educators expressed concern regarding the poor health and sedentary state of women and the need for corrective exercise to improve their internal systems. Even when the authors were not doctors, they evoked scientific and medical authorities to convince women to exercise. Fielding Yost's (1925) "Don't Accept Infirmity" and Anna Hazelton Delavan's (1925) "Health and Beauty: The Importance of Perfect Circulation" described the need for women to exercise in order to eliminate bodily waste. Delavan's position attempted to be popular, logical, and legitimate when she remarked "the whole world has long since turned to sane, sensible, and scientific exercise." Celebrity Helen Keller added that "there was a day not long ago when the duties of housekeeping provided strenuous physical activity for women, but the demands of household duties are gradually becoming fewer, so the problem of physical exercise is growing increasingly important (Keller, 1933:140)."

Growing numbers of young women were taking up sports such as tennis, golf, and even basketball, but exercise messages rarely mentioned them. When exercise was addressed, it was often with words of caution. Dr. Alsop (1925c) prescribed regular tennis for the woman careerist to eliminate her nervousness. Coach Yost (1926) suggested friendly games of volleyball between friends. However, other authorities warned of the consequences of women in sport. Exercise expert Artie McGovern stated that:

The woman who wishes for recreational purposes to indulge in some form of sports must, if she values her health, use discretion. Women are so constructed that they require, and can take with safety, far less exercise than men . . .. Too active participation in strenuous sports will often cause irreparable harm (McGovern 1932:49).
Selling Patriarchy as Figure

Consciousness

The message that exercise could be used to attain and regain beauty seemed to be more powerful and popular than health. The essence of many exercise articles was that beauty was an essential resource for women, and that it could only be gained, maintained, or regained with exercise. Exercise was necessary to become thin, to attract a good man and keep him happy (Cole 1930). In one success story a fat girl is transformed into a beautiful woman through a program of paid exercise. The woman acknowledges the value of exercise for securing a husband, claiming that no man would have noticed her in her earlier condition. Although the costs are high, the woman sees it as a profitable investment (Thompson 1925). Exercise articles constantly reminded women of the culture's youthful and thin standards of beauty and the reader's personal inadequacies. Standards of beauty were institutionalized in regular beauty columns, such as the Delineator “Institute for Beauty” and Good Housekeeping “Good Looks” section. Women could receive even more beauty propaganda by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope or two or three cents to the Health Department of the Delineator, the Reference Library of the Ladies' Home Journal, or the Good Looks editor of the Woman's Home Companion. Pamphlets advertised in or beside exercise articles included the Delineator's “Don't You Want to be Thinner?” and Ladies' Home Journal's “Banishing Bulges.”

Woman were directed to look at and think about their bodies and the bodies of others. Collier's Marie Beyon Ray directed women to glance in shop windows to observe their posture, to pull in their abdomen and hold it as long as possible. Readers were also advised to pull in their abdomens hundreds of time a day until it became a habit. Ladies'
Home Journal beauty editor Louise Paine Benjamin advised readers to look at other women, not as a way of accepting one’s figure, but as a form of shared loathing. “Study women as they go down theater aisles, enter restaurants, trot along the streets about their shopping. How many carry themselves well enough to make you look twice (Benjamin 1936:32)?”

Beauty standards were so strong that they were internalized as figure consciousness. Referring to a woman’s obsession to have the same measurements as the Venus de Milo, exercise expert Artie McGovern (1932:22) remarked that “women are never satisfied.” Although McGovern claimed that women should exercise for health instead of beauty and that there were no magic formulas for reducing, he still provided exercises designed to take off inches. The article was printed in two family magazines, Collier’s and Literary Digest. Not surprisingly, women’s magazines ignored the idea that women were too critical about their bodies. Exercise messages in women’s magazines thrived on women comparing themselves to unattainable standards yet optimistically believing that they could reach them.

Figures and photographs of young White women with unwrinkled faces, pinched waists, and long thin legs promised women that they could meet the standard if they followed authors’ scientific advice. With line drawings rather than photographs, artists could present the perfectly fashionable silhouette: thin and graceful in the 1920s and slightly rounder in the 1930s. Although older ladies (i.e. over twenty-five years of age) appeared, photographs of women exercising usually required young models and professional photographers. The “standard of beauty” included a neck that was neither stringy nor sagging, a collar bone that was easy visible, prominent shoulder blades, and
slim ankles (Alsop 1925a). Suffrage allowed women to discard their corsets, but it did not give them the freedom to ignore their mid-sections (Alsop 1925b). With four different body whirls, however, women could create their own “natural corset (Alsop 1931:32).”

Exercise authors claimed that their figure faults could be remedied with corrective exercises. Delavan (1925:102) remarked that “real beauty is the natural endowment of a healthy body, and any woman can retain or regain beauty of skin, hair, eyes, or contour of body by formulating a daily plan of exercise.” Spot reducing exercises known as corrective exercises were illustrated for every known figure imperfection, from head to toe. Exercises were offered for fallen stomachs, flat and narrow chests, slumping shoulders, old man’s knees, and thick ankles (Yost 1925; de Fleur 1927; Cole 1929). A famous scissors exercise was offered for “normalizing the thighs and buttocks (Cole 1927:69).”

As the standards of beauty changed, young women were expected to mold their bodies appropriately (Cole 1930). In the 1920s slim was fashionable. By 1930, curvaceous bodies were back in style, but a woman still needed to be proportioned (McGovern 1932; Tucker 1933). In a Pictorial Review story called “Plotting the Curve,” three teenage girls asked the beauty editor for her advice on changing their figures. Two wanted to reduce their hips to be presentable and one was dissatisfied with her thin figure. The two rounded girls were advised to take strenuous daily exercises and limit their sweets and starches; the thin girl was expected to eat more fattening foods and perform gentle exercises. Exercise messages were different for women deemed underweight. In Celia Caroline Cole’s “Does Your Body Fit You?” underweight girls were assumed to be too nervous, and were advised by doctors to be as lazy and gluttonous as possible (Cole 1932). On the other
hand, if teenagers were too lazy to exercise, a good corset could help them out (Ashley 1930).

Women were also expected to look appealing in fashions as styles changed. When French fashions dictated short skirts and two piece bathing suits, women were expected to slim their legs and abdomens (Thornley 1929). When backless evening gowns became fashionable, Good Housekeeping readers were expected to re-sculpt their backs. The standard of beauty was that a woman's back be neither fat nor scrawny. Although this would require planned exercise, it would also require a conscious effort not to slump throughout the day. Disguising figure problems was possible, but women were still made conscious of their hidden faults (Murrin 1934). According to beauty editor Ruth Murrin, a disfigured back would be noticeable in the thickest coat. In “Remodeling Last Year's Figure,” Hazel Rawson Cades (1931) tells the story of Arabella, a woman whose chest is too narrow for her Chanel fashion. Fortunately she is advised in corrective exercises by Dorothy Nye, former head of the corrective department at Barnard College.

Beauty experts reminded young women that vigorous sports could leave the participant lumpy and unattractive. In Collier's, Ruth Chandler Moore (1933) stated that “sports don't always improve the figure—especially the feminine figure (Moore 1933:14).” In Parents Magazine, Beauty, Health, and Charm editor Janette Eaton (1935) warned that the woman who specialized in one sport was in danger of becoming muscle-bound. Eaton stated that a woman could play several sports to avoid this imbalance, but practically, “not many mothers and household managers have time for such a career. If they are lucky they can enjoy one sport but such luxuries require the right climate and bank account (Eaton 1935:54).”
Exercise messages held women individually responsible for the health and appearance of their imperfect bodies even as they aged. Figures of matronly women accompanied those who did not exercise. Underneath an illustration of an average sized woman, the reader was directed to “stand before a mirror and take a good look at yourself. Are you a picture an artist would love to paint? (Hathaway and Beatty 1930:38).” According to Fielding Yost (1925) in the Delineator “what we don’t so readily realize that for many of our physical imperfections we have only ourselves to blame.” In Good Housekeeping, Anna Hazelton Delavan (1925:102) remarked that woman’s “laziness” and “ignorance” were the reasons for being unhealthy and flabby looking. Dr. Lillian Shaw (1926:14) added that “a good figure is the reward of conscious effort and definite training.” The implication of these prescriptions was that women needed to be more motivated and less slothful to maintain or regain a youthful figure (Alsop 1931). Those who refused to exercise would turn into “thick, misshapen bodies of forty and fifty, poisoned by greediness, heavy with neglect (Cole 1927:35)!”

Celia Caroline Cole portrayed aging and inactivity as a graphic nightmare in the story “The Year the Locusts Ate (Cole 1929).” In Cole’s vision, fresh, firm, and lovely women were left in waste reminiscent of a locust invasion. Instead of locusts, “ignorance, carelessness, worry and indifference” were the agents of destruction. Louise Paine Benjamin (1936:32), beauty editor of the Ladies’ Home Journal, described middle aged women as “awkward” and “breathless,” “stodgy” and “stiff-legged.”

On the other hand, optimistic exercise messages claimed that youth could be restored with daily relaxing exercise of the right kind. Even medical authorities claimed...
that women could regain youth with corrective exercises. Helen Hathaway and Barbara
Beattie, M.D. (1930:32) in Good Housekeeping remarked:

Youth's gone, figure's gone, hope's gone. We show our age. We're growing old. What are we going to do about it? Say die? Never! Recapture the youthful slimness? Certainly, if we're willing to work a bit.

Patriarchy, Biomedicalization, and Materialism:

Women's Roles

A discussion of women's exercise messages could not be complete without describing women's greater obligations. Women were prompted to raise children by scientific medical standards and to buy information and services for child development. Messages directed for mothers appeared in Good Housekeeping and Parent's Magazine. In "Exercises for the Baby," Dr. Josephine Hemenway Kenyon (1929:102) asked "are you sure that each set of muscles gets its proper amount and that he does not overdo it?" Kenyon noted that essential tasks like bundling the child for the baby carriage or putting him in a play pen restricted his natural tendencies for movement. Mixing biomedicalization and materialism, responsible mothers were therefore advised to exercise their children twice daily, under physician's guidance, and buy a book by Dr. Edward Wilkes. In "Babies Need Exercise!" Cynthia Fiske (1933) suggested that exercise was essential for the baby, that without exercise the child would be sleepless, constipated, and sickly. Fiske stated that exercise should be natural, yet children who were overactive should be trained to be less nervous.

In "Exercise for the Three-Year-Olds," Dr. Kenyon advised mothers to play with their children, to prevent them from becoming flabby armed, hollow chested, weak backed city children. Urban areas made play restrictive, therefore parents were advised to take

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their children to local parks. Finally, parents were advised to make their child’s exercise fun, something that wasn’t essential for women’s exercise. Mother’s could direct outdoor exercise, “even being part of the game while mending or sewing (Glimm 1931:26).” Otherwise, children could receive pony rides or swimming lessons or play golf with their fathers.

Good Housekeeping’s Dr. Walter Eddy made several admonitions to mothers who could afford to send their children to camp. Mothers were advised to select camps where exercise was scientific, rational, sanitary and not excessive. Dr. Eddy warned of the dangers of camps that emphasized competitive sports at the expense of children’s health. The doctor noted that excess sport was particularly unhealthy for girls:

Exercise for boys and girls must be differentiated. The girl’s skeletal frame is different from boy’s. Pelvic formation and position of thigh bones are different. Girls are physically unfitted to prowess in certain activities for which boys are admirably constructed (Eddy 1932:104).

Materialism and Class Influence a Woman’s “Treatments”

Class was central to women’s exercise messages as money and time would determine the quality of treatment that one could afford. Magazine articles offered little encouragement but several gimmicks for their less affluent readers. Busy housewives were obligated to find the time and make the effort to exercise at home as part of their daily work routine. Coach Yost (1925) remarked that women should reserve time in their daily schedules to make exercise a routine. Although the exercises were admittedly joyless and boring, most women were still expected to go it alone.

Although less affluent readers had less access and social support than wealthy women, they at least had access to new exercise information. Authors presented new
"tricks" or gimmicks that would make exercise easier and more effective. If a woman was stuck at home, she could make exercise more pleasant by exercising to the rhythm of music on the phonograph or radio (Yost 1925; de Fleur 1927; Thornley 1929; Ashley 1930). In the late 1920s and early 1930s, women were directed to perform all exercises lying down or even upside down to avoid the effects of gravity (Cole 1929). Daily Dozens and calisthenics were considered unfashionable and replaced by stretching routines guaranteed to keep women slim (Cole 1929; Hathaway and Beattie 1930). Readers were presented with leisurely titles such as "Greatest of Ease (Carson 1935)" and "Getting Up in Bed (Kent 1935)" to indicate that relaxed stretching was the magic potion. According to one medical authority stretching was a youth elixir. "This is not a fad, but a fact based on good common sense. . . . It contains the secret of renewing youth for keeping the lines at sixty the youthful lines of sixteen, for having lileness and grace at four score and ten (Hathaway and Beattie 1930:38)."

Another increasingly popular message was for women to readjust their attitudes and relax while exercising. Even if the exercises were boring, the reader was advised to "make it a pleasure that becomes a habit, a delightful habit. Follow it with a cool shower or sponge bath if you are able (de Fleur 1927:75)." Instead of performing Daily Dozens and calisthenics that did not seem to work, women in the 1930s were advised to stretch leisurely instead:

Everybody can have a beautiful and graceful body--it is accomplished as painlessly as breathing. It is attained with joy, not with labor. . . . It is so simple that it seems profound. And it is mostly mental (Cole 1929:65).
Exercise messages advised women to exercise without hurry or strain and to keep a sense of humor (Hathaway and Beattie 1930). Women also were told to act like cats or babies and stretch naturally (Kent 1935; Carson 1935).

An increasingly popular method of exercise for women was dance training. According to dance master Isadora Duncan, dancing would guarantee health, beauty, and happiness (Ray 1933). Although Duncan provided some exercises for the article, one would need to buy her upcoming book to learn more secrets. Mary Wigman, a German dancer, also had a system of relaxing dance. Her system of body training had become such a sensation in Germany that it was sponsored by the national government. The Dalcroze system was also available for women in universities and music schools.

For women with little time or money, Dr. Lillian Shaw (1926) proposed that housewives transform their work into exercise. The former head of Physical Education at Swarthmore College remarked that women who didn't have the time or the "extra energy" could still maintain a youthful body by consciously maintaining an erect posture while doing housework. The Delineator published illustrations of exercises for dressing, making beds, cleaning windows, vacuuming, and picking up children's toys. Shaw claimed that this form of "gymnastic housekeeping" would deliver "balance, poise, and flexibility," and relieve the monotony of domestic work. With a depression forcing middle-class people to discharge their domestic help, Betty Stuart's (1932) optimistic "Health and Beauty in Housework" made it seem fortunate that she was now taking care of her house and reducing simultaneously.

Exercise authorities appeared democratic when they exhorted all woman to participate, but their messages intimated that higher-class ladies could obtain fashionable
figures with less effort and more money. A movable home gymnasium could be built in the home if one had a two-car garage and one hundred dollars (Yost 1926). With this type of gym, a woman could invite her mothers' club to play volleyball and perform gymnastics together. More money would be needed for tennis shoes and an athletic costume (Yost 1925b). The author suggested that serious participants perform the exercises in orderly files, following the exercise leader's commands completely. For those desiring a short cut to beauty, women could buy passive exercising machines for home use. By standing inside a motorized reducing belt, women could merrily reduce the pounds away (Thornley 1929).

Social support and information could be expensive. Corrective exercise classes or "treatments" were offered in baths, institutes and health studios, but at a steep price. Single treatments cost $1.50 to $8. The average cost of sixty daily treatments would be $150, a price that even a wealthy husband might consider extravagant (Thompson 1925). Yet beauty icon Elizabeth Arden was able to maintain nine salons in the United States, five in Europe and several temporary spas in summer and winter resorts (Thornley 1929). Arden's merchandise was also deemed essential for the fantasy home. Arden's expensive salons and merchandise were promoted in Collier's and the Delineator even after the stock market crash. In Collier's, Betty Thomley (1929) described Arden's exercises as "magic movements." Thornley portrayed Arden as a heroine, able to help women fit into the most revealing French fashions, and described the salon experience at Arden's as "rolling in luxury." Even women not inclined to exercise could take advantage of the newest rolling machines to lose weight and inches. Smaller reducing rollers were also available for home use. "Miss Arden, whose sense of perfection in matters of beauty has sent millions of women into cream jars and rolling machines (Arden 1935:18)."
Arden's models sold a large number of treatments by leading women to believe in a fantasy—that they could be young again. In the *Delineator*, young, beautiful White women posed in magic exercise positions solely identified with the name Elizabeth Arden, Inc. (Cole 1929; Cole 1930). “She's shown the recipe in the movies—illustrated by tantalizing glimpses of lovely slim creatures who sway about like white birches dipping to a breeze, her own instructors who show us what we once were and may be again (Thornley 1929:19).”

The attraction of Elizabeth Arden and other salons for wealthy older women was that the youthful body could be regained with little effort. Besides rolling machines, Arden's Salons and other businesses offered steam cabinets and massage to help women “normalize the body.” “Here you do not exercise, you are exercised. You lie back in a wonderful chair with sand bags piled on whatever is wrong about you, a little electricity is turned on, and you are exercising with all your might and not the slightest effort (Cole 1927:69).”

In *Woman's Journal*, Dr. Gulielma Alsop (1929:40) suggested that women could make exercise a pleasure instead of a “grim duty” by investing in their health. All of the diseases of sedentary urban life could be cured by retreating to the country for hikes, swims, skiing, and horseback riding. Alsop presented the article as if any reader could afford such a proposition by presenting “real cases” of “average women.” In one case, two professional women bought a country house for weekends paying $1500 apiece. In another case a woman joined a small club of women who owned a small farm house and a Ford bus to transport them to the beaches. In a third case, a girl bought one hundred acres of land for $2000 for star gazing and planting fruit trees. According to Alsop (1929:40) “she is only a stenographer.”
In Good Housekeeping, celebrity Helen Keller (1933) also promoted outdoor exercise. Unlike any other authors of the period, Keller referred to her exercise as a sensual, transforming, and uplifting experience in addition to being an essential health practice. The article was different too in that it portrayed a blind and deaf middle-aged woman as a model for exercise. Although Keller's words were meant to promote exercise for women, her exercises such as riding horses and walking her dogs may have been financially and logistically out of reach for many urban dwellers, particularly the poor and disabled.

Family Magazines: Patriarchy and Materialism

Trivialize Male Exercise

Family magazines seemed less concerned with exercise than women's magazines. Exercise messages appeared less often in this type of publication, and when they did appear, they did not always favor exercise. Exercise was often considered an adolescent or trivial pursuit in a culture focused on politics, current events, and material and intellectual production. Some articles considered exercise a matter to be treated with satire or scorn while others warned of the dangers of overexertion. Still, other articles favored moderate exercise obtained through the medical, health, and beauty industries.

Humorous articles in Pictorial Review, Outlook, Harper's, and the Saturday Evening Post trivialized the value of exercise and uncovered negative social attitudes concerning its practice. Gerald Stanley Lee (1928) revealed the ritual obligation of exercise, remarking that few enjoyed it, but that many felt wicked not doing it. The success of the fad appeared to be only that a million others were doing it. Donald Ogden Stewart (1928) narrated his humorous efforts to exercise in New York City. For the city dweller, attempting to swim in the East River, bicycle, walk, hunt, and mountain climb was
hazardous or impossible. After eliminating these common forms of exercising, the author sarcastically suggested shaving, firing the cook, and drinking soup as his exercises. Similarly, in “The Big Health Secret,” Alexander Black suggested that people would benefit more by watching people exercise rather than actually performing it themselves. Citing claims by Secretary of State Everts and industrialist Chauncey Depew that health and longevity were attained through non-exercise, the author prescribed vicarious exercise for all. Kenneth Roberts (1933) revealed the gimmickry and confusion created by so-called exercise authorities. “Well-regulated salons,” for example, assured women that they could reduce with no effort:

By proxy workout each week, they are told, their nerves will be soothed, their fatty tissues will melt away, and that they will, at the end of a three month's course of proxy exercising be hard and lean again (Roberts 1933:27).

Roberts also noted that authorities were confusing and contradictory. Carefully studying several books just on walking, he found twelve contradictions on how to walk for health. Unable to find any consensus on how much he should exercise the author decided not to exercise at all.

A man's role in a patriarchal and material society was to be financially productive. Exercise and sports were often considered unproductive and perhaps counterproductive. In more serious articles on exercise, Collier's, American Mercury, and North American Review published three of the most disapproving exercise messages. In the story “Vice of Virtue” James Hopper (1926:17) laments that his exercise participation has made life unsuccessful. As a “zealot in the cult of Keep Fit” the author has spent countless hours of time exercising, yet realizes that he could have used his time more productively by reading, writing, and even drinking. In this “honest confession of a health addict” Hopper admits
that he cannot stop exercising any more than an alcoholic can resist drinking. In fact, he asserts, drinking would be less destructive. G.J. Nathan wrote of "the imbecility of physical exercise" in "Again, Exercise." According to Nathan (1929), man received all of the exercise he needed in everyday life, and backed it up with medical-scientific information. Citing a report by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company that scholastic honor winners lived longer than college athletes, Nathan claimed that exercise was only beneficial for the undertaker. The author referred to exercisers as "blockheads," ridiculing men who exercised as narcissistic "vain donkeys." T. Swann Harding (1930) echoed the problem of American exercise in his critique of the "athletic cult." Quoting medical journals, the author concluded "there is little or no exact scientific information about the effect of exercise on general health (Harding 1930:337)." In his critique of American culture, Harding said that children and adults were being duped into over-training. He explained that such indiscriminate activity was "silly" and 'non-essential," that exercise transmitted by radio or practiced with dumbbells developed muscles unnecessarily, and that this type of exertion "renders people too tired for mental work (Harding 1930:338)."

Biomedicalization and Materialism: Regulated Exercise

The Saturday Evening Post and Collier's warned of the dangers of overexertion and the necessity of regulated exercise in articles fearfully titled "Too Much Exercise (Blythe 1925)," "Burning Up Boyhood (Robertson 1934)," "Know Your Own Strength (Emerson 1930)," and "Tapering Off On Training (Robertson 1934)." In "Too Much Exercise," published by the Saturday Evening Post, Samuel G. Blythe asserted that rational exercise was beneficial, but that large numbers of men were irrationally exerting themselves. Blythe advanced the belief that men were born with a given amount of vital energy and should take
care to conserve it. Men who played sports excessively in youth were more likely to die early from tuberculosis or of heart disease in their forties or fifties, and men over fifty who did not take great effort to conserve their heart were ripe for the undertaker. Blythe mentioned that intelligent men he knew did not believe in exercise and called older men who played tennis and polo pathetically vain. The author warned that many golfers over fifty would live longer if they quit playing that sport and switched to lawn bowling, an activity that was “a man’s game without being a man-killing game (Blythe 1925:10.).” In American Mercury, John Hawkes II (1930) was not patently against middle-aged men playing golf, but he added to the fear of middle-aged exercise. Citing personal cases of men ruined or even killed by overexertion, the author called for more common sense among the middle-aged.

American Olympic coach Lawson Robertson warned of male overexertion in “Burning Up Boyhood” and under-exertion in “Tapering Off On Training.” Both articles appeared in the Saturday Evening Post. Robertson (1934) claimed that school children were being “burned out” by over-competitive sports, and encouraged a graduated system of physical training instead. As an example of the dysfunctional nature of sports, the coach referred to middle-aged men and former college athletes who were dying on golf courses and at their desks. Several months later in the Saturday Evening Post, Robertson suggested that the average businessman was under-exercised. According to Robertson, average office workers were so sedentary that they didn't walk more than two miles in the work day. Robertson prescribed that middle-aged men regularly walk two to four miles and that athletes take several years to taper their training, to adjust to a normal sedentary life.
Doctors conveyed medical authority directly as authors in some magazines. In *Collier's* William R.P. Emerson, M.D. (1930:24) stated that the average middle-aged person need not avoid vigorous exercise, but that exercise should be gauged carefully. The doctor prescribed that professional men balance their workouts with regular work. Exercise, he believed, was important to calm the “nervous strain” of work, but overexertion would produce “loss of initiative and increased irascibility.” The article did not mention any need for the working-class person to exercise. *Journal of the American Medical Association* editor Morris Fishbein combined esthetics and scientific information in the *Saturday Evening Post* article “Muscles and Man.” According to Dr. Fishbein (1933), the large muscled physique was no longer ideal. Referring to the Metropolitan Life study of college students mentioned earlier, Fishbein asserted that athletes lived slightly longer than the average other man. However, he asserted, “men who spend much of their time in the library and laboratory” lived longest. The doctor warned that athletes were more vulnerable to die of heart attacks in middle-age, and that while an athletic heart was not necessarily unhealthy, competition put undue strain on the heart and lungs.

Biomedical opinion was presented second hand in a few other articles. *American Magazine* interviewed physiologist Dr. Arthur Steinhaus who studied the effects of exercise on dogs. Although Steinhaus briefly noted that exercise did not hurt the normal heart, his most important finding was that exercise was “overrated.” According to Steinhaus “there are people who boast that they never take exercise and are perfectly well. It looks as if there might be a grain of truth in their claims.” Contradicting popular opinion, Steinhaus asserted that “exercise is one of the poorest ways for a fat person to reduce (Clark 1929).” *Scientific American* published a message by the American Medical Association criticizing...
the sale of vibrating exercisers. According to the AMA warning, mechanical exercisers had already caused ruptured appendixes and bladders, hernias, and torn penises (M.F. 1930). Plans for a homemade motorized electric exerciser were featured in Popular Mechanics a year earlier for people who found factory models too expensive (Koch 1929).

Authority and information were also sold in the form of self-proclaimed exercise experts and entrepreneurs who had the secrets to health. Milton Berry of Hollywood, California was a self-classified “physical re-educator” who reportedly helped hundreds of paralysis victims regain their health. In an American Magazine interview titled “You Can Keep A Youthful Figure If You Treat Your Muscles Right” Berry suggested that people who wanted to be spry in old age should prepare themselves by exercising regularly, and that regular exercise was a good way to reduce one's weight. Berry offered hope to older folks, stating that fifty- or sixty-year-old muscles could be rejuvenated. He offered hope to sedentary people too, claiming that “just a little exercise is all that is necessary (White 1927:112).”

Possibly the most famous exercise expert of the period was Artie McGovern, a former prize fighter turned entrepreneur whose advice appeared in American Magazine, Collier's, and Literary Digest. McGovern's claim to expertise was proven by his dutiful Manhattan clientele: Babe Ruth, John Phillip Sousa, and many captains of industry and finance: “rulers of industry whose word is law for hundreds of workers, meekly obey his commands (Smith 1931:68).” Artie McGovern's advice was not merely presenting exercises but commenting on the state of American health. McGovern (1925:47) claimed that too many college athletes and even businessmen were burning up their allotted “vital energy.” The expert was particularly wary of men who over-exercised on the weekends, claiming
"you will find yourself better off if you spend the week-end at home in bed than if you try to crowd seven day's exercise into one or two (McGovern 1925:150)." Corrective exercises for the individual, like those offered at McGovern's gym, were always good for the businessman, but golf and walking should be practiced intelligently and moderately (McGovern 1932).

McGovern's opinion paralleled many women physical education leaders (Lee 1931) who warned of the particular problems of females and vigorous exercise and sport. "Girls ought not to indulge competitively in strenuous games, as the element of excitement very easily leads to exertion injurious to the female physique (McGovern, 1925:151)." Unconscious of the patriarchal system that valued women's appearances, the gym owner remarked that women customers were fanatics in their desire to reduce.

Another exercise expert, Joseph Pilates, claimed that remedial exercises could serve as a "natural corset." Pilates claimed that a youthful physique could not be gained through sports, but it could be obtained by taking his system of corrective exercises (Ray 1934). Pilates' advise appeared in exercise messages for decades. His exercise devices are still used in physical therapy in the late 1990s.

**Biomedicalization and Other Ideologies: Regulated**

**Middle-Class Exercise in Hygeia**

*Hygeia* was substantially different from other popular magazines because it constantly reflected medical opinion. While women's magazines concentrated on fashion, diets, and recipes, and family magazines dealt with current events, politics and literature, *Hygeia* focused on health and medicine. Several health-related professional journals and physical culture magazines existed, but *Hygeia* was specifically for the layman's
consumption. Interestingly, the authors of many articles were doctors, yet "M.D." titles were rarely placed after the authors' names. As an official publication of the American Medical Association, however, there was no doubt that it was a direct mouthpiece for medical authority. Although the magazine had an initial circulation of 25,000 in the early 1920s, circulation grew to 200,000 by 1947 under editor Morris Fishbein (Fishbein 1969). *Hygeia* was also unique in that it delivered more exercise messages than any other popular magazine. From 1927 to 1936 it published eleven articles indexed in the *Reader's Guide* under the heading "exercise." The publication was similar to others in that its targeted audience was the white collar family. Exercise articles were almost exclusively directed toward sedentary white-collar men and middle-class housewives, yet age, class and gender distinctions indicated stratified exercise norms.

Although most exercise articles were informational prescriptions, a few were written as parables reflecting nationalism, class, and patriarchy as well as biomedicalization. In "Congress at Play," George H. Dacy (1927) told readers that government officials were exercising as a patriotic duty. Although the practice began during World War I, congressmen dutifully continued exercising to stay healthy and better serve their country. Pictures of former athletes using rowing machines, punching bags, and Indian clubs in the House gym accompanied news that these men were "now as spry as collegians." Although the article attempted to show the plebian backgrounds of several Congressmen, the story ended with a tour of the exclusive Congressional Country Club where members had access to golf courses, polo fields, and other posh facilities. The author concluded that "conservative play" was essential for these sedentary workers, and "our federal lawmakers
have found out the straight way to health leads to tennis courts, golf courses, swimming pools and gymnasiums (Dacy 1927:10).”

“Football Hero” was another parable of elite male rejuvenation, this time with medical intervention. In this story by Henry Pleasants Jr. (1931) a doctor counsels his patient, a former college athlete turned flabby white collar worker, that athletes cannot stop exercising without serious consequences. The doctor reminds the patient of former college stars who died of tuberculosis and pneumonia and those who stayed healthy with exercise. Finally, the fatherly doctor prescribes that his patient quit his job and hike for six weeks until he reaches his new occupation as a highway engineer, a position the doctor has conveniently secured for him. The grateful patient thanks the doctor, declaring “you've given me something better than medicine. You've given me an objective; and what's more I'm going to reach it with your help (Pleasants 1931:237).”

Help was something that *Hygeia* authors also offered to readers in four exercise articles: “A Physical and Mental Tonic (Nall 1929),” “Common Sense in Exercise (Schwartz 1931),” “Richard Kovacs Tells How, When, and Why to Exercise (Kovacs 1934),” and “Dancing Mothers and Dancing Daughters (Agniel 1931).” Each of these authorities prescribed moderate exercise for the individual to preserve health, but the definition of moderate exercise would differ considerably, depending on factors such as age, class, and gender. James O. Nall (1929:37) described age and exercise in two ways. First, he described human development as five “ages of man,” giving age appropriate activities for each stage: “from 6 months to 2 years, the crawling age; from 1 to 5 years, the walking age; from 3 to 20 years, the running age, including tag, track, and touchdowns; from 15 to 35 years, the tennis age; from 30 to 70 years, the golf age.” Second, he referred to scientific
authorities to prescribe the correct amount of activity. According to this prescription, exercise should peak to six hours daily by ages nine to eleven, then diminish to one hour daily by age twenty. Nall warned of the risky nature of physical overexertion in youth and older people. Young athletes who engaged in marathon running and bicycling were in danger of enlarged hearts that endangered their future health. Regarding exercise for old people, the author remarked that "physical overactivity . . . is never advisable; and after the age of 30 it is positively detrimental (Nall 1929:38)." Walking, swimming and tennis were prescribed for youth, and walking, riding and golf were prescribed for people over thirty. The authority even indicated that exercise was not vital for most adults, particularly physical laborers: "the average person's work will provide the necessary amount without any extra effort or recreation and some kinds of work will furnish more (Nall 1929:37)."

Louis Schwartz's "Common Sense in Exercise" also presented advice on the regulation of moderate and healthy exercise. Schwartz believed that white collar workers should be more physically active after getting approval from a doctor, stating that "persons who have sedentary occupations should have regular time in the day set aside for exercise. Many who are prominent in the social, political, and business world recognize this fact and act accordingly (Schwartz 1931:642)." Horseback riding, swimming, skiing, golf, and tennis were considered healthy sports, but age norms were necessary. The author noted that "after the age of 45, the average man should not play singles in tennis or handball (Schwartz 1931:644)." In addition, he echoed the warnings of doctors that "when engaging in these sports for exercise, one must never do too much. It is better to do too little . . . Sufficient exercise to exhaust is sufficient to harm (Schwartz 1931:644)." In a critique of overexertion in American athletics, the class-conscious author claimed that:
Young men and women who go out to win in competition are especially likely to do themselves more harm than good. . . I do not mean to say that competitive athletics are harmful to everybody. They sometimes serve a good purpose to men and women who cannot satisfy their desire for superiority in any other way. To such people excelling in athletics reconciles them to an otherwise disappointing life (Schwartz 1931:645).

Medical authority continued in “Richard Kovacs Tells How, When, and Why to Exercise” reflecting age, class, and gender stratification. Kovacs prescribed medical assessment and expert advice, pointing out that an initial physical examination was necessary to “guard against the dangers that exercise might bring.” Furthermore, “a trained medical adviser should select the kind of exercises that are best adapted to individual requirements (Kovacs 1934:329).” Dr. Kovacs explained the value of systematic active exercise, especially for professional and sedentary workers. Yet the doctor noted the importance of selecting the most suitable program for the individual, depending on “age, physical condition, sex, and occupation (Kovacs 1934:338).”

Kovacs discouraged fast sports for people over thirty-five and strength sports for those over forty. Running, swimming, dancing and some team sports were suitable for people up to “middle life,” but golf, walking and boating were the most suitable activities for older people. Although Kovacs suggested that the best program should mix sport with formal exercise, he stated that formal gymnastics were superior for developing the entire body and maintaining well being. The doctor also suggested that people commencing exercise join a public or private gymnasium where instructors could give advice and support.

Specific expectations for women and children were described in Marguerite Agniel's “Dancing Mothers and Dancing Daughters.” Agniel (1931) advised women to learn dance and teach their children dance and exercise. By being responsible for children's activity,
women could ensure that their children were free of postural defects. Mothers, however, were directed not to make much mention of the exercise as healthy activity. Unlike most adult exercise, children's exercise needed to be an enjoyable game or fantasy in order to ensure compliance. Agniel (1931) gave rational reasons for women to dance, asserting that mothers could maintain youthful bodies, “the desire of all women.”

**Materialism in Hygeia: Exercise and Non-Exercise in the Common Classes**

Hygeia’s messages appeared to be targeted to affluent readers, but occasionally the publication referred to the more common classes. In contrast to fables and medical directives, “The Radio Gymnasium Class” portrayed popular exercise among less affluent white-collar workers during poor financial times. Alfred C. Boand (1933) traced the popularity of radio exercise programs from their origins in Chicago in 1923 to their status a decade later. According to Boand “in the eastern part of the United States a chain of eight stations carries the gospel to the waiting cars of health enthusiasts over an area of some twenty states or more.” Boand, a producer of radio exercise programs, portrayed his programs as a community service for frantic but sedentary white collar workers and housewives:

No matter how health conscious one is ... the daily grind leaves little time and less incentive to get out and use what opportunities for exercise are offered to working people. Being responsible for the support of families, many... have said farewell to the healthy activities of school days and settled down to long hours and close confinement. With the depression sitting squarely on their chests, is it likely that they are going to be able to afford fees for golf clubs, dancing classes and athletic clubs ... (Boand 1933:524-525)?
Radio exercise programs were seemingly free to anyone who owned a radio and lived within listening distance. Indirectly, listeners were subject to the messages of materialism. "Attention is divided between the health value of the exercises offered and the merchandise sponsored, with the advantage usually in favor of the merchandise, whether it is soft drinks, clothing, or tobacco (Boand 1933:523)."

Exercise was deemed particularly constructive in correcting physical defects and pathological conditions of workers but unnecessary for blue-collar workers in good health. Medical gymnastics provided healing effects for heart conditions, nervous conditions, paralysis and injuries. Occupational therapy, a form of manual exercise or work, could return the worker to productivity. While promoting exercise and moderate sport for the sedentary professional, Dr. Kovacs was less encouraging to the physical laborer. "Many persons who do not take any systematic exercise remain in good health; this is especially true of those whose daily duties include a certain amount of physical activity (Kovacs 1934:338)."

The Illegitimacy of Physical Culture and Male Muscularity: Biomedicalization Versus Materialism

While some exercise entrepreneurs were legitimated by their appearance in popular magazines, others sold literature, mail-order exercise programs, and exercise equipment that AMA doctors would label as quackery (Mrozek 1987). Bernarr Macfadden, owner and editor of the magazine Physical Culture, was one of the most successful and infamous exercise entrepreneurs from the 1890s until the 1950s. Macfadden's health ideas challenged allopathic medicine and social norms. While the physical culturist promoted exercise he also advanced eugenics and curious and controversial ideas: wearing fewer clothes and
corsets, abstaining from white bread, fasting, headstanding to reduce baldness, and delivering babies without doctors (Hunt 1989:153). *Physical Culture*, with scantily-dressed men and women models of physical culture, was considered pornographic by some people and thus was not openly read in many homes. Federal authorities prosecuted the physical culturist for selling obscene literature through the mail, but MacFadden continued to publish controversial literature that had a larger circulation than *Hygeia*. In the 1930s, Dr. Fishbein and the AMA labeled McFadden and other physical culturists as quacks. MacFadden's media empire grew larger, however, as the entrepreneur added popular magazines such as *True Story* and *True Detective*, but *Physical Culture* remained its flagship publication (Hunt 1989).

Charles Atlas was another entrepreneur of physical culture with a less than legitimate reputation. A winner of McFadden's "World's Most Perfectly Developed Man" contest, Atlas began advertising in several magazines, including *Physical Culture*. According to William Hunt (1989:31-32) the secret to the entrepreneur's success was that he capitalized on the fantasies of male adolescents. Accompanying the image of the muscular strongman, Atlas suggested that his secret program of muscular development, "Dynamic Tension, would help the underdeveloped man to defend himself against bullies and get a girlfriend. He would make a "new man" of the customer in "just seven days (Hunt 1989:133)." Despite the growing illegitimacy of physical culture and their labeling as health fanatics or faddists, thousands of loyal adherents continued to promote and buy health and exercise products and information (Ernst 1991:114).
Social-Historical Analysis of Exercise Messages, 1925 to 1936

Exercise messages from this period were confusing and contradictory, but understandable in social-historical context. The context of these messages is that publishers targeted affluent groups, especially middle-class women or middle-class families, to buy and read their magazines (Ohman 1996; Scanlon 1995). Exercise authorities, a mix of entrepreneurs and doctors, offered advice appropriate for selling magazines, entertaining a magazine's audience, and encouraging readers to buy their advertised products. Undoubtedly this is why there is scant mention of economic hardship even after the Great Depression struck. Exercise advice reflected four powerful and overlapping ideologies: patriarchy, materialism, biomedicalization, and nationalism. These ideologies legitimated differing advice for women and men, young and old, blue collar and white collar.

Patriarchy and biomedicalization were prominent in exercise messages to women and girls. Women's roles were pronounced in women's magazines where readers were advised to look lovely, get a husband, keep a clean house and raise healthy children. Words and images incessantly projected the belief that youthful beauty was an essential asset, a belief internalized by many women as figure consciousness. Doctors and physical educators warned mothers and daughters against vigorous sport, not only because it would be unhealthy for their weak bodies, but because it would give them unappealing figures. According to a Literary Digest article, elite women athletes such as Babe Didrikson and Helen Wills Moody wouldn't be held back in sports, but this came at the expense of being labeled as unattractive and unwomanly Amazons (Wittner 1934:42). For the average married woman, however, women's roles were aimed at maintaining a spotless home and
raising children correctly. Medical authorities urged housewives to maintain their health and beauty through corrective exercise, but exercise was one obligation among many.

Materialism and social class were central in women's exercise messages. A prominent theme in exercise messages was that beauty could be gained with enjoyment or little effort if one had resources. A professional or wealthy woman could take dance lessons, go to a beauty salon to engage in corrective exercises, or invest in a country farm where she could pleasantly exercise outdoors. A woman of means could also have a gym or fantasy exercise room built for the home. If she had children, she could send them to summer camp or dance lessons. She could even avoid exercise altogether and reduce her figure through magic techniques such as vibrating rollers and steam cabinets provided at home or in salons. Certainly exercise messages were often veiled advertisements for a growing beauty industry capitalizing on women's guilt and desires. Authorities implied that readers could obtain essential beauty through consumption of goods and services, from cosmetics to special exercise treatments. Women of lesser means were stuck at home exercising with little social support, perhaps a radio exercise program or a new idea in the latest women's magazine. Selling new and improved exercise gimmicks for the busy middle-class woman would undoubtedly sell more magazines. Thus, calisthenics were fashionable in the 1920s, but they lost prominence to relaxing feminine exercises, dancing, and stretching which promised faster and easier results. The women who could not afford magazines, however, was probably getting few if any of these exercise messages.

Patriarchy, materialism, and biomedicalization were also important for men's exercise messages as advice varied by age and class. Gender roles were prominent in family magazines when men were admonished to be family providers and social producers. Sport
was more acceptable for men more than women, but competitive sport was portrayed as
dangerous and unproductive. Stories of young ex-athletes crippled by tuberculosis and
heart attack indicated that overexertion was dangerous. Some authors considered exercise
and sport illegitimate because it interfered with productivity, while others considered
regulated exercise necessary to maintain productivity in white collar work or to keep the
ex-athlete from premature death. For example, authorities considered golfing and expensive
gyms legitimate if they were used to reduce stress and improve the productivity of the
business executive. Medical authorities made exercise less legitimate for blue-collar males
as they were told they received enough exercise at work. Authorities also questioned the
value of exercise for older men. Men over thirty-five who exercised vigorously were
portrayed as vain fools who needed to act their age and face the possibility of heart attacks.
These middle-aged men could exercise, however, under a physician advised program.

Biomedicalization meant that medical authorities were further establishing
themselves as gatekeepers to exercise (Vertinsky 1991). During the 1920s and 1930s there
was little scientific information on exercise and health, yet men, women and children were
advised to see a doctor before engaging in exercise or sports. Biomedical advances were
credited with reducing contagious diseases (Ashburn 1933) and increasing life expectancies,
thus it would be understandable if patients believed doctors' exercise messages. Life
expectancy statistics are shown in Table 4. Protective doctors warned that exercise needed
to be individualized and dependent on age, gender, and occupation, and that people would
need medical advice to exercise safely. Doctors considered exercise a "corrective" therapy,
thus exercise was considered most important in returning men to work rather than in
preventing disease.
Table 4. U.S. Life Expectancy, By Gender and Race, 1900-1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White Male</th>
<th>White Female</th>
<th>Negro Male</th>
<th>Negro Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Medical advice called for white-collar people to exercise moderately, but girls, boys, sedentary men, and older people were advised not to overexert themselves. With patriarchal culture well internalized in older women, advising them not to exercise vigorously was probably considered unessential. Medical advice was not irrational given the lack of information for exercise and the anecdotal information regarding overexertion and mortality. Although medical advice was overly conservative, it reflected the benevolent but authoritative nature of medicine, and the conflict between medicine and physical culturists in the twentieth century.

Just as important in the content of exercise messages are the groups that were absent. Magazine images of Blacks and other racial minorities doing exercise were rare. On the sports page, however, Black male athletes such as track star Jessie Owens were sometimes shown, but they did not receive the same respect as Whites. Stereotypical images of the heavy woman domestic or the extremely dark and uneducated man did appear in other articles and advertisements (Penny 1931; Wiley 1933; Scanlon 1995). From public and private facilities to spectator sports, most sports continued to be racially segregated or at least subject to quotas (Spears and Swanson 1978; Figler 1981). Images of people who did not meet the standard of beauty rarely appeared in exercise messages. Old people and
fat people usually appeared as images of sedentary living or foolishness. Illustrations of women who did not meet the standard of beauty were sometimes shown, but only to elicit figure consciousness. The premise apparently was that this strategy would encourage more diet and exercise through guilt and self-consciousness (Scanlon 1995). Extremely muscular men and women were also ignored in legitimate exercise messages, as style and scientific medicine dictated that this body type was unfashionable and unhealthy.

In a 1925 *Good Housekeeping* article, Anne Hazelton Delavan claimed that the whole world had turned to exercise. In actuality, only some Americans had volunteered for leisure exercise on a consistent basis. As illustrated in Tables 5 and 6, exercise was probably not an area of concern for many adults during peace time, especially as unemployment rates rose. Many people felt that they had more pressing problems than to be involved in unpaid physical labor.

Table 5. U.S. Unemployment Rate, 1920-1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Sports Participation by Men Over Twenty Years of Age, 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Regularly (%)</th>
<th>Irregularly (%)</th>
<th>No Participation (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29 (n=96)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 (n=68)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 (n=40)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 (n=29)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69 (n=21)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+ (n=5)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>20-29 Years</th>
<th>30-39 Years</th>
<th>40-49 Years</th>
<th>50-59 Years</th>
<th>60-69 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoits</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Participation in Public Recreation Activities, 1936

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>1,675,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>1,112,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>553,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Singing</td>
<td>433,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>372,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Dancing</td>
<td>285,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>227,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseshoes</td>
<td>179,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap Dancing</td>
<td>117,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track and Field</td>
<td>136,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>138,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuffleboard</td>
<td>50,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Handcrafts</td>
<td>44,220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Sporting goods purchases plummeted as wholesale sporting goods sales decreased from $485 million to $272 million from 1929 to 1933 (Steiner 1972:45).

The Great Depression, however, may have forced downwardly mobile people to return to walking as transportation and manual labor as work. In the professional journal *Recreation*, an article “What 5,000 People Do in Their Leisure Time (1934)” introduced a professional couple who had little work for three years. The couple had abandoned many cultural activities including tennis and swimming, but they did plenty of walking for necessity. Although some men used their new free-time at municipal recreation centers, many spent their day looking for jobs or standing in lines for jobs or provisions. Sedentary white collar workers and middle-class housewives, the focus of most exercise articles, were
made exercise conscious through a variety of exercise gimmicks, but more important obligations and interests usually took priority. There was no conclusive evidence that exercise was healthy, and a great deal of information suggested that it was detrimental (Whorton 1982).

Materialist culture also served as a heavy counter-force against exercise. Tens of millions of Americans strove for work, with little time or energy to exercise. Many also strove for consumer goods to escape from alienating work: automobiles, movie and radio entertainment, and cigarettes (National Recreation Association 1933; Ryan 1934; National Recreation Association 1934; Calkins 1934). With more than 20 million cars on the road, the bicycle was increasingly perceived as a child's toy rather than a form of transportation (Reiss 1989).

Nationalism at the beginning of the twentieth century inspired progressive social policies for the education and recreation of children, including ethnic minorities (Pope 1997). After World War I, nationalism induced state governments to establish mandatory laws for the physical education of school children. Federal aid for physical education programs after World War I was not forthcoming, however. The American Federation of Labor and conservative interest groups both testified against federally funded physical education because they respectively believed it was fascist and socialist (U.S. Senate, 1920). Although most states passed laws for physical education, a 1927-1928 survey found that only 55 percent of high schools had compulsory physical education (O'Hanlon 1995:205). Another massive war on the horizon, however, would rekindle nationalism as the ideology for activating the sedentary population.
It is likely that tired workers of all classes agreed with authors who trivialized exercise. Yet from an energy standpoint, most people exercised daily as a form of work or transportation. Consistent with materialistic and patriarchal ideologies, working people of all classes would have asserted that they did not have enough time or the energy to waste on exercise, or that they obtained enough exercise by walking to work, gardening, or doing work inside or outside the home. Certainly, many workers, White and Non-White, did not have the resources to engage in golf or tennis or go to health salons. Poor folk had limited access to public recreation as well (Attwell 1921; Jones 1970; Johnson 1967).

Some probably saw little use in formal exercise, having had limited or negative experiences in sport. Some with different cultural experiences, Native Americans and first generation Jews and Italians, for example, may have been skeptical of exercise for themselves and may have discouraged family members in physical pursuits such as sports (Cheska 1979; Eisen 1991; Reiss 1989:122). With decreasing outdoor space for sandlots and safe swimming areas, informal urban sport and recreation were stymied (Reiss 1989). Sport and exercise were even abandoned by people with positive experiences, who discontinued activities to concentrate their limited vital energy on more legitimate areas of adult life such as business, intellectual work, or raising families, consistent with age, class, and norms. Recreation programs at U.S. Steel and other large industries offered sports, but for years they focused on elite spectator sports with professional athletes (Industrial Recreation 1920).

A significant minority, however, believed that physical activity other than work or transportation was necessary. As indicated in Table 8, participation in golf, tennis, and softball may have increased exercise during the Great Depression as public facilities were
expanded despite budget cuts. Participants probably considered their activities something other than exercise, however. Although social scientists have attempted to attribute activity to motivation (Thorndike 1937; Sorokin 1939), estimating the degree that people participated for health, beauty, recreation, habit, social interaction, sport, or social mobility is problematic.

Table 8. Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Areas, 1925-1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Baseball</th>
<th>Softball</th>
<th>Tennis</th>
<th>Swimming</th>
<th>Golf</th>
<th>Recreation Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>2,831</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>6,110</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>1,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>4,396</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>8,804</td>
<td>1,093</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>2,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>3,904</td>
<td>10,042</td>
<td>12,075</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>5,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>5,502</td>
<td>12,266</td>
<td>13,085</td>
<td>1,616</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>9,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>7,044</td>
<td>14,832</td>
<td>15,676</td>
<td>2,846</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>16,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>4,486</td>
<td>14,808</td>
<td>12,343</td>
<td>2,555</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>23,449</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Exercising or playing sport to stay productive, reduce nervous strain, and be physically attractive (women only) would have been consistent with materialistic, biomedical, and patriarchal ideologies for white collar workers and middle-class women, but these ideologies alone can not explain the entire process. For example, men exercising or playing sports as a habit or elixir may have reflected a mixture of the fading ideology of Muscular Christianity, the illegitimate ideas of Physical Culture, or the latent ideology of nationalism.

Exercise and sport participation occurred among all classes, but sporting experiences reflected stratified opportunities as illustrated in Tables 9 and 10. Apparently
many of the 3 million young male soldiers who played sports during World War I continued playing (Pope 1997). Respective social classes may have taken up sports like polo, golf, and bowling for social interaction (Sorokin and Berger 1939). When barrooms were closed during Prohibition, many city saloons were transformed into bowling alleys (Reiss 1989:77). Meanwhile, the elite used sports such as golf and polo as an opportunity to network and make business deals (Reed 1938). Though some older ethnic minorities may have considered sport an odd extravagance, many second-generation youth (e.g. Germans, Japanese) assimilated into American culture through American sports. Some ethnic minorities (e.g. Blacks, European Jews, Italians, Irish) may have considered sport as a route to upward mobility, but this dream was most often reserved for young males (Levine 1992; Eisen 1991; Regalado 1995; Mormino 1995).

Moments of resistance can be inferred from exercise messages. Apparently some people did not listen to medical advice, and were unwilling to slow down despite doctor's wishes. Men and women athletes were also exercising vigorously or building muscles as a form of work, sport, or leisure despite protests from their families and the shock of their communities. In some cases, women athletes had to withstand the taunts of being labeled as muscle-bound Amazons and the fears of ruining their reproductive systems. Athletic men had to withstand being labeled as vain and immature. However, newspaper sports pages marketing a wide male audience presented validating messages for men and women participants, conflicting with anti-exercise and anti-sport magazine messages.
Table 9. Time Budget Survey, in Hours Per Week, Westchester County New York, 1934, by Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>White Collar</td>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>White Collar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Work</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Care</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household/Children</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorinng</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lundberg et al. Study from Robinson (1969:76).
Table 10. Sports Participation, Westchester, New York, 1934, by Gender and Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Minutes Per Day (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Men</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Boys</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed Men</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Executive Men</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Girls</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Laborers</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-Collar Men</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed Women</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Laborers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Collar Females</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewives</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Wives from Oregon</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: According to Lundberg (1958:181), 60 percent of the respondents participated in sports. Farm wife participation reported by Lundberg, et al. (1958:180) from 1929 Corvalis, Oregon Study.
Source: Lundberg, Komarovsky, and McInerny (1958)

Exercise messages in popular magazines often reflected hegemonic ideologies and reinforced incorrect beliefs about exercise during the period. However, they were only one source of information, a source that some readers ignored and “others” had limited access to. Critical sociological historical analysis points to the diverse, changing and complex nature of groups, ideologies, motivations, and resources that would serve as walls, barriers, or springboards to exercise, sport, and recreation.
CHAPTER 5

EXERCISE MESSAGES FROM THE DEPRESSION TO THE COLD WAR, 1937-1953

Continuity and Change in Physical Activity and Exercise

This chapter analyzes exercise messages in magazine articles from 1937 to 1953. The analysis will show how nationalism reemerged as an ideology for exercise promotion as patriarchy, materialism, and biomedicalization changed in focus and format, and racism remained largely hidden. Gender, class, age, and race are again identified as four social categories in stratified exercise messages. The messages are contextualized in macro-social events and trends, from the Great Depression, to World War II, to post-war material affluence. Thereafter, a review of popular magazine articles illustrate the use of ideologies to promote or deter exercise for various groups. A summary of ideologies, stratification, ideology conflicts, and resistance are compared with secondary sources to create an interpretation of exercise messages.

Sporting, recreational, and educational opportunities declined for some during the Depression, but they improved for many after World War II. Before World War II, the U.S. Office of Education estimated that 51 percent of boys and 47 percent of girls had physical education in their last two years of high school (Rowntree 1944:790). As a youth-oriented project, millions of children played sports as physical education or P.E. (Weston 1962; 111

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O’Hanlon 1983). When budgets were pared, public school P.E., community recreation budgets, and industrial recreation programs were reduced. *Elite* athletics and spectator sport, though sometimes reduced, continued to be a symbol of American culture (Baker 1939; Growth of the Community Recreation Movement 1937; O’Hanlon 1983; Reiss 1989: 81-86). Exercise in its many forms was still stratified by age, class, gender, and race, but some social change occurred (Cahn 1994; Spears and Swanson 1978). According to one estimate, more than three hundred thousand girls and women played high school and college basketball (Hinton 1941).

Apart from a four-year war that would require more human muscle, America was becoming increasingly sedentary and strained as more workers entered sitting and standing occupations (Fuehr 1939). Many urbanites still walked to work, but this form of transportation was in decline (Sorokin 1939). The growth of suburbs, especially after World War II, was one factor in the loss of walking. Pedestrianism was no longer feasible for working people commuting into the city. Manual laborers remained the most common occupational group, often doing boring and repetitive muscular work within arm’s reach (Bell 1970). Sedentary white-collar work increased rapidly as physically demanding farm jobs were reduced. It is understandable that many people were grateful to be working but uninterested in laboring outside of work. Yet many Americans said they engaged in exercise during World War II. A 1940 Gallup Poll indicated that 67 percent of adults didn’t exercise (see Appendix II). A year later only 42 percent of all adults said they did not take any systematic exercise (Gallup 1972; Sartain 1942).

People continued to engage in outdoor pursuits such as hunting and fishing and social events such as bowling and dancing that may or may not have been considered exercise.
According to Reiss (1989:77-81), there were twelve million bowlers by the end of the Depression, a half-million in Chicago alone. Women, urban Blacks, and industrial laborers gained some sporting opportunities through YMCAs, YWCAs, youth clubs, industrial leagues, and church leagues, but formal sport was practiced disproportionately by young able-bodied White males with free time and the resources to play (Henderson 1939; Hinton 1941; Eastwood 1943; Gissendanner 1994; Mjagki and Spratt 1997). Still, adult sport may have been practiced more by factory workers, rather than professional workers, when opportunities were available (Thorndike 1937; Sorokin 1939).

Young men beyond school age tended to play irregularly in strenuous sports, while middle-age men (i.e. over thirty years of age) were likely to golf or bowl if they engaged in sport (Marshall and Nagle 1939). Hiking clubs for people over forty and old-timer’s softball leagues did exist, but only a small percentage of older people participated (Tork 1940; Softball for Oldsters 1941). Sports were played by a small percentage of men over fifty (see Table 6, p. 103). As an upper-class and middle-class game primarily for male adults over thirty, golf continued to be a social activity disproportionately held at private clubs (see Table 11). When municipal recreation opportunities were available, male elders usually played less physically demanding games such as horseshoes, shuffleboard, and bocci that reflected age norms, cultural traditions, and the related socio-biological realities of old age and disability (Marshall and Nagle 1939).
Table 11. U.S. Golf Courses, Public and Private, 1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Clubs (9 holes)</td>
<td>2,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Clubs (18 holes)</td>
<td>1,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Fee (9 holes)</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Fee (18 holes)</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal (9 holes)</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal (18 holes)</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Reed (1938:844).

Despite some progressive social change for women, girls and women were still less likely to be socialized into sport than men, and more likely to be discouraged from vigorous sport (Cahn 1994). Subsequently, women had limited access to sport and recreational exercise because they claimed less interest. In one local survey of high school students, the ratio of involvement in unsupervised formal sports was 27 percent for girls and 57 percent for boys (Olds 1949). In *School and Society*, Mary C. Baker (1939) reported that half of all college women with the choice to attend physical education classes opted out. Municipal recreation for older people tended to focus on men, but popular programs for older women included sewing and needlecraft for physical and mental activity (Recreation for Older People 1940).

**Nationalism and Patriarchy in Exercise Messages**

Before the United States was officially involved in World War II, the government was promoting exercise in anticipation of the fight (Lucas 1985). Former heavyweight champion
boxer Gene Tunney was recruited for exercise indoctrination in the Navy, “energetically preaching the steel-abdomen gospel,” but his message was transmitted to civilians as well. In the *New York Times Magazine*, the “sternly disciplined” and “deeply religious” officer advocated vigorous exercise and sport. He also called for a reduction in smoking and alcohol consumption, preaching that personnel must be in top shape to stay alive. His nine exercise prescription for getting fit was included in the article (Berger 1941). Two months later, *Time* magazine stated that Tunney wanted 600 “educated muscle-men” to act as training assistants. Highlighting the poor fitness of military recruits, the exercise authority noted that half of all Navy personnel couldn’t even stand properly. A picture of Tunney and recruits on a training run was captioned “Potbellies may lead to moral collapse.” Mixing patriotism and materialism, Tunney sold a three dollar “Gene Tunney Exerciser,” which claimed to ‘reduce the waistline, considerably strengthen the abdominal muscles, increase breathing capacity, tone up the whole alimentary tract, strengthen the heart, [and] improve the muscle action of the entire body (Potbellyacher 1941).”

As an exercise authority, Tunney himself wrote a book “Arms for Living” and a *Reader’s Digest* article “It’s More Fun to Be Fit.” His message was patriotic, but it also had the tone of Muscular Christianity and profit-minded physical culture. The Naval officer proclaimed that “physical flabbiness has always seemed to me criminal, even sacrilegious abuse of that wonderful instrument, the human body.” He presented a disturbing image of the sedentary male, a “pitiful figure” with collapsed chest and protruding stomach. Appealing to the growing sense of patriotism, the military officer asked civilians to voluntarily exercise at least fifteen minutes a day for sixty days. Consistent with biomedical authority, he stated that exercise must be carefully performed, with a doctor’s permission if necessary, “not
violent weekends of golf or tennis or sporadic outbursts of squash, but a daily drill that becomes as much a part of your life as brushing your teeth (Tunney 1942:20).” Stressing the necessity for fitness, he preached that “these pitiful signs of flabbiness and decay do not fit into the picture of a nation grappling with mortal enemies. To be in poor physical shape in our present crisis is unforgivable (Tunney 1942:21).”

Magazines addressed the necessity for exercise programs for young men. *Life* and *Collier’s* documented the strenuous and regimented exercise of male recruits training for combat. In *Collier’s* “Muscles for Victory” Charles Walker (1943) suggested that men of draft age begin toughening up immediately, to avoid being killed in battle. Men were encouraged to play sports and go to the YMCA, and photos of college men training for the eventuality of combat accompanied articles. The physical education trade journal *Health and Physical Education* reported that servicemen took advantage of free participation at YMCAs. In New York City alone, a ten months record in 1943 showed 166,956 “participations” by servicemen, many of whom took swimming lessons (Friermood 1944: 186). *Science News Letter* encouraged men to prepare for duty by exercising and changing sedentary habits. Lieutenant Commander Albert Behnke (1942) called for “a national program of vigorous, supervised athletic exercise and games for civilian men.” Behnke added that the public should use bicycles instead of cars for recreation, a practice ignored in peacetime but heeded by some during war rationing. Mixing materialism with nationalism, *Newsweek* readers were informed of a 35 cent booklet from Victory Publishing Company, “a system of thirteen self-administered sudden jerks and stretches” to strengthen the civilian population.

Programs to make young men fit were somewhat successful, but exercise messages were also necessary to treat those wounded in war. In the first two years of World War II,
the percentage of recruits unfit for service was listed at 27 percent, much lower than the 52 percent rejection rate claimed during World War I (Blanchard 1945:361). However, tens of thousands of men returned from battle in need of exercise rehabilitation, employment, and confidence following deforming injuries. In the Army Air Forces exercise program “Blueprints for Recovery” republished in *Hygeia*, soldiers were encouraged:

> Be sure of this: Every day men come here who have been shot to pieces, but they leave here able and eager to compete with anybody—for a civilian job or a blonde (Blueprints for Recovery October 1944:734).

**Racism and Exercise**

One cannot leave nationalistic exercise messages without referring to racial discrimination. Magazine photos of Asian Americans or Native Americans exercising were rare if they existed at all. This would be sensible, given that many Japanese Americans were placed in internment camps and many Indians were relegated to reservations. America, despite its image as a melting pot, was still largely segregated into White and non-White, in schools, YMCAs and military units. As an image of opportunity in *Health and Physical Education*, Negro children were seen swimming in a segregated YMCA pool (Friermood 1944). Many other Blacks were invisible, however. During the war, Jessie Owens, the famous track star who evoked nationalism during the 1936 Berlin Olympics, was recruited by the Office of Civil Defense as “national director of physical education for Negroes (Candee 1956).” Owens image, however, did not appear in any popular White exercise messages. Magazine messages were still for the disproportionately White higher classes. It is unlikely that doctors who told disabled soldiers that they could compete for blondes believed their audience could be anything other than White.
In a rare exercise message concerning race in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Tulsa basketball coach Bill Miller revealed racist beliefs regarding minorities. Talking about boxer Joe Louis, Olympian and football player Jim Thorpe, and baseball player Joe Dimaggio, Miller remarked:

> There we have a Negro, an Indian, and an Italian...Some people say these are lazy races because their members seem to be nonchalant, almost negligent. Yet they have produced, proportionately, more great athletes than all other racial groups. They appear to be lazy only because they have inherited the knack of relaxation. When they hit, they strike with the speed of a snake. Conserved energy through relaxation is the answer (Frank 1944:22).

**Female Nationalism**

Nationalistic exercise messages were not only for boys and men. During World War II, school girls were urged to stay fit in physical education as a part of Victory Corps, and women were prompted to exercise by Alice Marble, former tennis champion and Office of Civil Defense authority. Exercise messages for women took an about face in priorities during the war. While beauty was still important, exercise articles in women’s magazines and family magazines stressed women’s obligation to get fit for physically strenuous war work (Miller 1941; Cades 1941; Radcliffe 1942; Cades 1943). An article in *Independent Woman* titled “Hail America” explained the necessity for exercise:

> This war won’t be won by men alone. We American women, like our British, Russian, and Chinese sisters, must get the home front ready to meet total war. Our shortest route to political patriotism is to put ourselves into the best physical shape— at once (Sartain 1942:40).

Women were encouraged to engage in vigorous setting-up exercises and sports and other lifestyle habits for their own good and the good of the country. Physical fitness could be fun,
but more importantly it could keep women healthy, “freeing hospitals and medical services for those who may really need them as the war progresses (Sartain 1942:40).” In Woman’s Companion, Hazel Rawson Cades (1941:96) remarked on the poor state of women’s fitness, but predicted a “feminine boom in constructive exercise” and sports. Cades’ exercises, formulated by fitness expert Dorothy Nye, were descriptively and patriotically named “back to work,” “front line defense” and “victory stride.” Invoking biomedicalization with nationalism, Lois Mattox Miller (1941:15) claimed that America could be the most disease-free nation in history, if every family would “eat sensibly, relax wisely, exercise regularly, and think clearly.” Miller remarked that this was not merely her claim, but the scientific opinion of doctors and scientists. Apparently, nationalism alone could not convince everyone to change their habits. Miller’s Better Homes and Gardens article added that these changes could be done easily and without further sacrifice.

Articles in Life, Collier’s, American Home, and Hygeia illustrated the importance of exercise for women war workers. Women in military service known as WACS and WAVES were required to exercise, but women in industry were also encouraged to exercise and play recreational sports, to become more “efficient” and cheerful workers (Cades 1943). Special exercises costing only fifteen minutes per day were prescribed for improving the efficiency of hand movements, standing, and lifting heavy objects. Illustrations of proper form in doing work were encouraged to save women from “unnecessary strain and fatique (Radcliffe 1942:82).” Popular Science, American Home, and Life presented “exercising health tricks,” foot exercises, and massage for weary war workers. Despite this call for exercise it appeared that many women just wanted to rest (“Exercising Health Tricks 1943; Radcliffe 1943; Good Foot Work 1943; WACS’ Feet). According to American Home, however, 3 million women
were performing patriotic exercises such as “channel crossing,” “dive-bombing,” and “rescue mission,” “thus becoming more efficient in the pantry, at an office desk, in a war plant, or in a school (Kitchen Rangers 1943:87).”

Patriarchy and Women’s Roles Continue

Although women gained some opportunities in work and sports, the patriarchal belief that they were to be valued for their appearances persisted. Magazines continued to be a popular medium for these exercise messages before, during, and after World War II. During peacetime, magazine articles promoted “correct” exercise for women. The point of the messages was to exercise without overdoing it, relaxing and not straining to attain the ideal figure. Even during the war, WAVES were presented with the training film “Make-up from the Neck Down,” to fix the figure through exercise. Authorities were increasingly not doctors, but proclaimed beauty experts such as Woman’s Home Companion’s Hazel Rawson Cades, Ladies’ Home Journal’s Louis Paine Benjamin, Good Housekeeping’s Ruth Murrin, and their exercise consultants Dorothy Nye, Ann Delafield, Phoebe Radcliffe and others. Their popular method of exercise was “figure molding” or spot reducing to take off the bulges in the right places, attain the “million dollar figure,” and “remain fetching (Benjamin 1939; Felts 1936; Benjamin 1943).”

Exercise messages were preoccupied with body measurements and fashion. Diet and exercise were essential for attaining or maintaining the “perfect size 16” (Murrin 1936) or the “ideal average figure” of 34-25-36 (Benjamin 1939), being the “perfect girl” according to the U.S. Bureau of Standards (Benjamin 1940)” or stacking up to the dimensions of Hollywood starlets listed in Table 12. Women were informed that “the closer your bust and hip
measurements are to each other, and the smaller your waist is in proportion to them, the more compliments you can expect (Cades 1950).” As skirts became short again and bathing suits got smaller, women needed to slim their legs, hips, and mid-sections. According to Life magazine, when plunging necklines became fashionable, women also need “full bosoms” and “attractively filled out” necks (Neckline Build-Up 1948). The fashionable figure was essential to avoid embarrassing oneself or getting the “bathing suit blues” (Lane 1936; Cades 1946; Cades 1947; Murrin 1949). Women in their thirties, according to Hazel Rawson Cades (1940), were especially discontented with their slumping, bulging bodies, wanting to slim their hips, whittle their waists, and avoid getting a dowager’s hump. According to Cades (1947), 86 percent of her readers and reporters were dissatisfied with their bodies, most wanting to reduce their arm and leg measurements and increase their bust measurements. Experts noted that the fashion was not to be too “bunchy” or “overdeveloped” like tennis champion Helen Wills Moody, but to have sleek legs like her rival Alice Marble (Lane 1936; Marcus 1937; Posture Lady 1937; Nye 1939). The standard of beauty was to be “moderately slender but gently curved (Cades 1946).” This standard was illustrated by a number of exercise articles not for health, but for spot reducing--making specific body parts the ideal size (Cades 1950; Murrin 1953).

Magazine images of women and exercise were similar to those in the past. The standard image of beauty was still young and slim, but women with larger busts and gentle curves were also said to be fashionable (Cades 1946). Beside a picture of a slim woman holding and staring at a skimpy one-piece bathing suit was the article title “How Will You Look in a Bathing Suit (Murrin 1949)?” Drawings of women also continued to be used to diagram exercises, but they also indicated a standard of slimness and proportions that even
young models could rarely achieve. One novelty was the *before and after* photo, a tool used to sell women on the speed that women could change their figures (Neckline Build-Up 1948; Make a New Figure 1953). Underneath before and after photos in "Make a New Figure," the caption stated "four weeks of easy exercise, simple diet changed Marie's hips from 38 to 36 inches, her waist from 30 to 26 inches and reduced her weight from 134 pounds to 126 pounds." The article noted that the five simple exercises would take only two minutes a day!

Skiing, dancing, swimming, bicycling, and tennis were partially promoted for women (Benjamin 1936; Cades 1943; Crowell 1946). Sport could be fun for women inclined to participate, but it was not considered effective for conditioning or reforming the body to correct proportions (Cades 1939). Women were also informed that they should bicycle with their knees together to avoid large hips, and avoid dancing too much to prevent muscle-boundedness (Marcus 1937). Referring to elite dancer Patricia Bowman an article in Collier's stated:

> One word of caution. Too much ballet is as bad as too little. The reason Patricia Bowman has such beautiful legs, unmarred by bunchy muscles once considered the badge of a dancer, is that she limits the amount of exercise she does (Ducas 1939:31)."
Table 12. *Life* Magazine's Female Celebrity Models of Perfection, 1942

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Height (ft/in)</th>
<th>Weight (lbs)</th>
<th>Bust (in)</th>
<th>Waist (in)</th>
<th>Hip (in)</th>
<th>Shoe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veronica Lake</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5'2&quot;</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5.5AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Sheridan</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5'6&quot;</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita Hayworth</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5'6&quot;</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gene Tierney</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5'5&quot;</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6.5AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lana Turner</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5'3&quot;</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.5B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexis Smith</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5'7&quot;</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6.5B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedy Lamarr</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5'6&quot;</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>6.5A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carole Landis</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5'6&quot;</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosalind Russell</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5'7&quot;</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6.5A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda Marshall</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5'3&quot;</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>5A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Patriarchy and Materialism Promote Gimmicks for Women**

Instead of promoting sport, women's exercise messages were more likely to sell gimmicks and outrageous claims. Messages often implied that figure alterations could be done simply, fast, and easily. Some of the gimmicks, both old and new, included massage, upside down exercises (Kyle 1938), relaxing exercises (Cades 1939; Cades 1934), lazily stretching (Cades 1952), sit down exercises, exercises in bed (Benjamin 1938; How to Get Up in the Morning 1942), posture exercises (Hugeland 1953), pulling in your waistline (Craig 1953; “Waistline Slimmers 1951”), easy exercises for the bosom (Six Easy Exercises for the Bosom 1940; Breast Exercises 1946), and exercises for a few minutes a day (Benjamin 1946). Scientific experts believed that weight loss was slow with exercise. Mixing biomedicalization...
with materialism and patriarchy, diet plans became a fashionable aspect of many exercise messages (Murrin 1953:27; Helena Rubenstein's New Longevity Diet 1952).

Articles continued to sell goods and services other than the magazines themselves, such as Helena Rubenstein's Lithe Line (Helena Rubentstein's New Longevity Diet 1952) and "easy exercises" provided by the Richard Hudnut Salon (Bell 1953). In case exercise didn't work, a better brassiere could also be used for "deceptive measures (Cades 1946a)." If those gimmicks failed a women could buy better "foundation garments" (i.e. corsetting) or wear dresses with vertical lines and dark colors. In 1940, *Ladies Home Journal* beauty editor Louise Paine Benjamin (1940:58) noted that women spent $119 million on cosmetics and $171 million at beauty parlors, two tools in the American woman's arsenal to look attractive. This may have been a low estimate; Maxine Block (1947:642) reported that women spent more than a half-billion dollars on cosmetics in 1941. At this point, cosmetic company owners Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden were also two of the most wealthy businesswomen in history (Block 1947; Candee 1957).

Materialism was presented as an ally in the fight for a better figure. Hazel Rawson Cades (1950:4) reminded readers that "it's entirely sporting to take advantage of every aid in creating illusions. But how much easier it would be if you really *had* a finer figure. And I think you can if you will just knuckle down and do some diet and exercise." For social support a homebound women could turn on radio exercises in the morning. However, a more convenient product to encourage women to exercise was a series of exercise phonograph records produced by RCA Victor and designed by New York spa owner Wanda Bowman-Wilson. A *Life* magazine article sold the "modern" product "to help women in their fight against big hips (New Phonograph Records 1940)."
The experts claimed that exercise would bring youthful vitality in looks (Cocks 1938), keep the figure young with only a few minutes a day (Bell 1951), "do wonderful things for your figure (Bell 1953:102),” create prettier legs (Have Prettier Legs 1947), and produce better sleep (Simple Exercises 1940). The experts also implied that women could get the right measurements if they exercised correctly. Acknowledging that “Even Slim Girls Have Hips,” Louise Paine Benjamin offered hope that her exercises could reduce the girdle area.

**Patriarchy and Women’s Roles: Pretty Mothers Doing Women’s Work**

Although growing millions of women were in the paid labor force, many were also responsible for taking care of children and keeping their husbands healthy (Koch 1939). Magazines for the busy housewife, therefore, presented another old patriarchal message that seemed to be common in the 1940s. Exercise authorities told women that they didn’t need to exercise *per se*, they just needed to work correctly and think positively about their domestic roles. Illustrations helped explain the do’s and don’ts of housework exercise. According to exercise expert Ann Delafield, women could turn “housework drudgery” into “good clean fun” by stretching instead of sagging, deep knee bending instead of bending over, and reaching instead of kneeling (An Apple a Day 1941). In a *Parent’s Magazine* article entitled “Homemade Beauty” busy readers were given “time-saving beauty tricks.” Beauty editor Kay Wambold (1947) promised that “you will be surprised to find out how routine household duties can actually help in whittling your waist, improving your posture and lifting your mental outlook.” The housewife was directed to apply make-up, be neatly groomed, and organize as many meals as possible before getting to the dishwashing posture exercise. Beside a picture of young woman and two children exercising was the caption “you can make
housekeeping a tiring task or a beauty making activity depending on your approach (Wambold 1947:153).” In a case study of Mrs. Aulden Griffin, photographs were captioned: “First rate for figures! Cleaning, bedmaking, as Mrs. Griffin does it, slims hips (Benjamin 1940).” According to this success story, Mrs. Griffin maintained her figure fourteen years after being married. In another case, Martha Anderson, with three babies and early signs of “middle-age spread” was directed to scrub the tub with good posture and reach and stretch while dusting (Benjamin 1946).

Besides indoor housework, another particularly popular form of functional exercise was gardening. Although a few articles included men in the picture (Zwick 1940; Personal! 1942), the messages were largely for women. According to exercise messages, gardening could be good for a woman’s figure, but only if she did it correctly. Ann Halladay (1939:6) in American Home claimed that squatting in the garden would “squeeze those fat cells above and below the beltline until they move out.” Mixing patriarchy and nationalism, women were informed that they could turn their Victory gardens into health and beauty salons, to “gather in a perfect waistline and slender hips as well as armfuls of flowers or baskets of tomatoes (Personal! 1942).” They were warned, however, to keep their backs straight when shoveling and using a wheelbarrow (Sharp 1943). According to one article, gardening incorrectly, without Elizabeth Arden’s exercise advice, could make the woman look like a “hag or crone (How to Get in Shape for Gardening 1943).”

Post-pregnancy exercise messages were one exception to the belief that housework was enough exercise. Invoking biomedicalization and patriarchy, new mothers were told for beauty sake that they needed to exercise when their doctors approved (Murrin 1939; Higgins 1941; Edwards 1945; Fair 1950). Women were informed that they should not lose their
youthful appearance just because they had children. Beauty expert Ruth Murrin added “the truth is that few things are more important now than for you to be a pretty mother—your growing child’s ideal and your husband’s pride.” When husbands came home from war, Catherine Edwards of Parent’s Magazine advised women not to “find that the new baby has left you with an old figure.” Exercises designed by the Elizabeth Arden and Helena Rubenstein salons sold women the belief that exercise was necessary for the post-natal comeback (Edwards 1943; Fair 1950).

At the same time women were told to exercise for beauty sake, they were presented advice on socializing their children. Mothers were advised to promote playful exercise for young children, but advice for socializing older children was less socially controlling. In Parent’s Magazine, Woman’s Home Companion, and American Home, women were advised to play with their children. Mothers were told to let their young children use their imagination, pretending to be animals, storybook characters, cowboys, and rocking horses (Oden 1943; Radcliffe 1944). In Parent’s Magazine, a father encouraged parents to let their boys play actively while they were young. The author remarked that as soon as boys got older, they would rather be passive sports spectators “devoted to lounging, movies, and a growing interest in girls (Law 1939:37).” Formal sport and vigorous exercise were not as legitimate for socializing older children. In Science Digest and Changing Times, parents were advised to avoid pressuring their children to play team sports, and in Today’s Health mothers of older boys were warned of the dangers of overdeveloped muscles (Information for Mothers 1950).
Materialism and Class Stratification

Materialism, mixed with other ideologies, pervaded articles best described as style and fashion exercise messages. In *Literary Digest*, readers were informed that boring military-like drills and calisthenics were unfashionable. Scientific and fun exercise, proposed by the “muscled intelligentsia” of physical educators and recreation professionals was the vogue. The fashion was sport for men, relaxing exercises for women, and passive exercise for those with weak hearts. Reducing weight through exercise was considered inefficient and outmoded, but exercise was fashionable for the affluent. In lower Manhattan, Wall Street businessmen and celebrities could visit one of Artie McGovern’s gyms or William Bender’s Health Roof, luxurious spas by Elizabeth Arden, Helena Rubinstein and Richard Hudnut, or they could vacation at Rose Bernie’s milk-health farm in nearby Westchester County (Body Building 1937). *Nation’s Business* reported that Bill Brown had made himself rich with his health farm in Garrison, New York. Using strict discipline this exercise authority restored the health of “jaded” executives with weights and long hikes in a dormitory setting (Angell 1939).

Articles regarding the exercise habits of movie stars were another illustration of affluence and authority. Articles in *Literary Digest, Life, Good Housekeeping*, and *American Magazine* detailed the exercise formulas and weight reducing strategies of Hollywood actors and actresses. A *Literary Digest* article revealed that exercise was fun for most celebrities, but it was also a necessity. Most actors were required to look healthy and trim for movie roles. Although the value of sports were a matter of contention elsewhere, it was reported that Joan Crawford, Claudette Colbert and Jean Harlow played tennis, and Katherine Hepburn and Nelson Eddy golfed. Ginger Rodgers was an “all-around sports enthusiast” while her partner Fred Astaire had no routine but golfed and played tennis for enjoyment. Less keen
about exercise, Marlene Dietrich’s weight loss formula was to sleep less until the weight was reduced. Warner Brothers, MGM and Paramount maintained “studio physical directors” or “flesh sculptors” to improve an actors posture, or to help them develop muscles or reduce weight when the part required it. A picture of MGM’s flesh sculptor directing an actress in exercise illustrated that “Metro’s Mr. Loomis keeps bodies beautiful (Flesh Sculptors 1937).” Ex-YMCA boxing instructor Terry Hunt and physical culturist Richard Kline were famous themselves when articles profiled them directing stars such as Joan Blondell, Dorothy Lamour, Betty Grable and Cary Grant in staying trim (Terry Hunts Job 1940; Whiz at Figures 1942).

Though messages with affluent stars or businessmen may have inspired the less affluent, magazine articles clearly reflected class differences in exercise possibilities. In Independent Woman, Irma Fuehr (1939:164) expressed disapproval at the sedentary condition of American society both rich and poor, stating that “no woman should deprive herself of such pleasure.” Fuehr noted that hobbies like golfing, swimming, or horseback riding could be used to relieve tension, and that swimming was “cheaper and more invigorating than a movie.” Photographs of two affluent women, one owning eight horses and another boating, were shown with those with fewer status symbols. The author advised all readers that they could be physically active:

Don’t forego athletic pleasures until you can afford a vacation at Palm beach or Sun Valley. Resorts do not have a monopoly on active recreations. Private homes, YMCAs, municipal parks, and the open country provide them just as effectively —indeed almost lay them on your doorstep (Fuehr 1939:164).

Articles on skiing and hiking were also class-based if one were not living near a mountain. Skiing involved transportation, equipment, and ski lessons from someone like
Andre, a famous ski expert that only the wealthy could afford (Skiing Accidents 1940). In *Holiday* magazine, vacationing women were advised to condition their bodies and faces, noting that body lotions, face creams and lipstick were essential for keeping a good impression on the slopes. In the familiar theme of beauty consciousness, women were warned against the use of other types of make-up “because sun and reflection of glaring snow throw every facial line into unlovely relief (Colby 1952:82).” Hiking seemed like a more proletarian form of exercise, but it could be expensive when practiced according to the middle-class exercise messages. During the Great Depression “A Hiking Holiday” mentioned in *Hygeia* would require expenses and a job to vacation from (Chansler 1931). In the 1950s walking in the suburbs did not cost much, but walking vacations in Canada or Colorado for strenuous hikes would require an automobile and vacation expenses (Barth 1952).

**Preventive Medicine and Heart Attacks: Biomedical Conflict and Age Norms**

While *Hygeia* continued to publish articles on exercise, more popular family magazines sold medical advice too. Overall, advice continued to fluctuate between exercise promotion and exercise restriction. From one perspective, Americans were portrayed as excessively sedentary and in dire need of exercise. From another perspective, Americans were too busy and in need of relaxation in order to stay healthy. Both perspectives agreed that heart attacks had become an epidemic, killing hundreds of thousands of men per year. From the first perspective, prominent Boston cardiologist Dr. Paul Dudley White (1937) in *Hygeia* commented that dependence on automobiles was wasteful. It resulted in human wasting in obesity and heart disease and material wasting on fuel and parking spaces. Class conscious, he noted that "even families on government relief roles" had acquired the habit of riding...
everywhere. White called for a social policy to allow people to bicycle to work, a plan similar to Holland. His anti-materialist opinions, however, were seemingly ignored. At the same time the doctor desired progressive changes in public health, he evoked a sense of nationalism, directing that Americans be as physically active as their forefathers.

Others echoed White's remarks that exercise was beneficial, but exercise promotion was tempered with age, class, and gender prescriptions. *Hygeia* published a nine article series by Dudley Reed (1938) explaining the benefits and dangers of exercise. Reed promoted the belief of active recreation for the sedentary worker, calling for reduced spectatorship and an increase in exercise. The author noted the social and psychological benefits of moderate exercise for everyone, particularly for men with money. Golf, for example, could be a source of fraternity and joy, giving men a sense of both youthfulness and nostalgia. Reed noted, however, that golf could be expensive. Horseback riding and sail boating were also considered healthy and fun activities (Reed 1938; Kennett and Fechheimer 1938). Reed debunked claims that overexertion could damage a healthy heart, but questioned the purposes of strenuous activity for middle-aged people over forty. Pleading to age norms, the author suggested that violent exercise was especially undignified and unsafe for the fifty-year-old. George Weinstein (1944) told men over thirty-five to “stow away” their sports equipment and get a good pair of walking shoes. Walking was the perfect and dignified activity for the man or woman over thirty-five. E.P. Herman (1947) was a more liberal authority, suggesting that the elderly man over 50 could exercise by swimming, gardening, and golfing moderately. Readers, though, were advised to exercise gently and not exceed “their limits.” Accompanying the article was an illustration of a strong looking man, in a suit and tie, striding with cane in hand.
Dr. C. Ward Crampton's opinions were highlighted in a *Literary Digest* article “Exercise Tailored to Fit Type (1937).” Echoing Dr. Fishbein who claimed that large muscles were no longer in fashion, Crampton authorized appropriate exercises dependent on occupational types. According to this exercise authority, scholars and office executives needed the most amount of exercise and physical laborers required the least. The laborer was described as a slumping muscle-bound man requiring abdominal exercises and recreation more than anything else. Mixing medicalization and materialism, the article noted that Dr. Crampton’s new book was available for two dollars.

Other medical authorities highlighted the dangers of exercise for middle-aged people, stating that too many older people exercised excessively. This message encouraging middle-aged people to slow down gained popularity and medical legitimation for several years. Dr. Henry Christian (1939) referred to exercise as "an American fetish" that was leading many middle-aged people to heart attacks and premature deaths. Echoing popular age norms Christian said "it is a sad sight to see older men or women wending their way in from the tennis courts or golf links." Exercise was considered relatively safe for people over 40 who had kept in training, but it was considered dangerous for fat people or people who exercised sporadically. Dr. Christian validated the doctor's gatekeeper role by advising people over 50 that they consult a doctor before starting an exercise program.

Possibly the most popular medical authority of the 1940s was Dr. Peter J. Steincrohn, a prolific writer who promoted the belief that people over forty slow down and “act their age.” Apparently, Steincrohn believed that he was a pioneer in preventive medicine by advising people to relax and not worry, a difficult task in modern society (Candee 1957). The former chief of staff at Mount Sinai Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut, Steincrohn wrote a
series of popular books such as "You Don't Have to Exercise (1942)" and "Stop Killing Yourself (1950)," and magazine articles in Readers's Digest, Saturday Evening Post, Hygeia, American Magazine, and American Mercury. Dr. Steincrohn continued writing for four decades, with books such as "How to Be Lazy, Healthy, and Fit (1969)" and "How to Cure Your Joggermania! (1979)." Perhaps the secret of Steincrohn's success was that his message was attractive to sedentary adults. Although Steincrohn advised people to eat less and relax more, his advise to reduce or eliminate exercise appeared to be the most attractive aspect of his prescription.

In "Learn to Be Lazy" appearing in the Saturday Evening Post, Steincrohn (1942) directed his message to the 30 million people from 40 to 60, especially those who had the "mistaken belief that exercise is good." According to this "experienced medical observer" middle-aged exercisers were deluded people, fearful of aging, and in denial regarding their health status. Dr. Steincrohn supported his observation with the story of a foolish man in his forties who collapsed and died while working out. The doctor added that exercise would not improve health nor aid in weight loss:

Exercise for the growing will always be necessary to make strong bodies. But beyond forty it is one of the unessentials of life. It is outdated, outdated as barber surgeons (Steincrohn 1942: 29).

Steincrohn's humor was an equally forceful strategy against exercise. The doctor quoted nonagenarian railroad magnate Chauncey Depew who remarked "I get my exercise acting as a pall bearer for my friends who exercise." Supporting the doctor's gatekeeper role, Steincrohn did not prohibit exercise for all old people. Relaxed exercise was fine if the patient had a thorough medical examination and clearance from a physician. A photograph with
supporting text, however, illustrated that a pot-bellied middle-aged man who exerted himself looked foolish.

Other authorities supported Steincrohn’s proscriptions against exercise for older people. Morris Fishbein, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and *Hygeia* and advocate against physical culture quacks legitimated the conservative advice. Quoting Steincrohn, Dr. Fishbein (1942) suggested that the “modern scientific attitude” toward exercise was “not to lift a finger necessarily” after age 40. Reflecting nationalism, however, he noted that exercise was important for young people, especially men of military age. Fishbein’s public comments were reported in the *New York Times*. The medical editor (Fishbein 1942) reiterated this “modern scientific attitude” in *Hygeia*, tempering his remarks by stating that exercise was fine for older people if taken as a form of relaxation. Steincrohn’s position was also legitimated in a report by the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (AAHPER) which called for increased games and sport for young people, but warned that “among older persons (over 40) physical examinations and observation of the individual’s reaction to exercise disclose large numbers who need to restrict exercise (Steinhaus et al. 1943:559).” Drs. Christian and Steincrohn were among the four American Medical Association consultants for the report.

Dr. Steincrohn maintained his anti-exercise formula in two *Science Digest* articles: “You Don’t Have to Exercise,” a condensed version of his book of the same title, and “Exercise After 40? Forget It!,” condensed from another book entitled “You and Your Fears.” Employing his medical status, Steincrohn (1949:1) remarked that “as a physician, I am convinced that exercise is unnecessary—and often harmful.” Steincrohn’s popularity continued in another article also titled “You Don’t Have to Exercise” appearing in *Reader’s*
Digest, the most popular American magazine (see Table 13). An image of a middle-aged male golfer wrenching in pain followed the familiar text. Steincrohn warned that “by attempting to prove your fitness—or improve it—you may do yourself irreparable harm. You may even kill yourself in the process.”

Table 13. Popular Magazines with Highest U.S. Circulations, 1949-1966, in Millions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>1949</th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1966</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reader’s Digest</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Guide</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladies’ Home Journal</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday Evening Post</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman’s Home Companion</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCall’s</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better Homes and Gardens</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Housekeeping</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collier’s</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Home</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitan</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coronet</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redbook</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation’s Business</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebony</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steincrohn conceded that people over forty could do moderate walking, golfing, or bowling, but implied that it was unessential and perhaps a waste of energy. He reiterated that exercise was not effective for weight loss, noting that one would need to walk 66 miles to lose one pound. [Note: The current scientific belief is that it takes approximately 35 miles of walking to burn a pound of fat. Walking is a weight-bearing exercise, thus heavier than average people will burn more calories.] Reflecting on women’s obligations, the doctor added that “if you are a woman, your work is never done. You use up enough energy doing your daily chores; you need not find other ways to throw it away (Steincrohn 1952:87).” The magazine article included a citation that served as an advertisement for the authority’s popular book.

**Popular Magazines: The Conflict Over Exercise**

As Dr. Steincrohn was writing his articles, other popular magazines asked whether exercise was necessary or even beneficial. Donald Laird in *Popular Science* asked “How Much Exercise Do We Need?” Laird’s advice considered gender, occupation, and class. Among the advice and information: sedentary workers should avoid a heavy workout weekly but should do some moderate exercise daily; games and dancing were ideal forms of adult exercise; exercise was a poor way to reduce; a day of shopping was good exercise, and housewives need not exercise. An illustration of a fat man sitting comfortably next to home appliances, though, indicated that affluence had increased obesity (Laird 1941).

Other authors trivialized or questioned the benefits of exercise in *Saturday Evening Post* articles “The Armchair Athlete is Vindicated,” and “Do You Need Exercise?,” the *New York Times Magazine* ’s “Beneficial Exercise, Or is It?” and *Cosmopolitan* ’s “Exercise Can Kill You!” In “The Armchair Athlete is Vindicated” Robert Yoder (1942) and illustrator
Ervine Metzl humorously responded to efforts of Dr. Arthur Steinhaus to get busy sedentary workers to exercise minimally. Exercises such as the “morning staggers,” “desk dogging,” and “teetering” were comically illustrated. A drawing of a man teetering in the elevator elicited a curious response by the elevator operator, raising questions about the potential embarrassment one might feel doing these exercises.

After World War II, the necessity of exercise was challenged in a one-sided debate among intellectuals in Reader’s Digest. Trivializing exercise, intellectual and roving editor Henry Morton Robinson used racism and materialism, claiming it was something that you could hire “coolies” to do for you. Novelist Stuart Cloete used materialism to indicate that exercise wasted energy that could be used for intellectual work. Actress and author Cornelia Skinner used materialism, remarking that her favorite outdoor sport was “to play dominoes at a sidewalk cafe.” Using patriarchy, she remarked that “you wouldn’t see famous beauties of history taking exercise—except in the boudoir.” Eminent psychologist Andrew Salter invoked intellectual Mark Twain who claimed “he got his exercise attending funerals of his friends who exercised regularly (Skinner et al. 1946).” Aside from the cynical humor used against the exercise, Dr. Salter added a serious point, that exercise could not alter body structure, and that making people “exercise-conscious only builds up a sense of inferiority (Skinner et al. 1946:11).”

Harry Gilroy’s “Beneficial Exercise, Or Is It (1952)?” also debated the exercise question with humor. The author stated that sedentary men should take exercise, but not too vigorously. Deliberate activity was recommended by military men and physical educators, but “a notable opposition” was against exercise. Winston Churchill, physician Logan Clendening, and Chauncey DePew were among the historical opponents of exercise.
Churchill’s line was that he was 200 percent efficient by drinking and smoking, while Dr. Clendening’s message was that four out of five people needed rest rather than exercise. An illustration of a tombstone engraved “HE EXERCISED” sat atop DePew’s quote that he exercised as a pallbearer for exercising friends.

Ralph Knight’s article “Do You Need Exercise,” was also satirical. In this illustrated story, the pot-bellied middle-aged author outwits his doctor’s prescription that he start exercise. Eliminating a variety of sports and activities from consideration because they were judged too foolish or dangerous by the doctor or by the patient, the patient finally agrees to walk two miles a day. Finding that he already walked 2.3 miles during the day, the author dutifully and cunningly cuts his daily activity by taking a trolley. According to the article “from now on he sticks to his easy chair. He may not live as long, but he’ll enjoy it more (Knight 1953:34).”

In Today’s Health (formerly Hygeia), Dr. Max Millman questioned the value of exercise when he indicated that exercise was ineffective for losing weight. Obese people were cautioned against doing any type of exercise, particularly if they had high blood pressure or heart disease. According to Millman, physical activity could improve muscle tone, but it was not an efficient method of weight loss. A chart describing the amount of exercise or diet needed to lose weight showed that one would need to ride a horse 44 hours, walk 18 miles in 6 hours, do more than 1400 push-ups, play table tennis for 3 hours, and climb 80 flights of stairs in order to lose 2 pounds. On the other hand, one could lose the same amount of weight by merely eating 1000 fewer calories each day for one week (Millman 1951:15). Invoking medical influence, the doctor noted that “medical authorities today agree that it is
much safer and easier to lose weight by eating less than by exercising more (Millman 1951:14).”

Caroline Bird’s “Exercise Can Kill You!” was probably the most compelling article against exercise. The author compared exercise to the quackery of patent medicine when she remarked “straining the muscles has been peddled as cure-all for everything from lumbago to obesity. It usually helps neither, wastes time and energy, and if overdone, can cause real harm.” Bird’s (1953) descriptions of exercisers as foolish people were embarrassing and descriptive:

Thousands of pot-bellied businessmen skip rope like children, propel themselves monkey-like from bar to bar, or tug at weights they’s handle by machinery in their factories. Meanwhile, thousands of undersized young men are working hard to enlarge themselves. They lock their bedroom doors to practice mail-ordered rites guaranteed to develop powerful muscles that will gain the respect of bosses, burglars, and girls. The girls, too, are at it. In reducing gyms, they ride stationary horses and bicycles. They roll from side to side on the bedroom floor to discourage their hips. They ‘swim’ in bed to encourage their busts (p.76).

The article continued the anti-exercise argument by quoting the celebrated opponents of exercise, humorist Mark Twain, and intellectuals Robert Maynard Hutchins, Henry Morton Robinson, and George Nathan. However, scientific and medical information was perhaps the greatest source against exercise. Duplicating previous authors, Bird noted the old Metropolitan Life study that showed athletes lived shorter lives, and she echoed Dr. Steincrohn’s popular beliefs regarding rest. She strengthened the argument, however, by quoting authors one would believe were exercise proponents. Paraphrasing gymnastic medical authority Ernst Jokl and heart specialist Paul Dudley White, the author cited cases of sudden death due to overexertion. Jokl noted that many athletes had heart abnormalities and some died after retirement from sports. Dr. White favored moderate exercise as therapy.
for heart patients, but noted that many people died from sudden strain. While accepting that exercise could be used to prepare men for battle, reduce nervousness or condition people for active vacations, Bird (1953:79) concluded that “unless you are in training or taking exercises your doctor prescribes, there’s no real reason for torturing yourself (Bird 1953:79).”

Not all family magazine messages discouraged exercise, and some promoting messages appeared in response to Dr. Steincrohn’s dissuading articles. Articles in *Hygeia, Nation’s Business,* and *Science Digest* gave a doctor’s and physical educator’s opinion that one could exercise after forty (Thorburn 1948; Williams and Burton 1949; Miller 1950). The articles did not claim that the middle-aged man should engage in vigorous exercise, but that every man should exercise suitable for his age and physical condition. Men were cautioned, however, to see a physician before starting an exercise program and to avoid over-competition. Although this advise retained the doctor as gatekeeper, it acknowledged that middle-aged men could exercise moderately.

Two scientific authorities, not medical authorities, championed exercise in the 1950s. Thomas K. Cureton (1952:136), long-time director of the Physical Fitness Laboratory at University of Illinois, invoked nationalism and patriarchy when he remarked that half of all American males over forty were “dead... in terms of physical fitness.” More optimistically, Cureton also claimed that one could delay old age by 10 to 15 years by exercising. In a *Popular Mechanics* article titled “How to Keep Fit at 50, ” Cureton (1952:140) added that “too little hard work and exercise, not too much, is what kills off the middle-aged or heads them off to an early grave.” Pictures of the middle-aged professor running, jumping over a fence, and doing calisthenics were juxtaposed with photos of the research being conducted.
at the exercise laboratory. Cureton advised beginning exercisers to begin slowly, but added
"age is no barrier if you're sincere about wanting to regain good physical trim."

A less likely proponent of exercise was Dr. Jean Mayer, a nutritionist at the Harvard
School of Public Health. In a brief *Science Digest* article, Dr. Mayer and his co-author Dr.
Frederick J. Stare claimed that exercise could be used as a method against obesity. Mayer
(1953) observed that a person could burn up a piece of apple pie a-la-mode by walking fast
for thirty minutes. He also noted that hard-working farm hands and combat soldiers rarely
got fat even with heavy eating. Dr. Mayer's conclusions conflicted with other biomedical
authorities who believed there was little value to exercise. His ideas, though, were probably
read by few people.

**Social Historical Analysis of Exercise Messages, 1937 to 1953**

Nationalism reestablished its influence during World War II when Federal and local
government authorities vocally encouraged exercise. Exercise messages appeared less
stratified during World War II than in earlier periods, probably because young women and
poor people were considered vital cogs in the war machine. Exercise was a necessary aspect
of training for military women, for the productivity of women recruited for wartime industry,
and for civilian defense. Physical training was mandatory for military personnel. Civilians,
on the other hand, had to be coerced by nationalistic messages to exercise for productivity,
walk for transportation, and plant Victory Gardens for freedom and democracy. It should be
noted however, that the government's civilian exercise propaganda campaign amounted to
only $80,000 per year (Kelly 1956:104).
During this swell of nationalism, physical education, YMCAs, and industry teams (see Table 14) provided increasing sports opportunities for civilians, yet sports and exercise remained stratified by race. Japanese Americans were placed in internment camps during the war, and sports were offered to maintain social control. YMCAs began color desegregation in 1946 and Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in professional baseball in 1947, but *de jure* racial segregation or Jim Crow laws remained in the Deep South and de facto discrimination remained elsewhere. Black neighborhoods, as before, adapted to segregation and prided themselves on their men’s and women’s athletic teams and colored YMCAs (Captain 1996). Like any neighborhood, formal structures such as YMCAs and college athletics were more accessible to the middle-class (Mjagkij 1997). Poor minority youth with limited opportunities gravitated to the dream of sport and social mobility and found ways of playing sport with limited resources, sometimes with community support (Mormino 1995).

Table 14. Commencement of Industrial Exercise Programs, 1900-1956

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Under 1,000</th>
<th>1001-5000</th>
<th>5001-10,000</th>
<th>Over 10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Companies Reporting</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Program Started</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-1920</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1930</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1940</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940-1950</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1956</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Patriarchy and the norm of figure consciousness remained important. Women were told that housework and now gardening, done properly, were good sources of beautifying...
exercise. While getting women fit was a priority during World War II, women also read beauty messages and bought a half-billion dollars in beauty products annually. As beauty messages rose after the war, exercise messages regarding women’s health seemed less important. Authors often claimed that each new exercise program would keep women looking younger and more beautiful, yet be quicker, more effective, easier, and more fun if the reader would follow the authority’s plan. This strategy may have been readily accepted by women who just wanted to rest (Radcliffe 1943).

Using ideology critique, one may notice that patriarchy, materialism, and biomedicalization condemned men for looking at their bodies, but encouraged them to look nevertheless. Magazines revealed that appearances did matter to men. Men who exercised and played sport into middle-age were labeled vain and immature by intellectuals and doctors, yet sedentary middle-age men who returned to exercise were considered silly looking. This illustrated that some intellectuals and doctors were conscious of looks as well, and avoided breaking age activity norms to prevent themselves from looking silly.

Materialism continued to be significant in class-based exercise messages, though its messages conflicted. Movie stars relied on trainers for authority and social support, knowing the necessity of their body images for continued work. Wealthy women and men could visit upscale health spas and gymnasiums that provided motivating exercise experts. They could also ski for enjoyment or visit exotic venues as a reflection of status. Even hiking or walking could be a status symbol, requiring ample resources, if one visited a distant state or foreign country. Exercise, however, continued to be ridiculed by intellectuals who questioned its value. At the same time that exercise was used as a status symbol, it was also trivialized by intellectuals as a low-class activity reminiscent of physical labor. Materialist anti-exercise
sentiment, however, seems to have been restrained for the war years, especially when referring to youth exercise training.

**Biomedical authorities messages changed during World War II, as biomedicalization reflected greater age stratification in exercise.** In a turn of opinion, vigorous activity was rarely considered harmful for children, especially for healthy children. Play, games, and sport were also considered an important aspect of child development, though doctors suggested that they be practiced according to scientific standards available in books and magazines. Biomedical messages conflicted regarding exercise for middle-aged and elderly people, particularly for those who exercised vigorously. According to some doctors the “modern, scientific attitude” was to “not lift a finger after forty.” As a form of preventive medicine, doctors claimed that middle-aged men could avoid heart attacks if they relaxed more and exercised less. Other doctors tempered their advice saying that moderate exercise was fine under doctor supervision. In either opinion, doctors were further establishing themselves as gatekeepers for the expanding population of elders. A few scientific authorities began to challenge anti-exercise messages in the early 1950s, but they were not medical doctors, and they were not yet appearing in high circulation magazines.

For some, exercise may have evoked feelings of coerced physical training and alienating work. When companies provided recreation programs for worker health and welfare, some workers viewed them with suspicion and contempt. The AMA’s Morris Fishbein remarked to Industrial Recreation Association members that the suspicious worker “feels that it is some subtle plan on the part of the industry to regiment him and get more work for less money (Eastwood 1944:413).” This suspicion was unconsciously affirmed by Floyd Eastwood, Chair of Industrial Recreation at Purdue University, who promoted
company recreation for “morale-building” and “increased productivity,” and for keeping workers out of taverns and other “non-recuperative recreational pursuits (Eastwood 1944:413, 454).”

In some cases, sporting opportunities had obligations attached. Girls and young women could play basketball in church leagues and YMCA leagues, but they were often required to be members of Sunday school classes or active members of the church. Churches could maintain a monopoly on basketball participation and serve as a gatekeeper of sport in rural areas and small cities with few coaches and without accessible public gymnasiums (Hinton 1941).

Even when young affluent people had required college physical education, the activities did not prepare them for adult obligations (see Table 15). Instruction in football, basketball, boxing and field hockey were unlikely sports beyond college age. As one alumna stated “my time is taken up with my duties as housewife, and my extra time is devoted to volunteer work and reading (Iams 1941:517).”

Table 15. Instruction and Post-College Leisure Participation, Antioch College, 1941

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Women Instruction(%)</th>
<th>Women Post-College (%)</th>
<th>Men Instruction(%)</th>
<th>Men Post-College(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social dancing</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch Football</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handball</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Hockey</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxing</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Iams (1941:515).

Some men and women were happy to forget experiences in team sports that often humiliated the average student, choosing individual sports or no sports after school years instead (Iams 1941).

Sport and leisure participation grew, but remained stratified, by age, class, gender, and race. Similar to World War I, some young men with the opportunity for sport and exercise during the war continued exercising after their service obligation (Brownell 1944). Young women were given medical clearance for exercise and sport, but doctors still warned that strenuous activity might strain them during menstruation (Exercise and Menstruation 1945). Racial minorities had greater access to formal recreation during World War II, but racial and ethnic opportunities were far from equal. The poor still didn’t have access to high-class facilities, although public recreation facilities seemed to be utilized more by the lower
economic classes (White 1955). Older people were directed toward disengagement from exercise. In the trade journal *Recreation*, Sociologist Judson Landis claimed that old women were better adjusted to old age because they had less physically active hobbies than men:

In general, men are interested in hobbies which require physical strength, such as hunting and fishing, and athletic sports. When they grow older they must give up these activities and shift to some new interests (Landis 1942:607).

Landis (1942) did not favor total disengagement for the old male farmer, stating that this man should turn the management over to a son or relative but keep an interest in farming tasks, or at least keep a garden.

Given norms of aging and disengagement, it was not surprising when researchers reported that activity declined with age. In a small survey of White middle-class high school students, weekly participation rates in supervised sports and unsupervised sports were 57 percent and 40 percent for boys while girls supervised and unsupervised sports rates were both 27 percent (Olds 1949). In a 1959 Gallup Poll of adults, leisure physical activities such as swimming (33%), fishing (32%), dancing (32%), and bowling (18%) were popular for men and women, but golf and hunting remained male dominated (see Appendix 2). Dancing and most other physical activities were usually youth dominated. Participation rates in dancing, swimming, fishing, and bowling were 58%, 55%, 35%, and 33% respectively for people 21 to 29 years of age; rates for the same activities were 11%, 10%, 24%, and 6% for people 50 years and over. Skiing (3%) and tennis (4%) were apparently dominated by the affluent, given the low participation rate. Participation rates may have yielded a false impression of the activities of American adults, however, because respondents only needed to participate once a year to be considered active (Dishman 1988).
It is difficult to interpret the extent magazines influenced exercise behavior or the
degree that people considered their activities exercise or something else. It can be stated that
magazine circulation increased, with 17 magazines exceeding a million copies monthly. Radio
programs and advertising, movies, and newspapers were also popular, however, with their
own messages about American consumer culture. As the 1950s began, America “progressed”
towards more mechanized life and material affluence. Automobiles, televisions and home
appliances were promoted and perceived as necessities rather than luxuries, reflecting a
comfortable way of life for many in the “work and spend” society (Leevy 1950; Breedveld
1996). Despite sports participation increases, exercise messages forecasted the increasingly
sedentary and unfit state of American culture.
CHAPTER 6

EXERCISE MESSAGES DURING THE COLD WAR
AND POST-INDUSTRIALIZATION

Social Patterns Related to Physical Activity and Exercise, 1954-1968

This chapter analyzes exercise messages in magazine articles from 1954 to 1968. The analysis will show how patriarchy, nationalism, materialism, and biomedicalization were significant in stratified exercise messages, changing in format and focus. Gender, class, age, and race are identified as four social categories in stratified exercise messages. The messages are contextualized in macro-social events and trends such as the Cold War, post-industrialization, suburbanization, material affluence and civil rights. Thereafter, descriptions of popular magazine articles illustrate the increasingly sophisticated use of ideologies to promote or deter exercise for various groups. Ideologies, stratification, and resistance in exercise messages are again compared with secondary sources to create an interpretation of exercise messages and their influences.

Suburbanization, mechanization, materialism, civil rights, and the threat of global conflict corresponded to changing physical activity patterns and stratified exercise messages. Cities increasingly inhabited by minorities exemplified inequalities in education, work and leisure, but White suburbs and segregated rural areas and reservations implied inequality.
Since the 1930s, affluent Whites departed central cities as people of color occupied these areas (Farley 1976). Blue-collar suburbs reflected ethnic assimilation and material gains for the working class, but America continued race and class segregation that influenced minority opportunities and activities (Berger 1960; Schnore et al. 1976; Landry 1987).

Mechanization in this post-industrial era produced a growing number of sedentary jobs, sometimes with more pay or autonomy, but nearly always meaning freedom from physical labor. As a symbol of American affluence, households with automobiles increased from 54 percent in 1950 to 71 percent in 1960 and 82 percent in 1970 (see Table 16). As suburbs replaced center cities as labor sites, the car was a necessity for gaining and maintaining employment (Kay 1997).

The automobile aided segregation, but it also symbolized freedom, affluence, and necessity (Kay 1997). The car owner had the independence and luxury to live apart from work and drive away from work instead of walking. Nationally, 10 percent of commuters walked to work while 69 percent drove to work in 1960 (see Table 17).

Table 16. Automobile Ownership, Percent Distribution by Household, 1950-1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total%</th>
<th>Own One%</th>
<th>Own Two or More%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Automobiles and household appliances were positive commodities for women as they gained a larger role in wage labor. The automobile gave housewives greater shopping opportunities, and appliances allowed them reduced physical labor. Electric washers, dryers, ranges, irons, mixers, refrigerators and second phones were some of the modern conveniences (Leevy 1950). As Tables 18 through 20 indicate, many women stayed home raising families, but a growing number worked outside the home, as fertility rates began falling in 1958. When women had wage jobs, their cars and appliances become necessities.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Vehicle</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transit</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work at Home</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Department of Transportation (1993:2-2).

Table 18. Females in Labor Force as Percentage of Female Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Widowed or Divorced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19. Percentage of Married Women (Husband Present) With Children, in Labor Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>With Children 6-17 Years Old</th>
<th>With Children Under 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 20. United States Fertility Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>“Negro and Other”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>2399</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>3269</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3629</td>
<td>4533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2480</td>
<td>3067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Fertility rates are live births per 1,000 women.


The television became a prominent part of American materialism and leisure time. Households with televisions jumped from 8,000 in 1946, to 31 million in 1955, to 57 million in 1968. (U.S. Bureau of Census 1975:796). According to time diaries from 1965, the average adult spent 90 minutes a day sitting and watching television and seven minutes in active sports, outdoor recreation, and recreational walking and hiking (Robinson et al. 1997:323). Although people had more non-work time during the Depression, the television was seen as a symbol of material affluence in leisure.
Social change occurred in minority opportunities during the 1950s and 1960s. Education and work opportunities for minorities were less than equal, but they improved for many. Amid national prosperity, civil rights protests, and civil rights legislation, a significant Black middle-class emerged. According to Bart Landry (1987:86), approximately 80% of the Black middle-class in the 1970s were first generation middle-class, moving up from the physical laboring classes. Pay was usually unequal for minorities, but skilled and middle-class work meant freedom from alienating physical labor. Despite progress, several “non-white” groups remained disproportionately poor. The problems of Black Americans were being studied, but smaller minority groups remained almost invisible to much of the nation.

The threat of global war conflict was one ominous and persistent factor in American life. After World War II, America was involved in armed conflict in Korea then Vietnam, and threatened to be at war in Latin America, Europe, and the Middle-East. The Soviet Union and world communism were perceived as formidable enemies, and Americans were reminded of their nationalistic duties during this Cold War threat. Not until the Vietnam War did sufficient numbers of people protest against or even question the nationalist ideology (Jezer 1982).

Exercise as News: Nationalism, Indolence, and Youth Fitness

During the Cold War, several magazine articles presented nationalistic sentiments and alarmist statements of declining physical fitness in America, particularly among youth. *U.S. News and World Report* cited Dr. Hans Kraus' study where 56 percent of American children failed muscular fitness tests, but only 8 percent of European children were unsuccessful.
American youth were said to be healthier but less fit than previous generations, as 47 percent of the draftees were unfit for the Korean War. The *U.S. News and World Report* stated that:

The cause of this decline in muscle power usually is pinned on two factors; the growing luxury of American life, and the lack of substitutes for the bodybuilding exercise that work or harsher living conditions used to create automatically. . . . Children spend hours slumped before a TV or radio set, too, when they once played or worked. Even on farms, work and exercise are reduced—by electric appliances, tractors and other machinery (What’s Wrong with American Youths: They’re Not as Strong as Europeans, 1954:35).

In *Cosmopolitan*, Harry Henderson asked “Are We and Our Children Getting Soft?” Henderson noted America’s affluence: more leisure time, money, and possessions, but criticized its citizens for becoming a nation of lazy and passive slobs. Citing physical educators and nutritionists, Henderson blamed the social problem on lack of physical education and poor nutrition. Indirectly, he also blamed women of laziness even when they continued to be servants. The captioned photo of a waitress serving at a drive-in restaurant read:

Too tired out by indolence to cook, a multitude of Americans steer the family automobile toward a meal of unbalanced indigestibles at the nearest car-service emporium, where the only exercise is provided by the waitress (Henderson 1954:17).

Physical fitness advocate and entrepreneur Bonnie Prudden, a compatriot of Dr. Kraus in the youth fitness study, made similar statements regarding the sedentary state of the nation. Prudden warned that America’s archenemy, Russia, was spending 5 billion dollars annually on sports facilities for the masses, implying that their investment would make them increasingly stronger and more dangerous. The exercise entrepreneur (Prudden 1956:46) advised parents to test the whole family and exercise for the “emotional well-being of individuals as well as the future security of the nation.” Prudden’s fitness message and
charisma were popular enough to gain her a weekly spot on television's Today Show, a regular column in *Sports Illustrated*, a position on President Eisenhower's Council on Youth Fitness (Pope 1958) and magazine articles highlighting her national crusade (Lardner 1958).

Similar articles regarding America's physical unfitness were published. One *Newsweek* "national affairs special report" announced President Eisenhower's conference to address the youth inactivity problem. The message noted America's material progress and increasing life expectancy, but recited the failures of draftees and school children. The article also reported links between physical inactivity and other problems: heart disease and mental illness. Heart disease had become an increasing problem in America. Many contagious diseases were controlled, but millions of Americans died or became invalids after heart attacks. The problem was highlighted after President Eisenhower's heart attack in September 1955. Eisenhower's "heart doctor" Paul Dudley White claimed luxury, not work and exercise, was causing the epidemic. *Newsweek* added that Air Force Generals were ordered to exercise at least once per week to slow the disease in its ranks. Regarding mental illness, the article cited a study that least fit West Point cadets were most likely to "wash out" with psychiatric problems (Are We Becoming Soft? 1955). In the *New York Times Magazine*, Harvard professor Dr. Jean Mayer, reported on the soft state of America, linking recent rises in middle-age heart attack and back pain to inactivity. Mayer (1955) prescribed walking, calisthenics, and lifetime sports such as soccer, swimming, and tennis to cure the problem.

In *American Magazine* and *Reader's Digest*, fitness advocate John B. Kelly asked "Are We Becoming a Nation of Weaklings?" The U.S. Director of Physical Fitness during World War II claimed that the youth fitness problem was worse than juvenile delinquency. Acknowledging the role of materialism in physical inactivity, Kelly asserted "none of us want
to give up our wonderful modern conveniences.” Instead, he argued, activity substitutes were necessary (Kelly 1956). The former bricklayer turned wealthy businessman blamed parental coddling, the elitist sports system, poor physical education programs, and lack of intramural sports for the problem. The photo of a thin boy with glasses awkwardly trying a chin-up accompanied the article. The story included information on Kelly’s star family which included Olympic rower John Jr., Penn State athletes Elizabeth Ann and Margaret, and Grace his actress daughter. The Reader’s Digest version under the same title presented Kelly’s article as “an authoritative report on why better physical conditioning is perhaps the greatest single need of America’s children (Kelly 1956a).”

US News and World Report headlined two exercise articles. The first article, “Is American Youth Physically Fit?: THE FINDINGS THAT SHOCKED EISENHOWER (1957),” graphically presented American failures in physical fitness tests and draftee physicals. The article blamed the youth problem on lack of physical chores, declining space for children to play, use of school buses, and time spent watching television. Pictures of “how father built his muscles” showed boys filling the woodbox and helping father with the plow, girls hand-washing clothes, and boys and girls hiking to school. Pictures of “why Sonny may be soft” showed girls using vacuum cleaners and the telephone, and children watching t.v., taking the school bus, driving to the movies, and watching football games. In the same article, expert Bonnie Prudden blamed overprotective parents, school officials, physical-training teachers and community leaders for the problem. Despite the alarming title, though, the article briefly stated that the problem may not have been crucial or even real. According to some military men, American youth were no less fit than they had been for two or three decades, and those who were unfit could be toughened up in basic training. Physiologist Peter Karpovich, even
challenged the validity of youth studies, indicating that boys who had failed some fitness tests succeeded when they were given a five-minute warm-up.

Three weeks later, *U.S. News & World Report* published an interview with Dr. Paul Dudley White, "noted heart specialist" and medical adviser to President Eisenhower. White's interview illustrated "a changing attitude on physical fitness and health" that exercise was important for all, including recovering heart patients. White replied that exercise was just as vital as eating, sleeping, and working, and advised people to exercise vigorously an hour a day. Similar to his *Hygeia* article in 1937, White noted that people could be healthier if they bicycled to work "on safe bicycle paths" such as those in Europe. A picture of bicyclists in Copenhagen illustrated that exercise could be functional and healthy when safe bike paths were available (Exercise--What It's Doing for Ike and What it Can Do for You 1957)."

In 1960, the predominantly male magazine *Sports Illustrated* published an nationalistic article by incoming President John Kennedy titled "The Soft American." Citing studies comparing unfit American youth to Japanese and British youth, and fitness results of Yale University freshman, Kennedy claimed the nation's fitness was declining and that this "growing softness...is a menace to our society (Kennedy 1960:16).” Looking idealistically to the past, the President-elect claimed that physical fitness and sport were important aspects of western civilization. He also noted the concerns of past Presidents, Teddy Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower, who had called for a physically active nation. Looking to the future, Kennedy foretold that physical labor would be "almost extinct' by 1970, and that active sport and leisure were necessary for the nation to attain its full glory. The President-elect proposed a "White House Committee on Health and Fitness,” a National Youth Fitness Congress, and a division in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to study the problem. He also
charged American parents and children to be responsible for their own fitness. Invoking nationalism during the Cold War, Kennedy stated:

We do not live in a regimented society where men are forced to live their lives in the interest of the state. We are, all of us, as free to direct the activities of our bodies as we are to pursue the objects of our thought. But if we are to retain this freedom, for ourselves and generations yet to come, then we must be willing to work for the physical toughness on which the courage and intelligence and skill of man so largely depend (Kennedy 1960:17).

**Quick and Easy Exercise: Patriarchy and Materialism in Women's Magazines**

Nationalistic messages were dramatic, but women's exercise messages were more frequent. Exercise articles continued in *Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, Better Homes and Gardens*, and *Good Housekeeping* while youthful and fashionable magazines *Vogue, Mademoiselle*, and *Seventeen* displaced the outdated *Woman's Home Companion*. There were dramatic format changes in the late 1960s, with more photographs and modern-art illustrations and fewer words per page. In content, however, patriarchy and materialism remained. Women's exercise messages reflected and reinforced at least five desires or fantasies related to patriarchy and materialism: (1) figure problems and spot reducing, (2) adequacy to wear fashionable attire, (3) a youthful figure, (4) more energy, and (5) material wealth (Figures Made to Order 1955; Figure in Fashion 1956; Fromow 1963; Body Rhythms 1962). The essence of most exercise messages was that the reader could fulfill several of these desires quickly, with little or no exercise. Articles often addressed two or more of these desires in a variety of formats.

Figure problems were a common theme in women's messages. Articles took advantage of women's figure consciousness in a patriarchal society that continued to prize looks. Articles promised that readers could mold their bodies with the correct techniques.
The articles were usually written by beauty writers and editors with assistance from exercise experts. Special exercises formulated by exercise experts/entrepreneurs Nicholas Kouvnovsky, Dr. Ann-Marie Bennstrom, and Maya Kahn promised to reveal information in "Figures Made to Order (Norman 1955)," "Take Two Inches Off Your Waist (Norman 1955)," "The Low-Down on Sport Reducing (Boyle 1957)," and the "Spot-Reducing Chart to End All Spot-Reducing Charts (1966)."

Images of figure consciousness were rarely pictures of exercise experts, but photographs of young fashion models or drawings of the ideal woman (Reduce the Way the Models Do 1960; New Continuity for Beauty 1961). In *Ladies Home Journal*, twenty-one-inch waist model Margi Cato was employed to reveal a twenty-minute exercise routine in which "the average woman should be able to take two inches off her waist in less than six weeks (Norman 1955:214)." In *Vogue*, photos of model Lauren Hutton were used to illustrate "The Perfect Bosom Exercise (1968)." An earlier *Vogue* edition employed drawings of extraordinarily thin looking women to illustrate the spot reducing program of spa director Anne-Marie Bennstrom. Occasionally magazines mentioned different body types, but the intent was still to resemble a young model or movie star (Hart and Anderson 1961; Norman 1955; Clerke 1963).

Mixing materialism with patriarchy, standards of beauty were related to fashions and body measurements. Women were made conscious of the need to make their bodies fashionable with a "high rounded bustline, gently indented waistline, controlled hipline, unbroken line from hip to hem (Norman 1956:114)." In the spring, women needed "good posture, a flat midriff, and a pretty bust" for "the new-for-spring princess fashions (Craig 1954)." During the fall, women needed to "do justice" to autumn wardrobes (Take Up the
Slack 1957:114). In the summer, women needed to look good for revealing summer clothes (Boyle 1957:164), in other words, “bikini-worthy (Exercise and Inxercise 1966: 141).” The standard of beauty was sometimes the Bureau of Standards’ perfect size twelve (Clerke 1962). Other times, the standard was impossible for anyone:

Trying on almost anything before double-view fitting-room mirrors and under typical fitting-room lights, a woman is vulnerable; trying on bathing suits she is vulnerablest...The merest molehill of a bulge becomes a mountain of uncertainty (The Exercise Log 1960:181).

Experts promised, however, that exercise could “trim the spots that can spoil the fit of a swim suit or the new chemises (For a Fine Line 1958)” and reshape the body to accentuate clothes (July Project: Reshaping Your Figure 1957).

Spot reducing and toning exercises helped women objectify their body parts as objects of unhappiness (Leg Exercises 1962). The most common spots of dissatisfaction were (1) chest and shoulders, (2) abdomen, (3) waist, (4) hips, (5) buttoc, (6) legs, and (7) ankles (Boyle 1957). The chin and neck were also important spots that women needed to work to stay young looking (Fromow 1959). Short articles gave exercises exclusively for bosom improvement, face and neck lifting, and leg shaping (Craig 1959; Runge 1959; Exercises for Bosom Beauty 1959; Leg Exercises 1962; Patterson 1965).

Exercises were often old potions in new bottles, but new gimmicks also flooded the diet and exercise market. Exercises ranged from the established (posture, calisthenics, setting-up exercises, stretching), to the modern (electric machines and mechanical devices), to the exotic (isometrics, T’ai Chi, and yoga). Correct posture was an old gimmick for looking younger and thinner, taking mere seconds (Exercise Log 1960). Women could be transformed from slumping to graceful and charming if they stood straight and kept erect
posture (Searl 1954). In *McCall's*, exercise expert Jay Bender called posture exercises “exercise substitutes” or “straphanging,” but the routine was similar to housework posture exercises done for years (Hecht 1954). Later, *McCall's* sold their posture exercises as a “military secret” for looking tall and slim (French 1961). According to *Ladies' Home Journal*, posture and stretching exercises called “rag-doll exercises” could perform a “minor miracle” if women were loyal to this program (Robinson 1964:82).

Spot reducing exercises were usually traditional calisthenics, setting-up exercises and stretching done slowly and rhythmically, sometimes to music (Bartolucci 1958) in the bathtub (Murrin 1956; Bathtub Gym 1960; Lee 1966) using towels (Throw in the Towel 1956; McCall's Miracle Hour of Ice-O-Lation 1961), under water (Underwater Exercises 1958) or using a chair (Fink 1956; Bartolucci 1958; Chair-Borne Exercises 1963). Women were still advised to do exercises lying down to avoid the negative effects of gravity (How to Have Very Good Legs 1958; Remaking Your Figure's Age 1959) but with young models and modern art graphics, old exercises looked like new ideas (Gamsmanship 1966; Mlle's Own Beauty Adviser 1964; Exercise 1965).

Exercise routines promised *easy and relaxing* exercises for better figures and more energy in minutes a day (Five Minutes a Day to Keep Fit 1955; Unkink in Five Minutes 1958; French 1959; Fromow 1963; Lee 1966; Body Rhythms 1962; Kirk 1961) taking seven, ten, or twenty-one days, but rarely longer than six weeks (Murrin 1956; Body Rhythms 1962; Twenty-One Day Shape-Up 1968). Mechanical devices included Rubinstein's “Lithe Line,” a resistance cord with the beauty expert's name, and “Picas,” a system used in France and sold at Elizabeth Arden salons (Peterson 1964; Gordon 1961). Resistance devices, other than
weights, had been sold to women for nearly a century (Green 1986). Packages changed, but these devices still required physical work.

Although passive exercise was cited as less effective than active exercise (Norman 1959), it was usually promoted as an easy method to lose weight and gain a beautiful figure. The miracle of passive exercises was that they required little or no effort. Passive exercises for weight loss ranged from ancient techniques such as massage, hand rollers, and paraffin baths to modern mechanized commodities such as the Stauffer Table, the Shake-A-Way System, the Dewar machine, the Relax-A-Cizer, and the Exer-Cycle. The Stauffer Table and Shake A-Way table were vibrating machines equal to “nine holes of golf—lying down (Remaking Your Measurements 1957:56; How to have Very Good Legs 1958).” The Shake-A-Way chair was a vibrating device “for hip and thigh problems... in which the subject stands between two series of rotating rollers that break down solid fat (Remaking Your Measurements 1957:112).” The Dewar machine and the Relax-A-Cizer were electric machines claimed to tone muscles by causing involuntary contractions (New Reducing Plan: Name That Spot 1956). The Exer-Cycle mixed passive exercise with minimal active exercise. The user put her feet on the bicycle pedals as the pedals moved automatically (Exercise and Inxercise 1966). Though many machines were exclusive to reducing salons such as Elizabeth Arden's, the Relax-A-Cizer and Exer-Cycle were available for home use (How to Have Very Good Legs 1958; New Reducing Plan: Name That Spot 1956, Exercise and Inxercise 1966).

Fashionable, exotic, and easy exercises included isometrics, yoga, T’ai Chi, and combinations of these techniques. From 1963 to 1965, isometrics was a popular form of exercise promoted by NYU athletic director Vic Obeck for his book “How to Exercise Without Moving a Muscle.” According to Obeck, one could attain the results of five miles
of walking with five minutes of isometrics with an extra three minutes of active exercise (Lee 1964:118). "Thinking" women could use this exercise to "deflab" inner thighs (How to Move Inches—Without Moving an Inch 1963:111). Isometrics could be used by the entire family, but a doctor's approval was advised before starting the program (How to Take a Dull Edge off Winter 1965:40). Yoga and T'ai Chi Ch'uan were exotic Oriental exercises, involving slow movement and relaxed breathing, giving one serenity in a busy Western world (New Figure Orientations 1960; Maisel 1962; Psychedelic Exercises 1968). Isometrics and yoga were combined with calisthenics for a modern American hybrid (Keep in Shape with the Marines; Weightless as a Moonbird 1968).

Exercise messages sometimes offered dancing, golf, skiing, and miscellaneous exercises. Dance exercises included ballet exercises for posture and grace (Be Graceful as a Ballerina 1956; Warm-up Ballet Exercises 1965; Beauty Life; Shall We Dance? 1966). More importantly, it was promoted for figure improvement. In 1954, women could dance gracefully like Cyd Charisse for a "beautiful bustline," "slim hips," "prettier legs," and a "neat waistline (Bell 1954)." Golfing exercises could improve one's golf game and trim the mid-section simultaneously (Improve Your Form with a Golf Club 1955). Novelties such as Choreorhythmics (rhythmic exercises with a ball), exercises with implements (twirling a baton, skipping rope), and weightlifting also appeared (Peck 1957; Promotion of Grace 1964). Barbells were promoted in Better Homes and Gardens for packing "the equivalent of half an hour of calisthenics into five minutes of fast exercise (How to Crowd a Lot of Exercise into a Little Time 1962:44)." In 1965, dance was still promoted, but as a more vigorous, sustained, and modern activity where women could "dance away 750 calories in just four hours (Disco Shape-Up 1965:175)."
Diet gimmicks with or without exercise were extremely popular messages in articles and nearby advertisements. Women were reminded exercise wouldn’t reduce a woman’s weight (Mlle’s Own Beauty Adviser 1964). Therefore, women were offered 1200 calories-per-day menus (Fromow 1959; Fromow 1966), doctor prescribed 800 calories-per-day, high-protein diets (How to Stay Ten Pounds Thinner 1957), liquid lunches, “melon-berry diets” (North Pole Slenderizing Plan 1958), physician prescribed amphetamines (Deutsch & Deutsch 1963), “cheer-up” drugs (That’s Your Shape 1955), and diuretics (How to have Very Good Legs 1958), or over-the-counter vitamin supplements such as Rubinstein Reduce Aids (Remaking Your Measurements 1957).” Women needed easy exercise, as a supplement, to tone their bodies reduced by dieting (Slim Down—Shape Up With Sixty-Eight Diet Tips and Eight Lazy Exercises 1967). Besides nutritional supplements (McCall’s August 1957:115), advertisements in women’s magazines sold “wonder drug” cosmetics (Ladies Home Journal May 1959:151), artificial sweeteners (Ladies’ Home Journal May 1959:148), pre-packaged liquid diet foods such as Sego, and candy appetite suppressants such as Ayds (Ladies Home Journal 1959:175; Ladies Home Journal March 1968:4).

Advertisements sometimes appeared as free offers or resembled articles. An advertisement for the Relax-A-Cizer offered women free information on the “modern, sensible” and “effortless” way to reduce the “hips, waistline, abdomen, and thighs (Ladies Home Journal January 1967:16).” In Ladies’ Home Journal (May 1959:88), an advertisement resembling an article revealed that Stauffer Laboratories sold a “Magic Couch” for “effortless exercise and calorie reduction.” Although no price was listed, the “Magic Couch” could be rented by the month or bought on a “special budget plan.” Ayds candy
advertisements showing women’s diet successes also resembled articles (Ladies Home Journal 1959:175; Ladies Home Journal March 1968:4).

Advertising and commodification were not constantly fraudulent nor directly harmful. Advertising for sit-down ironing tables (Ladies Home Journal April 1954:182) and extension phones (Ladies Home Journal October 1959:19) let women “take it easy” and “save steps” though it also meant fewer calories expended. Advertising for Tampax and Kotex tampons with pictures of women and girls swimming, diving, skiing and golfing, and riding bicycles assured them that they could be active during their menstrual periods (Ladies Home Journal March 1968:6). Advertising by AMF bowling centers and AMF fashions showed women that bowling was not only a man’s domain, but that they could have legitimate fun and social interaction in this form of sporting exercise (Sports Illustrated October 15 1962:16).

Girls and Women in Age Norm Magazines

Although Mademoiselle and Good Housekeeping published diet and exercise articles for teenagers, Seventeen marketed the adolescent female. In format, the magazine had younger and perhaps thinner-looking models, but it was similar to magazines promoting figure consciousness and materialism. Posture was promoted as a “magic” way to look slimmer and reduce the waist one or two inches in one second (You Can Have a Far Slimmer Figure If You Stand Up Straight! 1965; Shape a Waist 1968). Setting-up exercises, ballet exercises, and stretching by Elizabeth Arden instructor Marjorie Craig, exercise expert Manya Kahn, and dance teacher Ann Smith were promoted for achieving a firmer prettier body in ten to thirty minutes a day, shaping a swimsuit figure, making “problem legs” look prettier, and
slimming hips and thighs (A New Beauty Kick 1968). Girls were warned not to overexercise, and not to perform calisthenics which might actually “make muscles:”

Are you developing muscles—or a better figure? Calisthenics—even modified push-ups like the one at left—tend to enlarge muscles. To develop strength and grace (not muscles!), keep your legs on the floor and stretch back as shown (Do Exercises Work? 1964:129).

Girls in *Seventeen* may have been more active than their mothers: swimming, bike riding, playing golf, tennis and volleyball. The activities, however, were promoted for patriarchal and materialistic reasons: to burn calories, slim down figure problems, and buy goods. Articles were thinly-veiled advertisements for department stores and their goods: from swimsuits, golf blouses, leotards and sporting goods to cosmetics and lingerie (Beach Beauty Guide 1965; 1,2,3 Ski 1968).

Although *Seventeen* exercise messages may be praised for promoting active exercise, they presented mixed messages about exercise and diet. In the article “‘Why Can’t Exercises be More Fun?’ They Can!,” girls were told that they could have fun exercising if they use a novelty prop, such as mini-springs, balls, or a teeter-totter device. The prize, however, was not feeling good inside, but “a slimmer, more supple you.” A bizarre contradiction, in my opinion, occurred in an article that told how obese girls got together for social support in a diet and exercise program. At the bottom of the article was a recipe for a “Dieter’s Dream Cake,” at “175 calories per scrumptious serving (Streamlines 1968:290).” With 12 servings, the cake would be a 2100 calorie binge if a girl ate it alone.

*Redbook* was marketed as “the magazine for young adults.” Like *Seventeen*, it promoted more vigorous exercise and sports than most women’s magazines. Women were allowed to do full push-ups and jump rope, and even run a short distance (Spring Training
1965). The intent of exercise was still to look slim, but one article suggested that women could have fun playing sports (How to Have a Better Figure 1963). Other messages promoted appropriate exercise within the roles of marriage and childbearing. *Redbook* advised young women to get their husbands to exercise with them, an idea that would build teamwork as well as energy and vitality for both partners. They also advised new mothers to exercise easily to “pare off unwanted inches” and regain strength (How to Measure Up as a New Mother 1961; Time to be Beautiful 1965).

*Parents* magazine was not the only magazine with exercise messages for mothers, but it was the only one to focus on women in this status. The article “Mothers and Daughter Cut a Fine Figure” was similar to other women’s magazines, referring to women’s “figure faults” and their need to find time for exercise to correct them. Isabel Johnson (1954:134) stated that “even a busy mother can find the fifteen minutes these exercises take and the energy they require.” Mothers were exhorted to exercise with their daughters to make their bodies “enviable.”

Several *Parents* articles were not about mothers staying slender. Rather, they were about their parental duties in the national problem of youth inactivity. Associate editor Genevieve Millet (1959) exhorted mothers to “Keep Your Family in Trim.” She explained that exercise should be pleasing to children, yet her tactics were less than democratic. A mother could encourage her children to dance with them, but if a son believed it was sissyish, mother could change his mind by showing him how muscular male dancers were. An accompanying illustration of a girl treating a doll in the nurse role depicted this maternalistic attitude to repair problems.

Other authors directly addressed the news of sedentary children in America.
Ruth and Edward Brecher (1959) suggested that there were problems with the social system. They criticized physical education programs and Little Leagues for catering to boys, and stated that programs needed to be accessible to all. The Brecher’s briefly noted that some denied a problem existed, and that part of the problem was overprotective mothers. The Brecher’s, however, remarked that recreation programs needed to hire skilled people, make gyms available for public use after school hours, and include the “forgotten” and disabled girls and boys. Stan Musial, fitness consultant to President Johnson, did not mention any debate regarding children’s unfitness, nor did he mention adult’s need to exercise. According to the ex-baseball star, millions of children were lacking physical fitness. Musial (1964) called for regular physical education in schools, but he also chided mothers who were overprotective of children, including girls.

Two later Parents articles illustrated social changes regarding exercise. Stanley Smith (1965) did not ridicule mothers, but informed them that sport for boys and girls was safe and that they needed sport for physical development. According to Smith, there was no danger in damaging the child’s heart with vigorous sport. This information suggested that even in 1965, protective mothers were worried about overexertion. “Fitness City, U.S.A.” was even more radical. According to this article, several cities were given funds to establish comprehensive programs to enhance fitness in their communities. In Muskogee, Oklahoma, the project focused on getting children physically fit. The elementary school program was a daily thirty minute program done to music. The program also funded local businesses to distribute free booklets to families who wanted to start active sport programs. For adult participation, the article noted that the local YMCA and YWCA offered adult exercise. Pictures of a local family performing sit-ups in unison, and another showing White and Black
children doing jumping jacks to music were used to depict the program’s success. Indeed, Muskogee’s pass rate in youth fitness reportedly jumped from 47 percent to 95 percent. The federal government was initially involved in the project, but parents were urged to continue the progress by swimming, biking, and walking with their families as government programs were abandoned.

Other magazines also authorized women to keep their families and themselves fit. Woman’s Home Companion, for example, presented husband and wife exercises staged by CBS radio and TV personalities (Cades 1955). In Ladies’ Home Journal, world famous pediatrician Benjamin Spock advised mothers to let their children play and exercise outdoors at least two hours a day for good health. Although Dr. Spock may have been considered a radical, he still maintained that girls need not engage in competitive sports invented for boys. Still, he suggested that girls participate in activities such as dancing, swimming, and golf (Spock 1960).

In the 1960s, a few women’s articles prompted active exercise, despite the fact that it required regular physical work and lifestyle changes. In House Beautiful, dance school director Shirley Ubell (1961) suggested that results did not come quickly or easily, and that it would take months for a middle-aged person to gain strength. Good Housekeeping (February 1968) suggested that people make lifestyle changes including more physical activity. In 1968, even Vogue published an article suggesting that people perform regular active exercise. Although these articles may not have represented a large trend, they may have foreshadowed the social movement towards physical fitness and vigorous physical activity.
Materialism, Class, and Gender: Beautiful People and Successful Businessmen

While intellectuals were less vocal in criticizing exercise, rich and famous people were projected in pursuing health. In some ways, this trend was not new. Magazine stories regarding women's health salons and businessmen's gyms appeared since the 1920s. This theme continued in women's magazines that reported on the luxurious accommodations of Manhattan day spas, vacation retreats such as Elizabeth Arden's "beauty oasis" in Arizona and the Golden Door in Palm Springs, California (Discovery in Beauty 1954; Underwater Exercise 1954; How to Have Very Good Legs 1958; The Exercise Log 1960; Beauty Checkout 1968) and the diet and exercise secrets of star actors and actresses (Hollywood News: How the Stars Eat and Exercise 1961).

Class-based exercise messages, however, expanded the theme in telling the beauty secrets of the "Beautiful People." While some rich and famous eschewed exercise or took it irregularly, busy socialites, celebrities, and jet setters admitted that exercise was one of their beauty secrets. In 1964, Vogue reported that many affluent women found time to exercise despite fast-paced lives. Regular exercisers included Mrs. Charles Englehard, Jr., Senator Maurine Neuberger, Mme. Armand, Duchesa Riario Sforza, and Mrs. Alfred Bloomingdale, and beautiful men Senator Clayborn Pell and The Earl of Lichfield (What the Beautiful People are Doing 1964). In 1967, Vogue reported on the regular exercise habits and fitness trainers of Mrs. Astor and other socialites, singer Roberta Peters' daily half-mile daily run around her Westchester house, Mrs. Gregory Peck's jogs on the beach, and artist Marisol's stress-reducing swims (What to Do When Your Looks Go Wrong 1967).
Class-based messages mentioned the social support and authority that the rich and famous received from exercise experts such as Miss Craig at Elizabeth Arden's, and Joseph Pilates, Nicholas Kounovsky, Manya Kahn, and Carola Trier at other salons (the Body Shrinkers 1966; The Exercise Log 1960; What the Beautiful People are Doing 1964; What to Do When Your Looks Go Wrong 1967). "Upper crust" exercise salons were newsworthy enough to appear in the "life and leisure" section of Newsweek. The article noted that the upper-class phenomenon was not restricted to Manhattan. Texas company Nieman-Marcus was planning a "beauty emporium" that offered "figure control" for a $1,100 two-week visit (Shape-Up 1964)."

Materialistic and class-based interest in exercise was not restricted to the rich and famous, rather it included the growing number of upwardly mobile Americans. Vogue (Remaking Your Figure's Age 1959) reported that "gym clubs" with weights and pools were being built "everywhere," with individual membership fees of $12 to $20 a month. Better Homes and Gardens (Hale and Hearty Room 1966) had plans for transforming a bedroom or basement into a family exercise room. Not nearly as glamorous as Elizabeth Arden's plans in Arts and Decoration (Exercise-Dressing Room 1935) the functional middle-class exercise room consisted of free weights and dumbbells, a stationary bicycle, a long seat and an exercise mat.

Businessmen were another expanding group receiving exercise messages. While Dr. Paul Dudley White had prescribed exercise for decades, and Nation's Business and other magazines occasionally referred to the benefits of exercise, men received conflicting messages regarding exercise. Reader's Digest and Cosmopolitan warned of the dangers of exercise in
the early 1950s, but President Eisenhower's heart attack and return to golf with medical permission presented a different signal: exercise might be beneficial.

Six months after Eisenhower's heart attack, in early 1956, *Vital Speeches of the Day* published the conflicting prescriptions of two authorities at the Economic Club of Detroit. The first speaker, Max Burnell, M.D., medical director for General Motors, tried to answer the question “How Much and What Kind of Physical Exercise Should the Business Man Take For His Job?” Burnell suggested revolutionary news that men might prevent heart attacks with moderate exercise, and gave his listeners a variety of alternatives. The doctor mentioned the efficacy of YMCA classes, where experts supervises and directed exercise. He suggested that suburban life could also be healthy if the businessman regularly walked his dog or gardened. He mentioned boating, volleyball, and golf, for aggressive businessmen, but advised that they must be done in a relaxing manner, not merely as a venue for business deals (Burnell 1956).

Physiologist Arthur Steinhaus' follow-up speech, “How Much and What Kind of Physical Exercise Should the Businessman Take For His Health and Pleasure?” urged sedentary men to do light exercise and to listen to their bodies. If a man felt his heart pounding and breathing labored ten minutes after golfing or climbing stairs, or if he was fatigued the next day after physical activity, he had done too much. The scientist stated that exercise did not damage a healthy heart, and that moderate supervised exercise was being used in cardiac therapy. The value of exercise was compromised when he noted a mayor's sudden death after receiving a clean bill of health. Steinhaus (1956:410) concluded that “one cannot be sure that the heart is sound, particularly as one gets older.”
Business magazines in the 1960s advised men that moderate exercise was no longer questionable, it was imperative. In *Dun’s Review*, Dr. Harry Johnson discouraged competitive activities, but advised men to seek moderate and supervised exercise. Dr. Bruno Balke added that YMCA supervised swimming and exercise programs could help men improve their health and function (Friedman 1961). *Business Week*’s “Personal Business” section advised hard-working men to seek planned, relaxed exercise such as walking and swimming. The article stated that “special gadgetry” was unneeded, but advertised a $220 treadmill and a $100 executive gym anyway. Not fully health-conscious, the article followed with shopping tips for alcohol and cigars (Personal Business 1961).

As *Newsweek* reported that many top businessmen exercised vigorously for productivity and health (Top Joggers in Top Jobs 1968), the question was not whether to exercise, but how much time, effort, and money to spend on it. *Dun’s Review* reported that thousands of businessmen were joining YMCAs, exercising at home, playing golf, and jogging. At the elite level, PepsiCo CEO Donald Kendall ran four miles a day with his personal trainer. Although it may have been faddish, a photo of overweight middle-aged men jogging indicated that exercise was not only for the elite or the beautiful. Money however was a consideration. Beginners were advised to consult a physician first, and regular health club dues were $280 per year (Poindexter 1968). *Business Week* prescribed more vigorous activity to relieve tension: jogging, swimming, bicycling, and brisk walking. The article noted information on health clubs, and exercise equipment for the office. The article was more health-conscious than 1961, providing information on a fat-free chili recipe (Personal Business 1968) rather than alcohol and cigars. In another article, *Business Week* reported on scientific studies on exercise, and programs for executive exercise breaks and reconditioning.
programs. The article stated "exercise programs have been prescribed medical treatment for years. Nobody questions their value (Spotting Heart Attacks—Beforehand 1968:94)."

**Today’s Health: Biomedicalization and Lucrative Regulated Exercise**

In the 1950s and even in the 1960s, many doctors believed that exercise was dangerous or unproductive for their patients (Levine 1963), but a few authors disputed these notions. In *Today’s Health*, the AMA’s sanctioned magazine, Charles Bucher criticized the common belief that people over forty should avoid exercise, and promoted recreational exercise for all. The physical educator cited physiological research favoring exercise, and noted its psychological and social benefits. Bucher suggested that active recreation was vital for maintaining business and family relationships, and cited psychiatrist William Menninger who challenged the belief that recreation and play were “not a luxury, a waste of time or a sin (Bucher 1956:57).” Other articles in 1956 revealed conflicting views on exercise. In favor of exercise, one article promoted adaptive tennis for elders and another revealed that exercise helped in the treatment of obesity (Miller 1956; Exercise and Slimness 1956). On the other hand, an article by Dr. Noah Fabricant (1956) trivialized exercise by presenting a column of famous anti-exercise and anti-sport quips by Robert Hutchins, Ring Lardner, Chauncey Depew, Frank McKinney, and H.L. Mencken with no positive exercise quotes.

Michael Sheridan reflected conflicting medical opinions regarding exercise, relaxation and dieting for men and women in “How the Stars Keep Fit.” According to Sheridan, not all actors exercised, but many engaged in vigorous activities: Alan Ladd farmed, John Wayne did skin diving, and Dana Andrews sailed; Rock Hudson and Robert Wagner boxed, Burt Lancaster ran track, and the team of Hope and Crosby golfed, but Cary Grant and Gary

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Cooper merely relaxed for good health. Esther Williams danced and worked in the garden, but few actresses were “sports addicts,” preferring to diet to stay fit (Sheridan 1958:59).

In the 1960s, *Today’s Health* reflected changing opinions toward exercise. Doctor Theodore Klumpp, a disciple of exercise enthusiast Dr. Paul Dudley White, advised everyone to exercise regularly and vigorously. Klumpp said that most doctors favored exercise, but a 1963 article “To Exercise or Not to Exercise?” revealed that the value of exercise was still debated (Lentz 1963:28). In a 1966 article, “Don’t Be Just a Weekend Athlete,” Klumpp again stated that “every member of our push-button society needs exercise.” Klumpp’s enthusiastic promotion was tempered by Dr. Warren Guild. The president-elect of the American College of Sports Medicine and Harvard Medical School associate warned that ‘anyone who exercises only on weekends is asking for trouble (Irwin 1966:46).’ While the article stressed that exercise was necessary for “blue-collar and white-collar alike,” doctors had different prescriptions. Physical laborers were allowed to be weekend athletes, but desk workers were advised to seek supervised exercise and exercise more regularly (Irwin 1966:48-49).

Other articles legitimated vigorous and supervised exercise. In one article, nutritionist Jean Mayer revealed that fat children’s inactivity in sports made them fatter (Inactivity Complicates a Fat Child’s Problem 1963). Other articles promoted conditioning and ski instruction for people doing ski vacations (Exercise Now for Better Skiing Later 1964), and questioned the value of fast and easy isometrics (Higdon 1965).

The most striking articles regarded cardiac rehabilitation. Before the 1960s, many doctors assumed that coronary patients recovered with bed rest. In a change of business practice, however, some began using supervised vigorous exercise as a therapy for many men and a few women (Bugg 1967:50; Bugg 1967a:52). Cardiac exercise therapy was legitimated
as a socially important tool. By treating and rehabilitating middle-aged sedentary workers, doctors could help material production as post-coronary patients returned to productivity (Bugg 1967a:52).

**Exercise Gains Popularity and Legitimation in Magazines**

In 1968, John Poindexter looked at the changing trends in exercise and concluded that rising interest in exercise might be a fad. Poindexter reported that more than one hundred fitness books were on publisher’s lists, and one book, *Jogging*, had sold 300,000 copies. On the other hand, he claimed that only one or two percent of American adults exercised regularly. His article in *Business Week* was itself a sign that exercise had gained popularity and perhaps a higher status. In 1968, 32 articles were listed in the *Reader’s Guide* under the heading “Exercise.” This one year total equaled the total from 1925 to 1929, and surpassed the sum listed from 1932 to 1935 (see Appendix I). Although it may be argued that magazine readership was more fragmented in the late 1960s than before, exercise articles appeared in many women’s and family magazines, and a number of speciality magazines, including: *Ebony, Sports Illustrated* and *Dance Magazine*, *Time, Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report, Science Digest, Consumer Reports, Field and Stream*, and *Farm Journal.*

The increase in exercise articles may have signaled exercise’s popularity, but the content of magazine messages signified its increasing legitimation. Though occasional well-written articles warned of overexertion or debated the value of exercise (Leiberman 1956; Levine 1963; Medelman 1966), and one religious editorial even referred to exercise as a curse for original sin (Stylites 1955), a growing number claimed that it was essential for a longer,
healthier, happy, and productive life. Popular magazines of all types promoted exercise as exercise became increasingly popular and commercialized.

Science magazines were low circulation magazines compared to family and women’s magazines, but they had a role in presenting scientific information to the public. Before the mid-1950s, scientific exercise articles were a few esoteric submissions. In the late-1950s, articles began highlighting exercise with greater relevance. *Science News Letter* and *Science Digest* both printed UCLA professor Laurence Morehouse’s claim that an average adult could stay fit on “two ten-minute sessions of exercise a week (Twice Weekly Exercise Advised to Keep Fit 1955:36; Exercise Twice Weekly to Keep Fit 1955:36).” More remarkable claims and vigorous prescriptions followed. *Science News Letter* noted that “Exercise Makes Hearts Sprout New Arteries (1956:153),” that it could “alleviate or cure” menstrual pain (Menstrual Pain Responds to Exercise Routine 1958: 201), and that it played a “tremendous role in weight control regardless of calorie intake (Lie Down and Gain 1965).” *Science Digest* asserted that “Exercise Helps You Live Longer (Galton 1956).” Also in *Science Digest*, Dr. Thomas Cureton (1958) claimed that the average man was physically middle-aged by age twenty-six, but that those who performed a planned exercise program could regain function. Quoting Dr. Ernest Jokl, Cureton suggested that exercise did not cause heart strain. Only five years earlier, in *Cosmopolitan*, Jokl had reportedly said that overexertion killed many ex-athletes (Bird 1953). Later, *Science Digest* and *Science Newsletter* reported that exercise might reduce heart disease (Exercise and Heart Trouble 1964; Exercise Important in Reducing Heart Disease 1963). Although Dr. Samuel Fox III of the U.S. Public Health Service said that there was not “conclusive proof that exercise prevented or allayed” heart disease, mounting scientific evidence in England and America since the early 1950s suggested

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that people needed exercise, and that vigorous exercise such as running was becoming popular in response to public and individual health concerns (Snider 1967).

News magazines were also relatively lower circulation magazines, but they too had a role in transmitting exercise information to the middle-class public in the 1960s. In its "Modern Living" section, Time referred to the "fad" of 50-mile hikers, gym members, healthy restaurants, and exercise book popularity as signs of "America's fitness fixation." Twenty-six million people were bowling, and 650,000 had bought the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) basic exercise book. The RCAF book was a system of exercises individualized for gender and current fitness level. Proponents of the exercises known as "XBX" for women and "5BX" for men included comedian Red Skelton, company executives, and even a home for the aged in Kansas City (Fads: Eleven Minutes a Day 1963:67).

In its "Life and Leisure" section, Newsweek offered information on the RCAF book and the U.S. government's adult fitness booklet, which was soon to be sold at a million businesses. The article briefly warned of exercise dangers and reported a recent Gallup Poll that stated that "only one in four Americans does any sort of daily exercises and U.S. draft rejections run higher than 50 per cent (1,2,3...Oof! 1963:76)." Newsweek and Time also reported on the isometrics craze. The 1962 Newsweek article promoted the $3.98 record by Vic Obeck that claimed results "without moving a muscle," but the 1964 Time article was slightly more skeptical (Oof! 1962:78). Although Time referred to the miraculous claims by Olympic weight-lifting coach and entrepreneur Bob Hoffman's isometric exercise equipment, and the popularity of isometrics, the phenomenon was not taken too seriously (Fads: Without Moving a Muscle 1964:38-39)."
Exercise graduated from lifestyle sections to the "Medicine" sections and even a "Time Essay." *Time* and *Newsweek* reported that people could "Exercise at Any Age (1964)," that exercise could bring "Top Form for Teens (1964)," and that it was "Never Too Late (1965)" to exercise. *Time* reported a study by U.S. Public Health Service doctor John Holloszy that showed post-cardiac patients could reduce heart disease symptoms with exercise. While *Time* promoted Dr. Cureton’s book for adults, *Physical Fitness and Dynamic Health*, *Newsweek* promoted the U.S. government’s booklet for students’ twelve to eighteen: *Vim* for the girl’s figure and *Vigor* for the boy’s physique. Exercise gained greater fame in the "Time Essay" "Don’t Just Sit There, Walk, Jog, Run (1968)." *Time* reported "the cult of physical fitness has developed into a national middle-aged obsession.” It remarked that exercise required a lifetime commitment, but explained that it benefitted the mind as well as the body, “giving the exerciser a gratifying sense of doing something virtuous, sensible and good about his condition.” The article reported on the increasing popularity of gym memberships and bicycling, middle-aged politicians and celebrities who were jogging and dancing, and the large industry that the fitness craze was producing:


The *New York Times Magazine*, a newspaper supplement, published exercise promoting articles in the late-1950s and 1960s. In 1957, Dr. Theodore Klumpp prescribed exercise for older people to cure fatigue. Klumpp asserted that relaxation was not a cure-all for fatigue, and that inactivity and boredom made exhaustion worse in elders. Rather than identifying one activity for all elders, the doctor offered a multitude of physical activities, and
stated that people should participate in the activity that they enjoyed. Pictures of "energetic elders" included Dr. Paul Dudley White biking, Premier David Ben-Gurion farming, former President Harry Truman walking, missionary Albert Schweitzer doing manual work, and Germany's Konrad Adenauer hiking with his daughter. Dr. Klumpp's mentor, Paul Dudley White presented another prescription, explaining that exercise should be a lifetime activity for physical and mental health. Pictures of active people of various ages illustrated the advice that "exercise is the best preventive medicine (White 1957, 9)." Curtis Mitchell promoted exercise for all ages, presenting age activity norms. Mitchell suggested that people begin tapering-off in sports from age 41 to 50, avoid strenuous or prolonged sport between 51 and 65, and play croquet or garden after age 65. Although women were mentioned briefly in the article, middle-class men were the focus of exercise promotion. Referring to the increase in group exercise at YMCAs, Mitchell said "they are typical of groups in 300 other Y's where thousands of businessmen are learning that life of vigor can be beautiful." Harvard's Jean Mayer (1965) debunked the theory that exercise could not help in weight reduction. Citing growing rates of obesity despite lower caloric intake than in previous generations, Mayer deduced that reductions in physical activity were the cause. Mayer asserted that people needed to be more physically active, but subsequent New York Times Magazine editorials written by M.D.'s criticized this prescription.

Family magazines were similar in content to news magazines and women's reporting on the exercise fad. Cosmopolitan reported on "How You Can Exercise Without Moving (Lagemann 1954)," the "amazing Dr. Cureton," and the diet and exercise regime that gave actress Audrey Hepburn her "fantastic figure (Waldman 1959)." The articles were simplistic, and sometimes exaggerated the impact of exercises. John Kord Lagemann (1954:6) claimed
that “without breathing hard, you can get rid of accordion waist, spreading hips, or plain fatigue. This, says modern science, is how man should exercise.” Andrew Hecht, called Dr. Cureton a “physical miracle man” who could help readers “halt aging” and regain youth (Hecht 1955:111-112). In 1954, Look told men that exercise could help a man’s heart (Berg 1954), and in the early 1960s, Life, Saturday Review the Saturday Evening Post, and Changing Times promoted XBX exercises (Howard 1963), isometrics (Frankel 1964), T’ai Chi (Jacobs 1963), and “Sensible Ways to Keep Fit (1964).” Life even rehabilitated the image of physical culturist and entrepreneur Charles Atlas, headlining that “Atlas Was Right All Along (1964).”

Reader’s Digest was most prominent in exercise articles. Its articles were usually not original works, but they reached millions of readers, perhaps tens of millions, when one considers that families read the magazine. One may note that some of its authors were familiar authorities: Dr. Paul Dudley White, Bonnie Prudden, and one doctor, Kenneth Cooper, whose name and coined word (“aerobics”) would be familiar to many exercise enthusiasts. Reader’s Digest promoted exercise for weight reduction (Blake 1956) and preventive medicine (White 1957), for family health (Prudden 1958), as a cure for back pain (Mitchell 1966), and as a way of feeling “fit at any age (Cooper 1968).” Although Reader’s Digest may have trivialized sustained exercise in “Six Seconds for Exercise (Monroe 1959)” and “Breathe Right-And Stay Well (Frazier 1966)” their authors were pointing out that even little exercise was of some value. Families were advised to monitor their children’s fitness and keep exercising themselves according to age norms (How Do Your Children Measure Up?; Mitchell 1961). In 1968, readers were shown how brave national heroes, the astronauts, exercised “without specific orders (Mitchell 1968:69).” Readers were also handed a flexible
"revolutionary new exercise program" called "aerobics." Combining nationalism and biomedical authority with nostalgia and the American value of individualism, Dr. Kenneth Cooper (1968) remarked:

As a doctor who has specialized in physical fitness, I'd like to see our nation reverse the consequences of an affluent society and its inbred inactivity. ... I'd like my nation to become a nation of doers instead of spectators. I hope this Aerobics program leads that revolution. And I hope you're one of the revolutionists (p. 87).

Not overly rebellious, Dr. Cooper did not tell people to stop using cars, but he strongly advised all revolutionaries to seek a doctor's permission before starting the program, maintaining the doctor as gatekeeper.

For the first time, so-called specialty magazines published exercise articles in record numbers. Ebony illustrated how young Black men and women used sport and exercise differently in their striving for success. In "Muscles are His Business (1964)," 24-year-old bodybuilder Rock Stonewall used exercise to gain social status. According to Stonewall, bodybuilding was his way of making himself a man, but the husband and family man said he continued his workouts so that he could be Mr. Universe and "turn his hobby into cash."

Defying stereotypes of the Black athlete, a nearby article on "Harvard's Egghead Quarterback (1964:129)" showed John McCluskey, the ambitious Negro athlete and student who "wanted to score in this classroom too." Black women had few chances to use athletics for material gain, but young singer Laura Green stayed in shape by doing a little exercise between domestic chores and a 12 to 14 hour business day. Pictures of Green having fun while ironing and doing other chores illustrated that one could "exercise your woes away (Stay in Shape and Love It 1967:110)."
Other specialty magazines promoted exercise for their readers. *Farm Journal* authorized a farm wife's need to exercise lightly to maintain her figure (Newlin 1955; Morris 1964). *Outdoor Life* and *Field and Stream* illustrated that exercise was needed to keep hunters fit for sport, and to restore the rural middle-aged man's physique (Orlick 1964; Starnes 1968). *Consumer Bulletin* and *Consumer Reports* verified the need to exercise to reduce weight and reduce a man's heart attack risk. *Dance Magazine* told dancers, mostly women, that exercise could be used to keep themselves youthful or at least reduce old age disabilities. Portia Mansfield (1966), an energetic looking elder and dance school director wrote that older women needed to get together for supervised dance classes. Finally, *Sports Illustrated* reported the need for men and their families to exercise. One author identified the nature of the elite sport business and its impact on exercise. Dr. Janet Travell, President Kennedy's physician remarked:

In the United States we have become, in a sense, victims of the demand for excelling in sports. The goal should be physical excellence, achieved through sports. . . . I suspect that a healthy nation depends on a solid 'middle class' of athletes who never win a championship. . . . We in the United States have no such solid middle-class; we've lost it because of too much emphasis on winning. The result has been excellence of the few and neglect of the many (Travell 1961:57).

In *Sports Illustrated* exercise and sport were deemed necessary for child development, youth fitness, national welfare, and to reduce heart attacks in men (Prudden 1961; Crozier 1964). Exercise promotion was not restricted to articles. Advertisements by Equitable Life appearing in *Sports Illustrated* from January 1962 to January 1963 encouraged fathers to get their children physically fit for sport, and promoted the dream that their child might become a star professional athlete. Pictures of professional White athletes and White boys emulating them sold youth sport and company goodwill. Advertisements suggested that Equitable's
posters were free; the company's film on youth fitness could also be borrowed by schools. Unfortunately for women, *Sports Illustrated* readership was mostly male and the messages were for boys and men. Legislation for more equitable sporting opportunities for women would be a decade away.

While exercise messages had changed over the century, one authority’s message was incredibly consistent. In *Vital Speeches*, Dr. Paul Dudley White told members of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) that exercise was vital for good health, and prescribed everyone to exercise seven hours a week. Although the famous doctor believed jogging was a fad, he thought that walking and cycling for transportation and recreation could be functional for society. Dr. White noted some progressive towns that added safe bike paths, and he continued to promote their construction. But White added that planning for functional fitness “wasn’t publicly done.” White called for individuals and communities to unite in building paths. While some of Dr. White’s ideas may have been more acceptable in 1968 than in earlier decades, his ideas for a functional fitness were still too radical for much of society.

**Social-Historical Analysis of Exercise Messages, 1954 to 1968**

Exercise messages in the 1950s and 1960s reflected and reinforced social change. In an growing mechanized culture, exercise was increasingly perceived as a productive and healthy activity, particularly among the growing middle-class. Exercise was slowly but increasingly portrayed as a method to prevent and rehabilitate heart disease and a method to reduce weight. The exercise fitness trend was perceived as a fad by some authors, but powerful groups increasingly authorized exercise for themselves and others. Larger numbers
of people had more exercise choices as Little Leagues, for-profit gyms, jogging, and exercise equipment gained popularity (Rader 1991; Seefeldt and Ewing 1997).

Exercise norms, however, remained authorized by the ideologies of nationalism, patriarchy, materialism, and bio-medicalization, and stratified by gender, age, class, and ethnicity. Women's magazines continued to be a major producer of exercise information. Messages appeared less authoritarian and more visually modern, but they continued to highlight patriarchal norms of figure consciousness and female body dissatisfaction. Women's magazines continued to promote less vigorous exercises, but variety was increased by fashion and materialism. Passive devices, "fast" and "easy" toning exercises, and diet miracles advanced materialism and the belief that the ideal body could be purchased with no little or physical effort. Although growing numbers were performing two-shifts (housewife and wage earner obligations), women were partially blamed for creating a nation in physical and moral decline. In concrete terms, women were told that their overprotective child rearing and failure to perform cooking duties were creating a generation of soft, lazy children. Nationalism and patriarchy presented conflicting messages to teenagers and young mothers were presented conflicting messages. Girls and women engaged in more sport as authors promoted youth and family exercise, but the message that vigorous exercise would make them unattractive continued. Material messages for some household appliances gave women the possibility for more leisure time, and tampons and athletic wear supported women's freedom to exercise vigorously. Athletic women, however, still struggled with and sometimes resisted beliefs that sport would make them less attractive.

Changing messages for men lent more legitimacy to their exercise. In the past, sport and exercise were often interpreted in materialist terms as unproductive, anti-intellectual
pursuits. Exercise was used as a method of wartime rehabilitation of young men, but doctors differed in their opinions of exercise for anyone over thirty-five or forty. Most doctors prescribed regulated easy exercise or no exercise for the middle-aged or older man. During wartime, nationalism made vigorous physical education and sport nearly mandatory for boys and young men. The biomedical message that athletics weakened the heart was slowly replaced by the belief that exercise strengthened the heart, even a middle-aged and diseased one. Cardiac therapy was portrayed as an effective tool for patient survival and worker rehabilitation. In most cases, the patients were men. Supervised and regulated exercise, with the doctor as gatekeeper, continued biomedical authority and advanced the biomedical business.

Exercise messages favoring sport and leisure physical activity grew, but messages continued to reflect and reinforce age and activity norms. In the 1950s and 1960s, exercise messages showed physically unfit children, particularly boys, as deviants. Nationalistic messages deemed youth exercise mandatory. In the 1960s, some biomedical authors began displaying vigorous elders as successful innovators. Liberal biomedical messages presented functional fitness exercising (gardening, building, walking, bicycling) as a socially productive but individual efforts. Although women’s life expectancy was significantly higher than men’s life expectancy, vigorous women were less frequently portrayed as physically active elders.

Materialism and social class also divided exercise opportunities. The rich and famous could purchase social support through personal trainers, vacation spas and exercise equipment. The growing and more diverse middle-class could try to emulate elite messages or seek other exercises. Spas, country clubs, and trainers were status symbols for wealthy women and men, but the exercise business actively sold goods and services to the middle-
class. For-profit gyms (including the YMCA) and exercise equipment were middle-class status symbols. Some exercise and diet gimmicks may have been profitable only for the entrepreneur selling magic potions, but others may have been profitable for the buyer and the seller. Jogging was portrayed as an exercise of the upwardly mobile businessman who exercised to stay productive. Working poor people rarely appeared in exercise messages, but many played sports despite alienating physical work and limited access. As exercise became a matter of health, regular leisure physical activity was not portrayed as necessary for this class.

Many magazine messages portrayed exercise as a leisure or recreational activity exclusively for White people. Black exercisers in *Ebony* illustrated the racially segregated nature of American society, and the materialism and patriarchy of American culture. Black men were allowed to play sport or exercise as a hobby, but the activities had to be justified as productive activities. Black male athletes had to live with the image of intellectual incompetence even in their own communities. Thus, sport was portrayed as a vehicle for material success, not necessarily a lifetime activity. Black women may have been able to seek wage careers, but they were still required to do domestic tasks. Exercising was something to be squeezed in between greater obligations. The images of minorities exercising were also restricted by class and ethnicity. High circulation magazines continued to portray exercisers as White people, and *Ebony* was a magazine for the Black middle-class.

An analysis of exercise messages cannot be complete without identifying acts of resistance and mentioning overarching social messages. Authors such as Paul Dudley White, Janet Travell, Thomas Cureton, Theodore Klumpp and Portia Mansfield were not free of dominant ideas, but their ideas clearly conflicted with some ideologies. Dr. White had a long-
standing resistance to biomedical and material messages that deterred exercise, promoting functional fitness and bicycle paths for individual health and the health of the economy. Dr. Janet Travell criticized elite sports, stating that a system of haves and have-nots in physical activity was dysfunctional for society. Professor Cureton, Dr. Klumpp, and Ms. Mansfield countered middle-age and old-age norms of disengagement and disability for men and women. Multitudes of lesser known people also resisted exercise norms. Minorities challenged racial exclusion in public and private facilities. Women athletes, master athletes and senior athletes resisted gender and old age norms by defiantly running marathons and creating their own sports organizations. Millions more participated in participation sports and jogging to the dismay of family members, peers, and doctors. Social change in exercise beliefs slowly changed. Biomedical and material authorities that previously deterred exercise slowly began promoting exercise and profiting from it. Scientists and doctors presented mounting evidence favoring regular and even vigorous exercise. Some companies sold exercise equipment that made exercise more convenient. Most companies did not establish exercise programs, but some started corporate fitness programs when they saw that it improved worker efficiency and reduced costs (Gettman 1996). Ironically, material messages of relaxing leisure, convenience, and consumption reduced the impact of many exercise messages (Haskell 1996; King 1991). Moreover, as exercise became authorized and dogmatic, resistance against exercise gained greater credibility (Stein 1982; Edgely and Brissett 1990).
Table 21. U.S. Recreation Consumption, in Billions of Dollars, 1925-1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Toys &amp; Sporting Goods</th>
<th>Radio &amp; TV</th>
<th>Movies</th>
<th>Spectator Sport</th>
<th>Magazines &amp; Newspapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22. Adult Participation in Outdoor Activities, Previous Year, 1960 and 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1977</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving for pleasure</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking/Jogging</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Games</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending Sports Events</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Walks</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Concerts</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback Riding</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking/Backpacking</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterskiing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study of exercise messages makes four conclusions. First, magazines employed biomedicalization, materialism, nationalism, and patriarchy in supporting socially restrictive exercise norms. This study corroborates research by Scanlon (1995) and Ohman (1996) that magazines used ideologies as social control techniques. This study supports and connects studies regarding ideologies and exercise norms (Vertinsky 1991; Sage 1990; Pope 1997).

Racism is rarely visible in messages, but may be inferred by counting the lack of minority images, as suggested by Scanlon (1995).

The second conclusion is that media messages advanced exercise norms stratified by age, class, gender, and race. Specifically, magazines promoted vigorous exercise more for young people, white-collar professionals, Whites and men, and less for older people, working-class people, minorities, and women. This study links cultural critiques of leisure and sport meanings (Deem 1986; Peters 1994; Henderson et al. 1996; Russell and Stage 1996; Davis 1990) and media images (Messner et al. 1993; Coakley 1994) with studies of structural inequalities in sport (Edwards 1973; Gonzalez 1996) and stratified leisure preferences (Phillip 1995; Shinew et al. 1996). This study also contributes to the limited critical research on aging and physical activity (McPherson 1984; McPherson 1994) by illustrating the stratified, socially controlling, and changing meanings of exercise over time. Disengagement, activity,
continuity, and age stratification are shown in a critical light, suggesting that ideological messages influence generational age norms and academic theories.

The third conclusion is that messages fluctuated between promotion and deterrence before exercise gained ideological legitimacy in the 1950s and 1960s. Biomedicalization, materialism, and patriarchy had complex histories of promoting unequal opportunities and sometimes discouraging exercise. Nationalism promoted exercise, but often fluctuated in influence. In the 1960s, all of the ideologies supported exercise, with norms attached. This study shows that interpretations of exercise as restrictive (Stein 1982; Edgeley and Brissett 1990) and emancipating (Eisenman and Barnett 1979) both have credibility. Locating resistance, as that offered by Beal (1995), is problematic. In this analysis, resisters and outsiders were usually ignored, but occasionally labeled as deviants.

The final conclusion is that changing ideologies were used in multiple combination or ideology mixes. Ideologies were powerful but alterable as the society changed. Materialism, for example, linked social patterns of work-and-spend noted by Breedveld (1996) and the automobile culture noted by Kay (1997) to reinforce sedentary behavior. Materialism also promoted opportunities for women and minorities (Cahn, 1994), but with price tags. It is not surprising, therefore, that exercise messages have been perceived as restrictive, emancipating, confusing, and contradictory. Social change is likely, but it does not necessarily mean that all change is emancipating. This conclusion is particularly salient for analyzing "exercise adherence" research and related social policies to address sedentary behavior. A more complex analysis is made in the following sections, and a summary of exercise message trends is located in Appendix 3.
The remainder of this chapter is separated into three sections. The first section places exercise messages in historical sociological context. The second section weighs the social significance of magazine messages using historical techniques and criticism. The final section discusses the study's implications for further research in critical historical sociology and health policy.

**Exercise Messages in Historical-Sociological Context**

Twentieth century America is probably the most sedentary culture in history (Berger 1954; Kennedy 1960). Americans were spending less time in physical activity as the nation moved from agricultural to mechanized to automated. Physical education, active leisure and sport participation increased, but human strength and endurance were replaced by powerful machines to increase material production, transportation, communication, and consumption (O'Hanlon 1995; Robinson and Godbey 1997). Sedentary culture became an international phenomenon, but it was most prominent in the United States (Park 1992; Haskell 1996).

It is likely that most Americans considered exercise a trivial matter. In the early-twentieth century, contagious diseases were the major health concern. During the Depression, the major concern was the economy and employment. During World War II, war work and production were considered top priorities. After World War II, material affluence continued to be a vital aspect of American life (Haskell 1996; Ohman 1996). Millions of people did engage in sport and active leisure, though apparently violating work and family norms, age and gender norms, class norms, and consumer norms (McGovern 1932; White 1937; Steincrohn 1942).
Sedentary culture was often associated with national progress and individual affluence (White 1937; Leevy 1950; Kelly 1954). Strenuous physical activity, especially in labor, was historically associated with oppression, coercion, low status and poor health (Bell 1970; Lerner 1992). Laborers and housewives were physically active (Park 1992), but the work was alienating and disabling. Physical training was a mandatory activity of body socialization for school children and military recruits (O’Hanlon 1995). Having a desk job, owning an automobile, relaxing in an E-Z chair, watching television, and buying home conveniences and labor-saving devices were symbols of upward mobility (Leevy 1950; Collins 1954; Kay 1997). Materialism in the media amplified these beliefs (Damon-Moore 1994; Scanlon 1995; Ohman 1996).

Exercise behavior, norms, and structures were stratified by age, class, gender, and race. Exercise existed as child development training, physical education, sport, work, and leisure (Cavallo 1981; Weston 1962; Spears and Swanson 1978). Physical education was mandated for young people, but it was not available for all youth. Young males were expected to be physically fit for war (O’Hanlon 1995; Pope 1997), but older adults were expected to disengage from sport and physical labor (Landis 1942; McPherson 1994). Sports and leisure facilities were more accessible for affluent White people than others (Reiss 1989). Social conflict, civil rights legislation, feminism and affluence allowed for greater access and opportunities after World War II, but equality of opportunity was far from a reality.

Analysis of Ideologies and Stratification in Exercise Messages

This study located multiple ideologies in exercise messages. Biomedicalization was an enduring ideology, but biomedical messages were complex and confusing. Stratification,
internal conflict, and external social change appear to be three factors related to the mixed messages. It should also be noted that biomedical messages were not always written by doctors or scientists. Many magazines paraphrased or quoted biomedical authorities, others implied that their information was supported by medical or scientific opinion (Nathan 1929; Bird 1953).

Messages using medical authority gave various prescriptions and proscriptions. Advice and information were stratified, but they were also inconsistent and subject to change. During the 1920s and 1930s, biomedicalization encouraged exercise for health, but discouraged vigorous sport and physical culture (Fishbein 1933). Boys and men were warned of the dangers of overexertion, and the quackery of physical culturists selling patent muscle builders. Women and girls, restricted from activity by many other sources, were warned of the effects of sport on child bearing. From the 1930s onward, scientific and medical authorities also claimed that exercise was an ineffective method of weight reduction (Millman 1951). These medical myths were based on limited information, but they existed for decades (Whorton 1982; Vertinsky 1991). Supervised and regulated exercise was prescribed as a therapy for reducing nervous tension, but such activity was deemed most important for white-collar men and affluent women. In the 1940s, biomedical opinion changed as a result of external forces. World War II required vigorous young men for war, but it was also disabling thousands of soldiers. At the same time, heart disease was becoming the largest killer of middle-aged men. Medical authorities then promoted vigorous exercise for young men, occupational therapy for disabled male veterans, and rest for middle-aged men (Fishbein 1942). Rest, not exercise, became a preventive medicine (Steincrohn 1942).
Another shift in biomedical opinion occurred in the 1950s. Biomedical authorities began to encourage adult exercise, particularly white-collar male exercise, as slowly mounting evidence indicated that it was beneficial and lucrative. Early promoters of exercise gained limited attention and legitimation until the early 1950s (White 1937; Mayer 1955; Cureton 1958). But by the late 1960s, doctors began prescribing exercise for middle-aged, white-collar men who were the main focus of the lucrative cardiac therapy business (Bugg 1968).

The biomedical message to exercise for health was not prominent in women's exercise messages after the 1920s. Medical authority was mentioned, however, in women's quest for weight reduction and happiness. Obesity and depression were seen as medical conditions that could be cured by drugs such as amphetamines. Diet and mood altering remedies had been sold by physical culturists for generations, but they were debunked by the allopathic medical profession (Green 1986; Fishbein 1969). In the 1950s and afterward, however, drugs became authorized as weight loss therapies (That's Your Shape 1955; Deutsch and Deutsch 1963).

Materialism, in the form of work ethic, consumption, and class stratification was prevalent in most magazines. However, the ideology changed shape throughout the century. From the 1920s through the 1940s, intellectuals in family magazines used materialism to discourage exercise (Hopper 1926; Skinner et al. 1946). Exercise was trivialized as alienating, monotonous, low-class work. Intellectuals discouraged exercise because it would take vital energy from productive, higher status sedentary work such as reading and writing (Hopper 1926). Borrowing from biomedical opinion, intellectuals substantiated their position in discouraging physical culture. Intellectual distaste for exercise declined during World War II, but resurfaced after the war (Skinner et al. 1946). The theme, however, lost power in the
1950s and 1960s as exercise was promoted for the health, productivity, and longevity of sedentary middle-aged men (Don’t Just Sit There 1968).

Materialism took a different form in women’s magazines and some family magazines. Women’s magazine messages were not directly opposed to exercise, nor intellectually elitist, but their messages reflected stratified opportunities based on class and consumption. From the 1920s, exercise was promoted for the health of all women, but class differences in exercise opportunities were illustrated. Exercise for wealthy women included salon memberships, spa vacations, home exercise equipment, equipment for passive exercise, and summer camps for their children (Arden 1935). Poorer women could exercise by performing their housework correctly (Wambold 1947). Social support also existed on a sliding class scale. Wealthy women could hire supervised trainers and exercise experts. Middle-class women, if they had enough resources, could use radios and phonographs to break the monotony of home exercise. Women’s exercise messages became increasingly commercialized in the 1950s and 1960s, reflecting wider social affluence, expanding consumer markets, and social change. Generational differences and age stratification were apparent, however. Middle-class women could emulate the wealthy by purchasing passive exercise devices and taking non-prescription diet formulas (Remaking Your Measurements 1959). Girls and young women could engage in tennis, golf, and swimming in addition to dieting (A New Beauty Kick 1968).

From the 1920s, popular magazines promoted and prescribed exercise for their readers. Moderate amounts of golf, tennis, horseback riding, swimming, and hiking were some of the approved exercises. Magazines also promoted resorts and lower-Manhattan gyms led by exercise “experts” and their miracle solutions. Articles may have rarely mentioned class, but class-consciousness was implied. From the 1930s, Hollywood acting
stars were presented as role models for exercise norms (Flesh Sculptors 1937). Rich businessmen and famous jet-setters were presented as exercise role models in the 1950s and 1960s (Top Joggers in Top Jobs 1968). The reality was that many people had limited access to exercise activities, and their lives were clearly different from their role models. With increasing affluence, however, growing numbers could emulate higher-class exercise norms.

Nationalism was the ideology with the most fluctuations in visibility and authority. From 1925 to the late 1930s, nationalistic exercise messages were uncommon. The trend reemerged just before World War II, lost influence after the war, regained popularity in the mid-1950s, and was reduced and transformed in the 1960s. During World War II, nationalistic messages were disseminated by the federal authorities to compel young men and women to exercise for survival, national security and wartime productivity. In the 1950s and 1960s, government appointees and even Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy supported exercise (Kennedy 1960). Nationalism was maintained during the Cold War as messages said that exercise could build peace through strength. National heroes such as athletes and astronauts were used as role models for physical activity. Most of the role models for national strength were White men, while a selected number were women or minorities.

Patriarchy was a powerful ideology authorized by both men and women. Women editors and writers in women's magazines, for example, were sources of patriarchal exercise messages and gender norms. The format of exercise messages changed, from benevolently authoritarian to understanding and stylish, but the norm of figure consciousness remained prominent throughout the century (McGovern 1932; The Exercise Log 1960). Figure consciousness was an enduring and powerful norm for young women and exercise. Women's magazines told women what they should look like, how they should dress, and what
they should do to attain the standard of beauty. The standard fluctuated from slim in the 1920s to well-proportioned in the 1930s, and slim again in the 1960s, but it remained consistent in transmitting the ideal of youth and limited muscularity. A less direct approach arose by the 1940s. Magazines did not openly direct women to exercise or tell them what they should look like. Instead, they reported how women hated their bodies, and offered help and hope in remedying the situation (Cades 1947).

Remedies for attaining the standard of beauty varied, but regular vigorous exercise was rarely the best option. Mixing patriarchy with materialism, spot reducing, passive exercise, and diets were promoted as fast and easy approaches to weight loss and the standard of beauty. Throughout most of the century, exercise messages for women transmitted patriarchal age norms, with girls and young women allowed to play moderately. Vigorous sport, however, was disapproved for making women look like unfeminine and unattractive Amazons (Wittner 1934). Although this proscription was increasingly resisted, the beauty argument against vigorous activity was maintained in exercise messages into the 1960s (Do Exercises Work? 1964). Implied in these messages, but rarely mentioned, was the patriarchal norm that women needed to be attractive in order to catch a husband and keep him happy (Thompson 1925; Murrin 1939).

Patriarchal exercise messages also promoted the married woman’s work role as the vital but unpaid housewife and mother. Gender norms held women responsible for maintaining their figures as well as their families (Millet 1959). Exercise messages did not try to change gender roles; rather they attempted to help women maintain their figures as they struggled with daily family concerns (Benjamin 1946). Ironically, the housewife and mother roles were physically demanding for much of the century. Women may not have been
exercising *per se*, but they were physically active in their underappreciated roles. As married women's work roles were changing in the 1950s, patriarchal messages directly and indirectly blamed mothers for the physical inactivity of their children. Mothers were told to stop coddling their children, but fathers were held less accountable for their children's inactivity (Musial 1964). Authors failed to mention, however, how overprotective mothers had been socialized to be overprotective and wary of sports.

It is important to point out that patriarchy also influenced men's age and exercise norms. During the threat of war, patriarchy with nationalism expected young men to exercise for survival (Walker 1943). Mandatory military training and sports were used to prepare men for mortal combat and to rehabilitate them if they returned home disabled. Patriarchy with materialism, on the other hand, expected men to quit childish sports in order to be *breadwinners*. Young men could afford to play sport, but the norm of male material success authorized little time for exercise. High-class sports were legitimated for white-collar males, however, if they could be used to make business deals or increase executive productivity. In the 1960s men's exercise was further legitimated as a tool to rehabilitate and prevent heart disease. Again, exercise was presented as a mandatory activity, a matter of male survival (Bugg 1968).

Racism was the most difficult ideology to identify in exercise messages. Racist statements were rarely overt. A coach's statement that minorities were lazy but athletically gifted, or an intellectual's quip that exercise was something that minority servants could do for you, may not have seemed racist to the authors or even to most readers. The ideas may have even been accepted or partially accepted by minority readers, but they were racist nevertheless. A more subtle racism was implied by the invisibility of minority images and the
materialist exclusion of minorities by class. Images of racial minorities in popular magazines were rare even in the 1960s. Black exercise, when it did appear, was only justified as a form of paid work for men and a form of domestic work for women (Muscles are His Business 1964; Stay in Shape and Love It 1967).

**Exercising Moments of Resistance**

An analysis of exercise messages would not be complete without recognizing moments of resistance. Three types of resisters are recognized: famous resisters, deviant resisters, and outsiders. Famous resisters such as Paul Dudley White (1937; 1968) and Helen Keller (1933) were important for promoting exercise in ways that challenged dominant ideologies. Dr. White challenged materialism and even biomedicalization in prescribing exercise for everyone. His ideas of building safe bicycle paths for transportation and prescribing exercise for heart patients were radical, yet he promoted them for more than a half century. Helen Keller, a blind and deaf middle-aged women did not fit the typical image of women's exercise messages, and her message was profoundly different from the figure conscious messages usually appearing in women's magazines. Keller challenged patriarchal and intellectual arguments against exercise by encouraging women to exercise for health and spiritual transformation. Deviant resisters are voiceless people who do not conform to stratified exercise norms. Muscular women athletes and middle-aged sportsmen, for example, were two groups who were scorned or trivialized in exercise messages for much of the century. Women who did not look young and thin were also ridiculed, and their images were presented to evoke guilt and scorn. Outsiders are the oppressed people who exercised in many forms. Famous athletic outsiders such as Jim Thorpe, Jessie Owens, and Althea Gibson
were not seen in popular magazine exercise messages, yet they had a presence in newspapers. It is apparent that many minorities and poor people exercised as a form of work, sport, and leisure, but their images were deemed unworthy. Pictures of the rich and famous “beautiful people” were presented as exercise models instead (What the Beautiful People Are Doing 1964).

Avoiding Bowdlerization: The Limited Power of Magazine Messages

This section briefly illustrates some limitations of analyzing magazine exercise messages. First, magazine reading was not a universal phenomenon. As Reissman’s study of class differences in leisure indicated, magazine readership was stratified by class. People with higher status occupations, more income, and more formal education were more likely to read magazines regularly. In addition, a significant number in the higher-class were also not heavy readers of magazines (Reissman 1954).

Bennett Berger’s analysis of a blue-collar suburb presented two more limitations of magazine readership. Although the magazines that the people read promoted materialistic “life style” norms, reader interest was diverse, and magazines did not necessarily reflect reader behavior. According to Berger (1968), Reader’s Digest was a highly popular magazine in the blue-collar suburb, but the community did not have a consensus in their magazine interests. After comparing the homes of suburban blue-collar families to the middle-class magazines that they read, Berger (1968:76) questioned the magazine’s influence in molding consumer behavior.

Recent studies relating the impact of media on behavior are mixed. Although television watching, for example, has been associated with childhood obesity (Anderson et al.
1998), this does not establish a cause-and-effect relationship. Understanding the magazine environment is also necessary. Although power differentials exist, the media cannot honestly be described as an all-powerful group, nor can readers or viewers be described as powerless victims (Carragee 1990; Evans 1990; Morley 1993; Livingstone 1993). Exercise adherence models, mentioned in the next section, indicate that health behavior is an extremely complex matter (Dishman 1994).

**Reflexivity and Recommendations for Social Policy**

Critical researchers use reflexivity to critically examine bias in their studies. Through reflexivity, I have gained several critical insights on this project and future social policy. First, this study itself is an exercise message that reflects ideologies, social control, and resistance gathered in a life course of stratified social interactions. The critical project has allowed me to observe and recall the oppressive as well as emancipating aspects of exercise that groups and individuals experience.

As this study progressed, I gained many key ideas by comparing social interactions and unsystematic observations to academic literature. I listened to a variety of promoters and followers: those who preach exercise, those who teach exercise, and those who trivialize it. I also interacted with people who say they love exercise, others who say they exercise for health, and still others who hate exercise or aren’t interested. Although I had understood the mechanics of “exercise adherence,” I had not grasped the social-historical complexity nor the oppressive inequalities of the “problem.” As I continued to read and observe, I found that merely trying to define exercise was problematically altered by a history of stratification and power relationships.
Reflexivity has also raised ethical questions about my agenda. Is exercise really an important issue? Are my interests merely to control some groups and defame other groups? As chapter one in this study indicates, I find it difficult to legitimate my study without using a mix of ideologies. From my perspective, biomedical, materialist, and nationalist opinions are necessary to legitimate this topic. Also, I find it difficult to legitimate this study without implying that this study will be used to increase social control. Yet, after reading articles on the oppressive nature of moralizing exercise, I am wary of writing this text as a “how to” book on how to socially control groups into particular exercise behaviors. I find that there is a fine and unfixed line between emancipating education and controlling propaganda.

Exercise adherence is the scientific-medical concept that attempts to explain and perhaps ultimately control elements of exercise motivation and exercise behavior. Exercise adherence is a relatively new concept, yet many scientific models have been tested. Many models have focused on psychological concepts such as self-efficacy, expectancy, and planned behavior, but sociological models and historical ideas have also been advanced (Chogahara, Cousins, and Wankel 1998; Cousins and Keating 1995; Cousins and Vertinsky 1995). A review of several models serves to illustrate the complicated nature of exercise behavior (Dishman 1994). Dozens and perhaps hundreds of biological, social-psychological and demographic variables have been tested, yet their relationships with motivation and behavior are unclear (Chogahara et al. 1998). Differences in key operational definitions, scaling, and study samples make generalizations problematic. More generally, each model reduces its scope to a small number of manageable variables that only explain a small portion of exercise adherence. As this study indicates, exercise adherence models face unit analysis problems.
affected by the problematic nature of defining exercise by not addressing the social-historical background of exercise.

Recommendations for Further Research

Exercise messages are a narrow topic in the bourgeoning sphere of health and medicine. Medical prescriptions, alternative medicine, anti-aging formulas, and diet messages are related topics of popular concern in sedentary societies during this information age. For greater benefit, future research should examine and link six areas: (1) the status of ideology mixtures in contemporary health and sedentary messages, (2) social structures and social interactions involved in producing these messages, (3) consumer responses to past and present messages, (4) continuity and change in stratified health norms, (5) overriding social structures and messages that influence the health of particular groups and of society, and (6) education for emancipating social change.

Researchers may examine health and sedentary messages using a variety of perspectives and methods. From a critical perspective, researchers could examine how health or sedentary messages reflect or reinforce ideology mixes and vested interests of consumers, editors, and advertisers. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, researchers could examine the production process of health and sedentary messages. Ethnographies and exchange theory could be used to examine the interactions and power relationships involved in selecting and editing topics, words, and images in relationship to beliefs, values, and desires. Content analysis and comparative analysis of target marketing and targeted messages would be of particular interest. Comparative and critical analysis could be extended to other types of media, including trade journals, videos, infomercials, speciality magazines, and the

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Internet, and social structures such as corporations and governments who fund health or sedentary messages. Comparative research could also analyze health and sedentary messages in different nations and regions in relationship to different social structures and ideologies.

From another angle, studies may investigate consumer awareness and consumer behavior in response to health and sedentary messages. Focus groups, surveys, and experiments could be used to examine consumer acceptance or resistance to ideology mixes and other sophisticated marketing techniques. Researchers could identify subgroup awareness and responses by various categories, such as age, class, gender, race, physical ability, and geographic location. Researchers could also study whether particular skills may enable various groups to be more critically aware and critically responsive to health and sedentary messages.

By first understanding consumers and producers of exercise and sedentary messages, a critical conversation among consumers and producers and researchers may be fruitful. Praxis research could examine teaching techniques to enhance critical awareness and critical decision making in consumption, and ethical decision making in message production. A regular dialogue with consumers and producers could be used to help consumers retrieve and analyze information and make educated and socially conscious choices.
APPENDIX I

READER'S GUIDE TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE, 1925-1968

Popular Magazines: Where Exercise Articles Appeared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Top Circulating Magazines</th>
<th>Women's Magazines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
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<td>1960</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

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| Year | Count of Female Count of Male Count of Total |
|------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1961 | 20                                      | 6                                       | 8                                       |
| 1962 | 18                                      | 5                                       | 7                                       |
| 1963 | 26                                      | 12                                      | 13                                      |
| 1964 | 28                                      | 9                                       | 11                                      |
| 1965 | 21                                      | 9                                       | 11                                      |
| 1966 | 27                                      | 9                                       | 14                                      |
| 1967 | 18                                      | 7                                       | 11                                      |
| 1968 | 32                                      | 9                                       | 14                                      |


Note: The early Cosmopolitan was not a women's magazine. Counts do not include female-oriented magazines or magazines likely to have a disproportionate number of women readers, such as Parents Magazine, Arts and Decoration, Pictorial Review, Sunset, Etude, Dance Magazine, and a variety of education magazines.

1925-1929

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Magazine/Source</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fair, fit &amp; forty</td>
<td>Saturday Evening Post</td>
<td>Apr '25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of perfect circulation</td>
<td>Good Housekeeping</td>
<td>Apr '25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily dozening</td>
<td>Woman Citizen</td>
<td>May '25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily dozening</td>
<td>Woman Citizen</td>
<td>Jun '25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise and nerves</td>
<td>Woman Citizen</td>
<td>Jun '25</td>
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<td>How much exercise is enough...?</td>
<td>American Magazine</td>
<td>Jun '25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Too much exercise</td>
<td>Saturday Evening Post</td>
<td>Jul '25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't accept infirmity!</td>
<td>Delineator</td>
<td>Nov '25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical condition...experiments...</td>
<td>Science News</td>
<td>Nov '25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises for the home gym</td>
<td>Delineator</td>
<td>Feb '26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn your housework into exercise</td>
<td>Delineator</td>
<td>Mar '26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice of virtue</td>
<td>Colliers</td>
<td>Apr '26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress at play</td>
<td>Hygeia</td>
<td>Jan '27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise for beauty</td>
<td>Sunset</td>
<td>Jun '27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can keep a youthful figure</td>
<td>American Magazine</td>
<td>Aug '27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figuratively speaking</td>
<td>Delineator</td>
<td>Nov '27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we can learn from an orange</td>
<td>Pictorial Review</td>
<td>Feb '28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stretch and grow slim</td>
<td>Ladies' Home Journal</td>
<td>Apr '28</td>
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<tr>
<td>My own ten-minute exercises</td>
<td>Outlook</td>
<td>May '28</td>
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<td>Big health secret...watching others</td>
<td>Harpers</td>
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<td>Physical and mental tonic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercises for the baby</td>
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<td>Time-saving and hand molding exercises</td>
<td>Etude</td>
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<td>Out of doors for health</td>
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<td>Years that the locusts ate</td>
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<td>Again, exercise</td>
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<td>Exercise for the three year olds</td>
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<td>Making an electric exerciser</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
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<td>New test of student mind, rats!</td>
<td>Literary Digest</td>
<td>Sep '29</td>
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<td>How to roll off that roll</td>
<td>Colliers</td>
<td>Dec '29</td>
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<td>1930-1939</td>
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<td>Middle-aged at play</td>
<td>American Magazine</td>
<td>Jan '30</td>
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<td>Shoe of tomorrow</td>
<td>Hygeia</td>
<td>Jan '30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reach up your hands</td>
<td>Delineator</td>
<td>Feb '30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercising for the new silhouette</td>
<td>Ladies' Home Journal</td>
<td>Mar '30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genteel stooping and bending</td>
<td>North American</td>
<td>Mar '30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know your own strength</td>
<td>Colliers</td>
<td>Jun '30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plotting the curve</td>
<td>Pictorial Review</td>
<td>Jun '30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stretch and stretch again</td>
<td>Good Housekeeping</td>
<td>Jun '30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect figure: how to get it</td>
<td>Woman's Journal</td>
<td>Jul '30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise in disease</td>
<td>Scientific American</td>
<td>Mar '31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Football hero, ten years after</td>
<td>Hygeia</td>
<td>Mar '31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slender waist</td>
<td>Woman's Journal</td>
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<td>Dancing mothers and dancing daughters</td>
<td>Hygeia</td>
<td>Apr '31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making play of exercise</td>
<td>Parents Magazine</td>
<td>Apr '31</td>
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<td>Common sense in exercise</td>
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<td>Jul '31</td>
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<td>Remodeling last year's figure</td>
<td>Woman's Home Companion</td>
<td>Oct '31</td>
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<td>Broken knuckle gave him...</td>
<td>American Magazine</td>
<td>Nov '31</td>
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**1940-1944**

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<td>Tennis and ping pong: rotational...</td>
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<td>Getting in shape for skiing</td>
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<td>Shake all over</td>
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<td>I do my daily dozen doing housework</td>
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<td>Good digging: hard labor or exercise</td>
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<td>Six easy exercises for the bosom</td>
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<td>Terry Hunt's job is to keep movie...</td>
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1945-1955

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Sensible ways to keep fit
Beauty: new legs to stand on
Physical fitness for everyone
Muscles are his business
Promotion of grace: new swerve in...
Shape-up:...Manhattan’s upper crust

Exercises for a younger prettier face
Facial isometrics
How to take the dull edge off winter...
What’s a dancer doing at Mr. Kenneth’s?
Interviews with two experts about trimming...
Lie down and gain: with chart showing energy...
Spring training
You can have a far slimmer figure if you stand up...
Best diet is exercise
Physiology of exercise
Sprinters burn oxygen
Time to be beautiful: post natal exercise and beauty

Beach beauty guide
Let’s tell the truth about isometrics
Key to physical fitness
Physical fitness and dynamic health: review
Warm-up ballet exercises
Disco shape-up
Exercise
Growth hormone: important roll in muscular...
Four exercises to trim, tone or relax you

Fourteen day diet and pep-up plan
Your aching back, and what to do about it
Body shrinkers: what they can do for...
Breathe right and stay well
Quality of fitness
Beauty life: shall we dance?
Oh, for some easy exercises!
Pre-racing physical conditioning
Exercises to change your figure
Spot reducing chart to end all spot
Surfside shape-up
Better figure while you bathe
Short skirt, the low heel, and the leg...
Loneliness...long-distance runner over 40
Gams-manship
Is it that good for you?
Don’t be a weekend athlete!
Dramatic gains in youth fitness
Help them move young (3 part series)
Hale and hearty room
Help them move young
Exercise and inexercise: the new way...
How the American male can be fit

Changing Times
Ladies’ Home Journal
Parents Magazine
Ebony
Vogue
Newsweek
McCalls
Time
Better Homes & Gardens
Dance Magazine
Mademoiselle
Science Newsletter
Redbook
Seventeen
New York Times Magazine
Scientific American
Science Newsletter
Redbook
Seventeen
Today’s Health
Parents Magazine
Time
McCalls
Mademoiselle
Ladies’ Home Journal
Science
Good Housekeeping
Reader’s Digest
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Reader’s Digest
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<td>Slim down, shape up: with 68 diet tips...</td>
<td>Good Housekeeping</td>
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<td>Ten minutes a day to slimmer hips and...</td>
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<td>I spa: or how to profit from a visit...</td>
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<td>What you do when your looks go wrong</td>
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<td>Run for your life</td>
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<td>Slim your figure for the new fall</td>
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<td>Diet you can live with: and exercises</td>
<td>Look</td>
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<td>They're mending hearts with exercise</td>
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<td>Stay in shape and love it</td>
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<td>Personal business: daily exercises...</td>
<td>Business Week</td>
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<td>One exercise that does everything</td>
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<td>Building healthful exercise into your...</td>
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<td>Don't just sit there: walk, jog, run</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>Psychedelic exercises</td>
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<td>Exercise: does it help ward off heart...</td>
<td>Consumer Reports</td>
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<td>How to feel fit at any age</td>
<td>Reader's Digest</td>
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<td>Men over 30 have fitness program</td>
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<td>Pear-shaped syndrome</td>
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<td>Physical fitness secrets...Yaz</td>
<td>Popular Science</td>
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<td>Should businessmen jog?</td>
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<td>Fitness city, USA: pilot project...</td>
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<td>Top joggers in top jobs</td>
<td>Newsweek</td>
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<td>Well armed all of you: hand, hair, torso</td>
<td>Vogue</td>
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<td>Be sure you are ready for skiing</td>
<td>Popular Gardens</td>
<td>Fall '68</td>
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<td>Why can't exercises be more fun?</td>
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<td>Diet, exercise, and weight control</td>
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<td>Road to fitness: the astronauts' way</td>
<td>Reader's Digest</td>
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<td>Twenty-one day shape up program...</td>
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<td>Brain is on top: nature a great rehab...</td>
<td>Vital Speeches</td>
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<td>Heart-to-heart talk: advice from...</td>
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<td>Spotting heart attacks beforehand</td>
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<td>Physical fitness can be fun for all ages</td>
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<td>One, two, three ski</td>
<td>Ladies' Home Journal</td>
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APPENDIX 2

GALLUP POLL SURVEYS RELATED TO EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

1. November 21 to November 26, 1940:
Do you happen to take regular exercise now?  Yes 24%; No 76%

2. November 27 to December 1, 1941:
Apart from your job do you do anything to exercise?  Yes 42%; No 58%

3. December 14 to December 19, 1957
Do you think young people in this country get more physical exercise or less physical
exercise than the young people of Russia?  More exercise 31%; Less exercise 44%; About
the same 10%; No opinion 15%

4. February 4 to February 9, 1959
Which of the activities listed on the card have you, yourself, participated in during the last
12 months?

Men: fishing 44%; swimming 35%; hunting 28%; dancing 27%; bowling 21%; baseball or
softball 17%; golf 13%; pool or billiards 10%; ice skating 8%; badminton 8%; horseback
riding 7%; tennis 5%; roller skating 5%; volleyball 4%; skiing 3%; none of the these 29%

Women: dancing 37%; swimming 30%; fishing 21%; bowling 15%; badminton 5%;
hunting 5%; ices skating 4%; baseball or softball 4%, roller skating 4%, volleyball 3;
tennis 3%; horseback riding skiing 2%; pool or billiards 1%, none of these 44%.

Age 21-29: dancing 58%; swimming 55%; fishing 35%; bowling 33%; hunting 21%; none
of these 12%.

Age 30-49: swimming 44%; dancing 40%; fishing 39%; bowling 23%; hunting 19%; none
of these 24%.

Age 50 and over: fishing 24%; hunting 1%; dancing 1%; swimming 10%; bowling 6%;
none of these 54%.
5. January 11-January 16, 1963
During the past 12 months, did you, yourself, happen to do any of these? Go bowling?
Yes 24%; No 76%

6. March 8-March 13, 1963
Aside from your job, or the work that you do, how much time if any, do you spend walking in a typical day?
None 29% (23% for men; 33% for women); under 30 minutes 25%; 30 to 60 minutes 21%; 60 minutes or more 25%.

7. April 23-April 26, 1971
Asked of those who work outside the home: What means do you use to work?
Car 81%; bus 6%; walk 6%; train 3%; bicycle/motorbike 2%; other responses 2%.

How long does it take you to get to work?
Train 41 minutes; car 16 minutes; bus 21 minutes; on foot 9 minutes.

(Gallup 1972:255, 313; 936, 1289; 1463, 1504, 1594; 1805; 1813; 2308)
APPENDIX 3

TRENDS IN STRATIFICATION BY IDEOLOGY, 1925-1968

Trends 1925-1936
Gender: Patriarchy, Materialism, and Biomedicalization promote women's exercise for figure consciousness and health, but regulate women's sport participation.
Gender: Patriarchy and Biomedicalization promote female gender roles as mother/housewife.
Gender: Biomedicalization conflicts with materialism to delegitimates men's physical culture.
Gender and Age: Biomedicalization regulates youth and adult male age and exercise norms.
Class: Materialism promotes class-stratified opportunities for social support, facilities, and exercise gimmicks.
Class: Biomedicalization promotes class-stratified and regulated opportunities.
Class: Patriarchy and Materialism trivialize exercise.
Race: Racial minorities are invisible in White exercise messages, but appear as subordinates in stereotypical advertisements and images.

Trends 1937-1953
Gender: Nationalism during World War II promotes exercise for young men and boys first, but exercise for girls and women is also promoted.
Gender: Nationalism promotes exercise rehabilitation for male World War II veterans.
Gender: Nationalism and wartime Materialism particularly promote exercise for women's productivity.
Gender: Patriarchy and Materialism promote women's figure consciousness, but this idea is less apparent during World War II.
Gender: Biomedicalization and exercise for health less apparent in women's messages.
Gender: Patriarchy and Biomedicalization promote women's roles as mothers/housewives.
Age and Gender: Biomedicalization with Nationalism changes by promoting vigorous exercise for boys and young men. Biomedicalization regulates, and in some cases strongly deters, exercise for middle-aged and older adults, particularly men.
Class: Biomedicalization continues to promote class-stratified opportunities.
Class: Materialism continues to promote class-stratified opportunities for social support, facilities, and exercise gimmicks.
Class: Intellectual Materialism trivializes exercise as unproductive, low-class labor.
Race: Minorities continue to be made invisible, but segregated Black youth are seen in a physical education magazine promoting nationalism.

Trends 1954-1968
Gender, Age, Class, and Race: Nationalism promotes some exercise for all, but it is still stratified.
Gender: Patriarchy, Materialism, and Biomedicalization promote diet and passive exercise for women.
Gender and Age: Materialism promotes some sports for young women.
Trends, 1954-1968 (Continued)

Gender, Age, and Class: Biomedicalization, Materialism, and Patriarchy promote regulated and commodified exercise for businessmen and executives.
Class: Materialism continues to promote stratified exercise opportunities in social support and commodified exercise gimmicks.
Class: Materialism promotes commodified exercise for a growing middle-class.
Class: Nationalism promotes exercise for all, for national welfare and defense.
Class: Intellectual Materialism against exercise is reduced.
Race and Class: Regulated exercise slowly promoted for young, middle-class Blacks, legitimated by Patriarchy and Materialism.
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