



Is #YogaForEveryone? The idealised flexible bodymind in Instagram yoga posts

K. Alysse Bailey
University of Guelph

Carla Rice
University of Guelph

Melissa Gualtieri
McMaster University

James Gillett
McMaster University

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* on December 2, 2021, available online:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2159676X.2021.2002394>

Recommended citation:

Bailey, K. A., Rice, C., Gualtieri, M., & Gillett, J. (2021). Is #YogaForEveryone? The idealised flexible bodymind in Instagram yoga posts. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2021.2002394>

Is #YogaForEveryone? The idealised flexible bodymind in Instagram yoga posts

Abstract

Research consistently demonstrates that media depictions of “the yogi” are narrowly represented, erasing bodies of difference, and perpetuating an idealised form of yoga. We analysed 257 Instagram posts from the hashtags #YogaForAll and #YogaForEveryone to explore how these hashtags, which seemingly promote an inclusive yoga, are mobilised. Using reflexive thematic analysis and multimodal discourse analysis, we posed the following questions: 1) What discourses and affects circulate in and across these hashtags, and 2) How do seemingly inclusive hashtag constructions constrain and/or expand possibilities of yoga for a diversity of bodyminds? Drawing from post-structuralist and feminist theorising on biopedagogies, flexible bodies, and affect, we explored how yoga Instagram spaces represent a yoga that is ostensibly intended for “all” and “everyone.” Our analysis generated the following themes: Flexible Bodyminds, Yoga as a Commodified Flexible-Aesthetic, Yoga for AbALLe (all-able) Bodies, The Yoga Bod, and Yoga as Promising Happiness. Overall, we confirm that Instagram comprises another medium where biopedagogies, or expert

instructions for living, proliferate and come to “stick” to idealised bodyminds through socially desired discourses (e.g., flexibility) and affects (e.g., happiness). Within these posts, neoliberalised gendered imperatives, such as individual responsabilisation and physical-mental-social-economic flexibility—what we call the flexible bodymind—are packaged as the “happy yogi” and reverberate on a powerful sociocultural platform.

Keywords:

Yoga, social media, biopedagogies, feminist affect theory, flexible bodyminds

Introduction

Media depictions of yoga bodies have been found to span a narrow range of representations (i.e., Cowans 2016; Strings et al. 2019; Vinoski Thomas et al. 2017, 2019) with images of fat, racialised, disabled, low income, and aging yoga bodies nearly non-existent (e.g., Webb et al. 2017). A popular platform where people post about their yoga practice is Instagram, which has an estimated 500 plus million daily users and 95 million photograph or video uploads per day, catapulting it to the fore of the digital world for image- and story-sharing in contemporary anglo-western social media (Aslam 2020). It is also a popular platform where people post and navigate conversations about their embodied selves, health and fitness (Toll and Norman 2021), which tend to map onto, reflect, and extend, though also challenge, broader sociocultural values.

Instagram claims to bring people together regardless of their differences and offer space for users to express their individualities without boundaries—to reflect, according to its “community guidelines,” “our diverse community of cultures, ages, and

beliefs.” Diversity of bodies and bodies of difference can disrupt powerful ideologies within yoga and social media. But does the availability of communication technologies, such as Instagram, enable its users to express themselves differently or comply with existing social norms and ideals? Research, including recent studies published in this journal, demonstrate the latter (e.g., Cowans 2016; Toll and Norman 2021); however, in response to criticisms of mainstream yoga’s exclusive practice and narrow portrayal of yoga bodies, campaigns have been initiated on social media to diversify yoga. Popular hashtags such as #YogaForAll and #YogaForEveryone circulate widely on Instagram ostensibly to encourage more inclusive representations of who can enjoy the practice, potentially challenging dominant yoga discourses and imagery; to date, this representational field has yet to have been examined for its inclusivity claims.

The Emergence of a Neoliberalised Yoga

We briefly outline yoga’s contemporary uptake in the west, exploring how it has become a flexible biopedagogical practice shaped, in part, by gendered, raced, abled, and neoliberalised ideologies and systems. We consider how and why these values “stick,” building on gaps in biopedagogy theory to understand the affects (desire, joy, happiness) circulating around and through flexible bodies (and minds) that account for their appeal.

Postural yoga, the dominant form in the west comprised of mostly physical postures and exercises, became popular in North America in the first half of the twentieth century (Page 2016). Through its encounter with neo-colonial and neo-market forces, the practice is believed to be at least partially shaped by neoliberal ideologies

(Godrej 2017). For instance, postural yoga joins other popular body practices (e.g., keto diets, HIIT fitness regimes) that promote health by emphasising the *responsibilisation* of individuals, or the transfer of responsibility from higher authorities to individuals who are “called on” to take action to manage their wellness and fitness (Rose 2007).

Responsibilisation is particularly evident in the field of health because liberal humanism is anchored in the belief that our health is the direct result of our moral choices (Godrej 2017). The shift in technologies of government to technologies of the self (Foucault 1998) in neoliberal regimes involves an emphasis on individuals managing their affairs, including health, through careful self-investment and self-optimisation (Rose 2007). Here, new technologies of governance extend the larger apparatus of government (institutional policies, juridical and legislative regimes) to reach into/shape individuals’ modes of self-governance, becoming “technologies of the self.”

Contemporary yoga praxis, shaped as it is through uneven power and hyper-individualisation that mark the neoliberal neocolonial present, can be seen as an example of what Foucault calls “technologies of the self,” or practices that “permit individuals to effect . . . operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality” (1998, 8). Valerie Harwood (2009) and other critical education, sport, and embodiment scholars call these technologies *biopedagogies*—the moralising information, advice, and instruction about bodies, minds, and health that function to control people through affects of praise and shame alongside

discourses of “expert knowledge” to urge conformity to physical and mental norms (Rice 2014, 2015, 2018; Rice et al. 2015; Wright 2009).

Biopedagogies reproduce what critical medical sociologists (Crawford 1980; Zola 1977) have called “healthism” (see Turrini 2015 for a genealogy of the concept), a mechanism of discrimination that situates solutions to the problem of ill-health squarely in the individual by presenting a particular ideal of healthy bodies and lives as a moral imperative that all citizen-subjects need to achieve or risk stigmatization in failing to do so. Healthism operates as “a form of medicalization” (Crawford 1980, 381) that spreads medical logics into all spheres of social life, thus depoliticising and reframing health problems in Foucauldian disciplinary terms as lifestyle problems that can be managed mainly through individual effort. In neoliberal, healthist contexts, those inhabiting bodies coded as fit (typically also non-disabled, thin, white and affluent), who are presumed to live healthy lives, become “good citizens” who reap socio-economic rewards for taking personal responsibility for health following the guidance of public health authorities; in contrast, those coded as unfit (oftentimes also fat, disabled and racialised), who presumably adopt unhealthy lifestyles, become “failed citizens” whose inability to take personal responsibility for health explains and even justifies their discrimination (Chandler and Rice 2013; Friedman et al. 2019; Rice and Chandler 2020).

Harwood develops the construct of biopedagogy to explain the widespread embrace of healthist values by extending Bernstein’s “totally pedagogised society” (2001, 365), in which individuals “are shaped into hyperflexible learners” who become subject to systems of control through instruction (Rice et al. 2018, 666). She also builds

on Foucault's (1984) *biopower*, where she considers how governance in contemporary liberal democracies occurs, in large part, through practices of body- and self-regulation that enable individuals to present themselves as intelligible subjects and worthy citizens. Biopedagogies proliferate across many pedagogical sites—places that engage flexible subjects in teaching and learning about healthy, admired, and valued bodies (e.g., magazines, billboards, clinics, households, television, websites; Harwood 2009; LaMarre, et al. 2017; e.g., Instagram; LaMarre and Rice 2017; and Facebook; e.g., Rice and Chandler 2020). Information about postural yoga, as it is taken up on Instagram, acts as a powerful source of biopedagogies where flexible learners consume information to discipline their bodies and achieve healthist bodily-behavioural norms. Harwood describes online health culture as a “concealed pedagogical practice of biopower” (2009, 21) that generates and disseminates biopedagogies in a multidirectional flow of information, advice, and instruction.

On Instagram, users post within their networks and information is instantly distributed in an active, participatory, multidirectional exchange (Hays et al. 2015); in this user content-generated space, digital information operates as a “public pedagogy” (Giroux 2004) or realm for extending institutional and symbolic power through teaching and learning about healthy bodies and health-seeking behaviours in ways that monitor and shape (e.g., Couture 2021) social understandings of gendered and abled bodies, their capabilities, and health (Camacho-Miñano et al. 2019; Rice and Chandler 2020). This is indicative of how power operates in neoliberal, turbo-capitalist, post-feminist political economies that conflate freedom with having the income needed to choose

from a range of commodities (e.g., products and practices to achieve a desired body) or, in the age of influencers, to turn one's bodily being and "lifestyle" into a commodity that corporations believe followers will want (e.g., using influencers to sell embodied practices and products that promise to help follower-buyers attain desired bodies and lives). Here, governance occurs at a distance via, for example, the multiple social media users who follow popular yoga practitioners who, in turn, commodify their own embodiment of the flexible-aesthetic ideal as a profitable-pleasurable practice by agreeing to market products, thereby continuing to reward the already over-privileged and to blame the discriminated-against for their oppression. Like the fitness industry at large, Instagram is a site for selling and promoting "health," where people are "taught" they can "easily" change their behaviour, body, and life situation, and consume health and happiness (Giroux 2004).

Feminist anthropologist Emily Martin extends the idea of the flexible learner subject to flexible biopedagogies to the body itself through her work on *flexible bodies*. Martin (1994) theorises how models of the body come to inhere in models of society (and vice versa) by tracing dramatic changes in American understandings of health and immunity since the 1940s and the profound implications of these changes for the ways subjects work, the types of work and workers that employers value, and for the conditions under which workers have access to healthcare.

By exploring the operations of flexibility across diverse contexts (e.g., medicine, media), she observes an increasing premium being placed on flexibility that she sees as interlocked with our late capitalist economic system of flexible accumulation and

neoliberal politics. Martin demonstrates that flexibility has become a valued commodity in westernised societies where health is rated according to immune system flexibility and contemporary business practices and experiential learning promote the idea that the most valuable workers (and citizens) are flexible and adaptable. Although the flexible bodied and minded worker-citizen may seem like a liberating ideal, Martin (1994) stresses that this new standard is constraining since citizens instructed to strive for flexibility cannot stop moving or show discontent with life or work, which she warns is a move towards a new Social Darwinism. We posit that Instagram is a powerful biopedagogical platform where users— influencers and followers—teach and learn about (adopting, enacting) the cultural premium placed on hyperflexible bodies.

Flexibility in postural yoga can be understood as operating in a literal and symbolic way. In a literal sense, there is a plethora of media images featuring flexible yogis doing advanced postures (e.g., Webb et al. 2017) and symbolically, these flexible bodies are coded as economically privileged, beautiful, and worthy. For example, “the yogi” in popular media portrayals is often hyperflexible (and white, thin, and non-disabled), wearing expensive form-fitting fitness apparel to visually show muscle tone and length, and signal socio-economic advantages (e.g., Strings et al. 2019; Vinoski Thomas et al. 2017). The narrow depiction of the yogi erases other embodiments or casts them as non-normative (and potentially economically-disadvantaged), delimiting the possibilities of yoga and instead re-centering the normative.

The Affects of Biopedagogies and Flexible Bodies

How do biopedagogies that encourage/urge flexible bodies get taken up? While biopedagogical theory suggests that expert discourses mobilise certain emotions (praise, shame) to enlist people's conformity, absent from this theorising is any sense of how this might occur. Lupton (2013) argues that health promotion discourses encouraging weight loss do not always "work" given that many people ignore, resist, and fail at expert instructions. We posit that expert and user-generated knowledge claims come to "stick" to certain bodies through their tethering to what affect theorist Sara Ahmed (2004) calls *affective economies*: these are the affective dimensions of social discourses and relations, the emotional and sensorial flows that circulate across, within, and between individual and social bodies and discourses to shape individuals' embodied experiences and inform the meanings they make of people and things. Her analysis helps to explain the non-discursive flows of power in encounters between bodies and across differences, and how emotions, in assigning different values to differently-marked bodies, come to align embodied subjects with certain ideologies and act as their gateways into (re/producing or disrupting) certain power relations in the socio-material world. Mobilising the concept of affective economies, we can begin to make sense of the ways that population regulation and personal discipline interconnect affect's tethering to individual and social bodies, which helps to bolster, regulate, and enhance the life of white, non-disabled, affluent, and normative populations and relegate non-normative bodies to the margins.

For example, Ahmed (2010) explains how happiness imperatives reinscribe, rather than challenge, social norms—where happiness becomes a “good” to be acquired and an “end goal” to achieve. While all of us are instructed to strive for happiness, only the normative are thought to achieve it, which serves to re-marginalise bodies of difference (Chandler and Rice 2013). Another poignant example of how emotions work to uphold the status quo is found in hatred (Ahmed 2004), and specifically fat hatred, which circulates as an affective economy in its flows across, attachments to, and rejection of fat—in food and on bodies (LaMarre et al. 2019). Fat hate may not be a singular emotion, but rather a collection of emotions (disdain, fear, disgust) that have commonality in whose bodies they orient to and what they do to those bodies (Rinaldi et al. 2020). Participants in Rinaldi et al.’s study (2020) experienced hatred directed toward their fatness which circulated in healthcare, on transit, and while exercising. This obstructed their access to social life by rendering these spaces as uncomfortable, unsafe, unwelcoming, and inaccessible.

Within the context of postural yoga, we observe happiness operating to maintain group dominance, proliferated in media as the smiling, white, economically advantaged, hetero, hyperflexible thin woman with no apparent mental illness (e.g., Webb et al. 2017). Strings et al. (2019) note that the white, thin women typically featured on yoga magazine covers are often laughing, and are frequently framed by positive text, where yoga is seen as the route to happiness, “the ‘what’ we aim for...[the] end-in-itself...[the] ends rather than...means” (Ahmed 2010, 26). This suggests that through its affective

flows, yoga might be thought of as a vehicle for reinscribing broader ideals of white, thin, nondisabled feminine embodiment that manifest in North America today.

In a push to expand the possibilities of and access to yoga, campaigns using the popular hashtags #YogaForAll and #YogaForEveryone have emerged on Instagram ostensibly to encourage inclusion of everyone in the practice. We know that social media is a potential tool for underrepresented groups to redress their lack of coverage (e.g., female athletes in golf; Kitching et al. 2021). With this in mind, we posed the following questions: 1) What discourses and affects circulate in and across these hashtags? 2) How do seemingly inclusive hashtag constructions constrain and/or expand possibilities of yoga for a diversity of bodyminds? We use the term *bodyminds* to recognise the indivisible relationship between bodies and minds, and to challenge the ways in which medical and positivist knowledge regimes operate as if the two are dichotomous and distinct (Price 2015; Rice et al. 2020, 2021).

No research to date has examined how these inclusive yoga hashtags mobilise bodyminds discursively and affectively, what the language and comments that frame the images do, and if/how biopedagogies of flexible bodies are extended and/or resisted within these posts. Since from a disability studies vantage, the study of image also entails the study of “blindness, the invisible, the unseen, the unseeable, and the overlooked” (Mitchell 2002, 170) as well as tactile, auditory, haptic, and multi-sensory perception, we understand Instagram media as mixed media—as affecting/informing more than visual perception. From this view, Instagram might be thought of as behaving like other media in engaging all the senses to different degrees and in relying on text

and other signs (e.g., sounds, what is absent) to generate meaning. We chose Instagram because it has catapulted to the fore as an image-sharing platform in social media culture (Aslam 2020). It is also a platform that social media marketing companies have increasingly turned to for marketing products and services relevant to yoga practitioner influencers and their followers. In fact, yoga has become increasingly the most discussed topic on Instagram (Baklanov 2020), and the purchase of yoga equipment has increased dramatically over the last five years (Research & Markets 2020). To build on previous research using a germane platform that houses image and text about yoga, we analysed the hashtags #YogaForAll and #YogaForEveryone on Instagram.

Data Collection and Procedures

We collected data from Instagram over a three-week period in July 2019, pulling publicly available images from a Tuesday morning, Friday evening, and Sunday afternoon, on separate weeks for a breadth of representation. We wanted to capture a snapshot of nearly a month in summer. We began by searching for the hashtag #YogaForAll and #YogaForEveryone, pulling 50 of the most recent posts of each on each day to capture “typical” and current representation, resulting in 300 posts total (consistent with other social media studies; Cowans 2016). We stored screenshots of all the posts in a Word document for analysis. We did an initial search through the posts to delete ones that were not written in English. By the time of analysis, some posts were deleted from users’ accounts, and therefore were not included in analysis. The final data set count included was 257 posts. Since we were using public Instagram posts that had

no reasonable expectation for privacy, our University ethics board did not require a review of our study. Regardless, we chose to not reveal users' Instagram handles or images to draw greater attention to the actions of the images, discourses, and affects than to those of individuals, and to invite reflection on the ways that we (researchers and readers) may be implicated in the uptake and spread of these values.

Data Analysis

Overall, we approached analysis from a post-structuralist lens, understanding knowledge and reality as socially shaped through discourse and practice (e.g., Jones et al. 2014). This approach aligns well with Braun and Clarke's (2019) reflexive thematic analysis, which we used in combination with multimodal discourse analysis (Machin and Mayr 2012) to understand the data. In recent publications, Braun and Clarke (2020) argue for new, theoretically rich mashups of reflexive thematic analysis that take a critical approach to interpretation (e.g., discourse analysis); and they note (2021) that although reflexive thematic analysis may not offer tools for a detailed discourse analytic, when implemented with poststructuralism, reflexive thematic analysis allows for pattern-based discourse analysis. Furthermore, to enhance the rigour of our analysis, we drew on theory (i.e., biopedagogies; Harwood 2009; flexible bodies; Martin 1994; and affect; Ahmed 2004, 2010) to develop a rich understanding of the data, rather than merely a surface-level distance-oriented description (Braun and Clarke 2020).

We began by generating a reflexive thematic analysis through identifying and categorising the image and textual content of the posts gathered. The third author familiarised herself with the data by looking over the images and videos and reading the

captions and comments (Braun and Clarke 2006); she then proceeded with an initial inductive analysis of the posts that described image content and composition, hashtags used, number of comments and likes, and other general patterns operating across posts (i.e., use of images, videos, captions, and comments). From there, the first and third authors sorted posts into preliminary themes based on the coded commonalities and differences that the third author found across text and images. The researchers completed this stage of analysis through weekly meetings wherein they discussed possible theme names and content. The first author presented this analysis to the second and fourth authors for discussion and theory generation and application.

The coming together of text and image creates a multimodal text, thus we adopted a multimodal discourse analysis (Machin and Mayr 2012) to search for meaning in image captions, hashtags, images and videos, as well as in interactions among images, videos, and texts. This approach added another layer to our analysis as we searched for connotative meanings conveyed in images and associated text. This included finding contradictions or disconnections between modes of data, and recurring discourses with inferred meaning across the hashtags.

Findings

Flexible Bodyminds

Many Instagram posts (102 out of 257) from both hashtags demonstrated advanced forms of body flexibility; and yogis often paired these with the hashtag #Flexible. Images of advanced range of motion at the joints from splits to backbends

dominated the feed. Text descriptions reinforced that flexibility is the goal of “perfect” postural yoga practice. This finding may seem unremarkable since most yoga practitioners use yoga to improve flexibility (Ipsos Public Affairs 2016); however, drawing from Martin’s (1994) theorising on flexible bodies, we understand flexibility within the context of yoga posts as a metaphor for expectations and evaluations placed on systems and subjectivities in the current neoliberal political climate. Within the majority of posts, flexibility was not only represented visually in a literal sense through advanced demonstration of muscles lengthening, but symbolically in a broader political way through clear distinctions about who *does* and *does not* have a flexible bodymind. Predominantly represented were white, presumably able-bodied, female-coded bodies, with text describing and/or implying a “happy mind,” and physically, subjectively, and metaphorically demonstrating hyper-flexibility. This flexible bodymind oriented to the neoliberalised gendered bodymind, represented with white skin, a thin toned body, flexible muscles, and a happy, you-can-do-it-if-you-set-your-mind-to-it demeanor.



Furthermore, we observed ideals of white feminine embodiment being reified through the absence of fat and racialized Others: only 10 posts depicted fat, thick or plus-sized persons and 25 posts featured visibly racialised ones. Of the few images of fat, thick, and/or racialised people posted, none appeared to be professionally shot; none posed in advanced/hyperflexible posture; none explicitly mentioned positive emotions such as happiness; and significantly, some were taken from behind, thus emphasizing the subject’s “large” buttocks (an attribute that has been reclaimed by anglo-African cultures in response to its white supremacist coding as sign of black female

deviance and abnormal femininity; Strings 2019); and all had few likes (<30) and fewer comments (<5). For these reasons, we see *flexible bodyminds* as an overarching theme, and as such, weave it throughout the other themes delineated below.

Yoga as a Commodified “Flexible-Aesthetic”

Another significant finding was that users engaged in staging an aesthetically pleasing image, which oftentimes appeared to be professionally captured. Common images included forward folds (i.e., stretching the back of the legs), middle splits (i.e., leg split variation), split handstands (i.e., handstand with legs in aerial splits), intricate inversions with twisted legs (i.e., upside down poses), or advanced backbends accompanied by an ocean-wave or sunset background. On close examination of captions and comments, we observed physique-salient yoga apparel being advertised, and yoga companies explicitly recruiting users, which we speculate to be to model and sell company brands. Indeed, advertisements for companies such as Alo Yoga, an expensive yoga apparel brand, were evident with some users thanking their “generous sponsors.” In some posts, readers interacted by praising the pictured individuals for “a beautiful backbend” or for “mak[ing] it look so easy, and SO BEAUTIFUL!!”, commenting with affect-laden text such as, “Lovable flexibility,” “Gorgeous fold,” and “Stunning capture.”

These images reflect a white, westernised, seemingly affluent, consumerist flexible-aesthetic. For example, within a post featuring a young white woman doing a dancer’s pose on what appears to be the edge of a cliff (a locale perhaps requiring travel time and funds), a motivation-based company comments, “Yay! 🙌 We really like

your motivated Instagram pictures  and we were wondering if you are interested in modeling our products ". Another example features a white woman on her balcony doing an advanced split backbend variation, offering the quote: "Be so committed to what's best for your heart that you're willing to sit through the most uncomfortable pain of growth & change, that you refuse to accept anything less than complete love & alignment." Along with this post is a comment by a representative from a yoga company advertising their yoga therapy program to help individuals manage anxiety and depression.

Such aesthetically pleasing posts of normative bodies have the farthest reach, garnering "like" counts upwards of 6500 and attracting the most attention from yoga industry representatives. Thus, praise, reward, and even "love" is directed toward flexible, aesthetic, normative yoga posts. These posts are also frequently coupled with other hashtags such as #Flexible #YogaGoals, #YogaStrong, #YogiOfInstagram, #YogaJourney, and #YogaInspiration. In sum, we found that the most commonplace and celebrated representations of bodies reflect ideals of whiteness, thinness, economic buoyancy, hyper-flexibility, and femininity.

Yoga for abALLe (all-able) Bodies

Exploration of interactions between the textual data and images demonstrates that both hashtags convey incongruent and inconsistent messaging about yoga being for "all" bodies. For example, we found posts captioned as "easy yoga sequence for beginners" and "flying splits in just 10 seconds" with images of yoga sequences being described as for "everyone"; however, pictured are slim, hyper-flexible, white,

presumably female bodies doing advanced forward folds, lunges, and arm balances. Thus, although such posts proclaim that “anyone” can and ought to incorporate yoga, they privilege the flexible able-bodied. In particularly blatant examples, advanced yoga practitioners use the hashtags #YogaTutorial, #YogaTips, and #YogaForBeginners even as they feature images of a white, thin, seemingly non-disabled woman (i.e., themselves) seamlessly in middle splits on a balcony or in a headstand on a beach. In another example, a white woman posted a video that she describes as a tutorial on completing a “basic yoga challenge.” Yet this “basic” sequence involves an advanced forward fold, followed by a knee bend, roll onto the back while feet extend over head and touch the floor, and a roll back to the front of the mat returning to a stand. Not only does the sequence involve advanced core strength but it also requires hamstring flexibility and advanced leg balance.

In another post, the caption advertises a new female instructor who “can make anyone feel comfortable on the mat.” This information is paired with a black and white image of a white thin woman holding an advanced side arm balance with her eye gaze looking directly into the camera. The photograph centres her arm muscles, which are flexed and visible and challenge the viewer to join a militaristic bootcamp-like program through an intimidating eye-gaze coupled with an advanced yoga pose. Although the author of the text may intend to attract a diversely-embodied audience, reading “Everyone’s body is made differently, therefore each yoga pose is different for each person,” the image speaks to and recruits a militaristic (e.g., firm, toned, flexible) body-

type by using an intimidating photograph that emphasises muscle strength to seemingly encourage viewers to “rise to the challenge.”

In one of the five posts that feature both racial and mobility diversity, a racialised woman of size is depicted in what does not appear to be a professionally-taken image sitting in what might be a hospital wheelchair located in a rehabilitative or medical clinic. She smiles as she balances a yoga block on her head. This and similar posts, when analysed alongside the posts described above, seem to sort bodies into two categories—those that are flexible, able, and beautiful (and white, thin, healthy, and physically/socially/economically mobile) and those that are not (inflexible, ill, unhealthy, fat, immobile, disabled, non-white). Although these posts mobilise discourses that explicitly nod to beginners or bodies of difference, the images often highlight able-bodied, hyper-flexible, affluent, lean, and usually white, women. The contradictions between the message and visual image, and between denotative and connotative meanings of the captions and comments remain unresolved. Together, the videos and images of idealised bodies paired with claims of “basic” or “beginner yoga” send a powerful message about who postural yoga is for (i.e., able-bodies) and *not* for, through absenting and demeaning racialised, fat, and disabled bodies that are textually and visually positioned as Other and undesirable.

Getting the Alignment Just Right

A typical westernised fixation in yoga is with the alignment of the body in poses, which tends to privilege a narrowly defined body-type (Page 2016). Yoga teacher trainings dedicate hours of curricula instructing students on how to master the “proper”

alignment of poses, and how to provide cues during classes to encourage the same in students. Both hashtags demonstrate posts keen to provide information about the alignment of poses without considering how an apparent “universal” alignment cannot apply to everybody. One user posted an image with four different quadrants to denote the “correct” and “incorrect” ways of doing half-moon, a standing leg balance variation. The first quadrant depicts a thin white woman in a black and white photograph with red circles drawn around certain body parts and movements, and an “X” to indicate where her alignments are “wrong.” These images are represented by a white thin abled woman who visually illustrates the “wrong” variation as having a “weak ankle” that is not engaged, a hand and foot “too close together,” and with her eye gaze (supposedly incorrectly) downward. In contrast, the other three quadrants use colour photographs, green circles, and check marks to indicate that poses are done “correctly.” The same woman, now in “correct” variation, has her “hand vibrant,” “arm strong,” “foot flexed,” and eye-gaze looking up. This neglects the fact that poses can be self-tailored and not always universal. The connotation here is that there is a “right” and a “wrong” way to be and move in a body, in a practice that is supposed to honour all ways of being and moving using the hashtag #YogaForAll.

In a few posted videos, the user shows the viewer how to do a postural sequence. For example, in one, the user demonstrates a lunge, chair pose, and chaturanga (similar to a push-up) flow. While sequencing through these postures, the user meticulously examines their form and alignment in each phase of movement before proceeding to the next pose. Not only is the viewer encouraged to mirror this

movement precisely, but also methodically match it with breath (inhale versus exhale) and placement of each body part. This fixation on body alignment and movement precision perpetuates the erroneous assumption that one way of moving is correct and can be applied to all bodies, when really it is the standard of the flexible body that is being privileged.

The Yoga Bod

This fourth theme draws on the cultural drive to achieve a body ideal. It circulates in both hashtags through the discourse of the “yoga body” or “yoga bod,” and references and advocates for a disciplinary regime involving regular commitment to physical postures. Approximately 63 posts explicitly reference this discourse within their hashtags or photos. A frequent trend of such posts includes brief yoga sequences intended to provide what users pitch as “easy” ways to lose weight and improve appearance. For instance, one post explicitly advertised a weight-loss strategy, its caption reading, “20-minute yoga workout for weight loss” and its image depicting a tall, thin, white woman wearing white and black form-fitting yoga apparel posing in advanced sequences to demonstrate her high body flexibility and strength. Comments included sentiments of gratitude for providing such a “simple” and “easy” weight-loss workout, and queries about poses to also gain weight. Another post consisted of a woman on a beach doing a headstand with twisted legs coupled with the hashtags #YogaStrong #YogaFit #BeachBody #BeachReady. The caption read,

Summer is here and time to get our bodies outdoors to enjoy the sun. Keeping up a yoga practise will ensure your body is fit and healthy inside and out for sports,

holidays and playtime! Yoga will make your arms and upper body supple and strong to look good and feel great, oh and to do headstands 🙏😊😊 Remember to check the website for new blog about building strength through yoga 😊

Whether they were seeking to lose or gain weight, users engaged in conversations about disciplining their bodies through the practice of yoga in order to achieve a certain size and shape. This sentiment was commonly paired with strategies for achieving optimal health, such as following a vegan diet to “cleanse” and “detox” the body, thus conflating thinness and ableness with health status. The “yoga body” portrayed in these posts was predominantly white skinned, thin (or using yoga to lose weight), hyper-feminine (e.g., young, long tidy hair, form fitting clothes, make-up, smooth skin), nondisabled, and flexible. This yoga trend also reifies dominant notions about who has a flexible body (young white thin women) and who does not (bodies of difference) where white beauty is constructed through the devaluing of fatness (e.g., the predominant push for weight-loss), and absence of disabled and racialized Others (who were rarely featured). This is coupled with the illusion that the “yoga body” is not only achievable but easily so through a few simple hours dedicated to a handful of advanced yoga postures that “beginners” can do. Postings of these images and textual messages might reveal peoples’ negotiations with the mainstream biopedagogies of “how to be healthy and fit,” encouraging a “yoga bod” among users and conflating it with “a healthy body.”

Yoga as Promising Happiness

Another common trend we found in posts is the idea that disciplining the body through physical posture and flexibility training will also discipline and improve the mind. This theme was present in 82 posts; for example, some captions encouraged people to eliminate negative emotions and thoughts and paired this push with the promise that yoga would bring health and happiness, thus reproducing a rhetoric that both simplifies mental health and spreads sanism (i.e., discrimination against people with lived experience in mental healthcare systems or institutions). Some posts were in scenic, ostensibly luxury travel destinations. For example, one post was of a thin white woman on a large boat looking out across the water in Spain, with the caption reading, “yoga has played a big part in helping me follow my dreams. Keeping my mental and physical health at an all time high.” What is not acknowledged in the post is the relationship between economic privilege (demonstrated by the boat and financial resources to travel) and mental health (e.g., Muntaner et al. 2007). Instead, solely postural yoga is credited for mental health gains.

Another post portrays a young woman doing front splits in what appears to be a yoga studio alongside a caption that reads, “respect your body and your mind will be aligned with it. I represent happy, healthy, strong woman.” Taken together, this image and text conflate the hyper-flexible body (represented visually) with the hyper-flexible mind (represented by the caption). In these posts, we surface the hidden message that only the flexible can experience yogic liberation and self-love, and that one achieves such flexibility through practising disciplinary techniques designed to sculpt a leaner,

more attractive (flexible) body, which equates metaphorically with a (more flexible) happier mood. Another post was advertising a yoga business called “Shiny Happy Yoga” with the tag line, “show up and shine” and the user’s account description reading, “chooser of happiness”—suggesting that happiness is always and only ever a choice.

Another post with only text reads, “keep your behaviour positive, because your behaviour becomes YOUR HABIT #SelfLove” alongside the following caption, “We often tend to give up good habits for convenience living. Raw Food will help you to stay on track, happy body will make happy mind which then promotes good health and overall happiness.” This user promotes yoga and a raw food diet in the pursuit of happiness—associating a disciplined body through exercise and diet with a disciplined mind. Implied in these posts is the idea that mental flexibility is the root to achieving a healthy, happy mental state. Happiness is tethered to and circulates in conjunction with normative ideologies embedded in ageist, ableist, and sanist rhetoric. For instance, one user states in a post, “Did you know? When you sleep naked regularly, improves blood circulation, which is good for your heart and muscles. The quality of sleep you’ll enjoy also increases the release of growth hormone, melatonin, both of which have anti-aging properties.” This text is accompanied by an illustration of a young, thin, white, smiling woman who delicately sleeps on a bed of flowers. Although on the surface images like these seem harmless, they are discursively positioned as conflating happiness, youngness, and able-bodiedness in the social imagination, and reflect a white, westernised, consumerist aesthetic, which orients subjects toward desiring these bodyminds and erasing or sidelining and devaluing diversity and difference.

Discussion

This multi-modal discourse and reflexive thematic analysis study explored Instagram users' engagement with the hashtags #YogaForAll and #YogaForEveryone. Across our mixed media dataset, users' images, videos, captions, comments and associated affects often exemplified contradictions between a yoga intended for "everyone" and a very narrow representation of the yoga practitioner, teacher, and community (consistent with previous research; e.g., Cowans 2016). Predominating in these spheres were images of, and textual directions on how to achieve, flexibility. Martin's (1994) construct of the flexible body explains how human value has become increasingly associated with flexibility and adaptability as a result of intensifying neoliberal forces that place a premium on these capacities in our progressively disruptive and precarious economic climate. This focus on individual hyper-flexibility responsabilises workers (and citizens) to continually adapt and change to fit the vicissitudes of markets (and governance systems) whilst maximising profits (and cutting taxes for the wealthy and services for all) by requiring less of less of business (and state interests) to give back to workers (or citizens). We expand this idea within the context of yoga social media posts, where flexibility was captured in aesthetically pleasing and professionally clever ways, denoting who yoga is for and who is the true "expert" in yoga.

In this study, we found Instagram to be used as a biopedagogical and affective-laden platform, where conversation, instructions, and affects (happiness, love, praise, joy) associated with how to achieve the flexible body were shared, exchanged, and

rewarded. This mirrors how power operates in western, neoliberal, capitalist countries that govern at a distance via recruitment of multiple social media users into values of primary benefit to neoliberal political economies that continue to reward the already over-privileged and blame the discriminated-against for the oppressions they face—all under the guise of official discourses promoting freedom, choice, and equality. Instagram is a site for selling and promoting “health,” where people can, through (the illusion of) behavioural change and personal choice, consume health and happiness. Instagram operates as an affective biopedagogical assemblage that can excite or disturb (Leahy and Malins 2015).

We observed the disciplining of individual bodies as an avenue through which influencers and users, aided and abetted by marketers, come together to regulate the body politic. Affect theory not only helps to explain both *why* individuals want to discipline their bodies (through the attachment of positive affects to bodies and behaviours coded as valuable) but also *how* populations, or segments of populations (e.g., young white women) come together through their specific identifications to desire collectively a certain flexible-aesthetic (i.e., theme two) and to participate collectively in regulating group values and norms. This is aided, in part, through the marketisation of content created by influencers and corporations on social media, which invites influencers, through financial incentive, to embody flexible ideals and promote positive messages about yoga as a route to achieving a flexible bodymind and a happy life.

Affect theory thus explains how disciplining bodies and regulating populations are not distinct or separate registers at which power operates; rather, these modes of

governance interconnect complexly through the mobilisation of discourse and circulation of affect across individual and social bodies. This was illustrated in theme four, where we found that Instagram creates an imagined community of yoga practitioner-influencers and followers who each participate in regulating the collective through influencers' broadcasting of their successful disciplinary practices, and users' following of content promising to deliver on culturally valued ways of looking and moving. In this way, yoga hashtag communities spread a desire for yoga (through the mantra that yoga is for everyone) whilst continuing to centre and privilege the young, thin, white, non-disabled, and flexible.

Furthermore, we observed excitement towards the normative posts that were seemingly professionally staged and had high 'like' counts and comments, but not the non-normative posts wherein bodies were situated in clinics, without photograph filters, captured in dim lighting, with little user interaction. We also observed the conspicuous absence of minoritized differences (e.g., BIPOC, 2SLGBTQI and disabled people), where meaning assigned to what was present lent meaning to what was absent by its mere absence.

Webb et al. (2019) note that Instagram is powerful in its reach, function, and effect to entice users into perpetual inundation and comparison with images of ordinary peers who reflect idealised standards. In our study, we found a similar trend, where normatively embodied users often posted idealised and aesthetically pleasing images of themselves—content that could rival magazine advertisements. Images often represented culturally desired ways of living and being through the propagation of the

flexible bodymind. Here, the flexible bodymind is represented as bodies demonstrating the widest range of motion and minds that can easily adapt, learn, and alter patterns of thinking and feeling, presenting an unrealistic vision of a laughing, smiling, and negative-affect-free person, for whom the imperative for happiness is reproduced and reinforced (Ahmed 2010).

The association of yoga with happiness can be attributed to what Ahmed (2010) calls the “Happiness Turn” or the popularisation of self-help with its emphasis on the search for happiness. From Ahmed, we might further think about what happiness does in these social media posts. According to her, “we have a responsibility for our own happiness insofar as promoting our own happiness is what enables us to increase other people’s happiness” (2010, 9). Instagram representations perpetuate the idea that happiness is not only an individual choice but also a social responsibility—in other words, that yogis must choose happiness in order to uphold that “right” for others within the yoga community. This reinforces the idea that one can simply acquire happiness through body- and self-work and that it is the individual’s responsibility to do so to maintain the health and wellbeing of the social body. These users participate in preserving what feminist theorists (e.g., Harwood 2009; Wright 2009) call biopedagogies through the affective “stick” and promise of happiness in yoga, where individuals are enjoined to conform with mental and physical norms (e.g., flexibility) as fundamentals for living productive and worthwhile lives (Ahmed 2010; Rice 2014, 2015; Wright 2009). This was done by entering and contributing to conversations about fitness and health that largely reproduce healthism rhetoric packaged as a yoga lifestyle that

brings happiness through carefully controlled behaviour. Here, happiness is not solely a personal responsibility, but also “a means to an end, as well as an end” (Ahmed 2010, 10).

According to Ahmed, in order to feel this contentment, we must *do* things that allow us to feel happy at all times. Discourses appealing to “good behaviour” and “good habits” as a means of generating “good character” and eliminating “negative thoughts and emotions” circulated across these posts and were packaged as ways to live a “happy life” (Ahmed 2010, 9), mirroring what Crawford (1980) and Zola (1976) theorise as medicalisation of everyday life: where attitudes, behaviours, and emotions are the “symptoms” that need attention, rather than systemic health inequity, thereby deflecting responsibility from government to individual in order to justify discrimination (Turrini 2015). Overall, emotional distress was posited as the antithesis of a true happy yogi who is imagined as having full control over their life.

Ahmed (2010) notes that happiness has become an ingroup versus outgroup quality, where you either have it or not. Who possesses this privilege, and who does it banish? Fat studies scholars have underscored how happiness has been repeatedly (and erroneously) conflated with thinness (e.g., Farrell 2011) and whiteness (Strings 2019), perpetuating fatphobia and racism. Sabrina Strings (2019) traces the racial origin of the fear of fat, outlining how the contemporary ideal of slenderness is racialised and racist, where fatphobia is not about health, but rather a means to validate, whilst concealing, racial prejudice. We observe this prejudice operating in the posts through

the absence of racialised and fat/thick or plus-sized people, and the push for weight loss.

Within postural yoga represented on social media, we also observe affect operating in ways that reproduce group dominance, by “sticking” biopedagogies to economically and politically “ideal” bodies through socially desired discourses, affects, and new hegemonic feminine sensibilities for mental health (Chandler and Rice 2013). This new hegemonic femininity—a fit, flexible, happy, can-do, post-feminist femininity—is shaped both by old patriarchal discourses that devalue flesh and especially fatness as feminine and non-white (against a white male bodily self-mastering subject) and by new post-feminist discourses that mobilise feminist values to construct women as self-made consumers and entrepreneurs, and frame their participation in body projects (e.g., postural yoga) as choice, a route to success, and something to desire (Riley et al. 2017). The women who demonstrate their superiority are rewarded by high “like” counts, a large follower base, and economic rewards such as recruitment by yoga companies with generous sponsorship.

However, all that glitters is not gold. We observe a parallel between Martin’s (1994) flexible body construct, as demonstrated on yoga social media posts, and its operations in the material conditions of working yogis. In the last two decades, yoga teaching as a career choice has boomed in North America. Recent data show that there are two people in training to become a yoga teacher for every single currently active teacher; many yoga teachers supplement their full-time day-jobs with teaching yoga classes part-time; and only 29% teach yoga as their primary source of income (Ipsos

Public Affairs 2016). Further, yoga teachers are often employed as independent contractors or detached workers with employment connections to several studios that employ them simultaneously (Ipsos Public Affairs 2016). This type of precarious employment demands a flexible work ethic, and willingness to juggle multiple placements at once. A flexible yoga instructor and practitioner, as it is manifested symbolically on Instagram, mirrors the hyper-neoliberal requirements of workers in other precarious fitness and wellness industries, which are known for lacking racial diversity and excluding disability (Harvey et al. 2014).

From a disability studies perspective, the mobilisation of seemingly inclusive language such as “all” and “everyone” works to erase disability, especially within contemporary westernised social contexts that continue to equate disabled bodyminds with lack and deficit (Hamraie 2016). Prior to the rise of discourses of “universal” and “inclusive” design in the early 2000s that erased disability, designers and architects attempted to build diverse spaces, technologies, and practices explicitly for advancing accessibility as a means to achieving disability rights. With the invention of “universal design” (which was originally conceived by a disabled architect as a way of getting non-disabled professionals interested in design for disability) and its adoption of the seemingly inclusive language “all” and “everyone,” the design field moved away from the politicised work of disabled designer-activists, and from the notion of disability as a marginalised identity. The hashtags #YogaForAll and #YogaForEveryone follow this shift in mobilising disability-neutral language that implies that the yoga on offer can work for everyone, even as the approach being promoted ignores human diversity and fails to

present practises for non-normative embodiments, ultimately overlooking the systems that marginalise disability and difference.

Circulated in the yoga posts in this study were textual instructions of alignment and cues that “apply to everyone” – when these images and instructions were neither basic nor widely applicable, but instead advanced a normative type, the flexible bodymind. Knoll (2009) urges teachers and instructors to examine and challenge both the ways in which learning environments fit only certain raced, gendered, and classed learners and also how the practices structuring these spaces privilege certain types of (non-disabled) bodyminds. This includes yoga spaces, both in-person and online, which consistently support white, heteronormative, cisgender, normatively minded, able-bodies (Page et al. 2016). As far back as 1984, feminist theorist and writer Audre Lorde (589) recognised the power of the “mythical norm”: the “thin, white, male, young, heterosexual, Christian and financially secure” individual. Perpetuation of a universal body alignment in yoga poses reifies that norm, by implicitly centering it through means of performative instructional teaching practices.

We posit that non-normative posts which circulate through difference-affirming hashtags, such as hashtag #FatYoga, #DecolonizedYoga, #CripYoga, and #AccessibleYoga, may garner more explicitly feminist, activist, and anti-capitalist posts than the ambiguous and slippery #YogaForAll or #YogaForEveryone. These spheres may subscribe to an unapologetic promotion of bodymind difference as sources of pride in identity and culture through the reclamation of words (e.g., fat; Wright 2009).

Conclusion

To conclude, we confirm that Instagram is a powerful medium where biopedagogies proliferate and come to “stick” to idealised bodyminds through socially desired discourses and affects. Within these posts, neoliberalised imperatives, such as responsabilisation and the flexible bodymind—are packaged as the “happy yogi,” and reverberate on a powerful biopedagogical apparatus that erases fat, disabled, and racialized Others.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest reported by the authors.

Funding

K. Alysse Bailey was supported in part by funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

References

- Ahmed, S. 2010. *The promise of happiness*. Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. 2004. *The cultural politics of emotion*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Aslam, S. 2020. *Instagram by the numbers: Stats, demographics and fun facts*.
Retrieved January 13, 2021, from <https://www.omnicoreagency.com/instagram-statistics/>
- Bernstein, B. 2001. From pedagogies to knowledges. In A. Morais, I. Neves, B. Davies and H. Daniels (Eds.), *Towards a sociology of pedagogy: The contribution of Basil Bernstein to research* (pp. 363–368). Peter Lang.
- Baklanov, N. 2020. What topics are rapidly growing on Instagram and which ones are losing the followers' attention? April 9. Hype Auditor.
<https://hypeauditor.com/blog/what-topics-are-growing-fast-on-instagram-and-what-topicsbecome-uninteresting-and-lose-followers/>
- Braun, V., and Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., and Clarke, V. 2019. Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4): 589-597.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
- Braun, V., and Clarke, V. 2020. One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis?. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 1-25.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. 2021. Can I use TA? Should I use TA? Should I not use TA? Comparing reflexive thematic analysis and other pattern-based qualitative analytic approaches. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 21(1): 37-47.

Chandler, E., and Rice, C. 2013. Alterity in/of happiness: The radical possibilities of unruly bodies. *Health, Culture and Society*, 5(1): 230-248.

<http://hcs.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/hcs/article/view/146>

Couture, J. 2021. Reflections from the 'Strava-sphere': Kudos, community, and (self)surveillance on a social network for athletes. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 13(1): 184–200.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2020.1836514>

Cowans, S. 2016. Yoga on Instagram: Disseminating or destroying traditional yogic principles? *Elon Journal*, 7, 33-43.

Crawford, R. (1980). Healthism and the medicalization of everyday life. *International Journal of Health Services*, 10(3): 365-388.

Farrell, A. E. (2011). *Fat shame: Stigma and the fat body in American culture*. NYU Press.

Foucault, M. 1984. Biopower. In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (pp. 258-289). Pantheon.

Foucault, M. 1998. Technologies of the self. In L. Martin, H. Gutman, and P. Hutton (Eds.), *Technologies of the self: A seminar with Michel Foucault* (pp. 16-49).

University of Massachusetts Press.

Friedman, M., Rice, C., and Rinaldi, J. Eds. 2019. *Thickening fat: Fat bodies, intersectionality and social justice*. Routledge.

Giroux, H. 2004. Cultural studies, public pedagogy, and the responsibility of intellectuals. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*. 1(1): 59-79.

Godrej, F. 2017. The neoliberal yogi and the politics of yoga. *Political Theory*, 45(6); 772-800. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591716643604>

Hamraie, A. 2016. Universal design and the problem of “post-disability” ideology. *Design and Culture*, 8(3): 285-309.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17547075.2016.1218714>

Harvey, G., Vachhani, S. J., and Williams, K. 2014. Working out: Aesthetic labour, affect and the fitness industry personal trainer. *Leisure Studies*, 33: 454-470.

Harwood, V. 2009. Theorizing biopedagogies. In J. Wright & V. Harwood (Eds.), *Biopolitics and the “obesity epidemic”: Governing bodies* (pp. 15-30). Taylor & Francis.

Ipsos Public Affairs. 2016. The 2016 Yoga in America study. Retrieved from [https://www.yogaalliance.org/Portals/0/2016 Yoga in America Study RESULTS.pdf](https://www.yogaalliance.org/Portals/0/2016%20Yoga%20in%20America%20Study%20RESULTS.pdf).

- Jones, S., V. Torres, and J. Arminio. 2014. *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education fundamental elements and issues*. 2nd ed. Routledge.
- Kitching, N., Bowes, A., and Maclaren, M. 2021. 'Write when it hurts. Then write till it doesn't': Athlete voice and the lived realities of one female professional athlete. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 13(1): 77–93.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2020.1836507>
- Knoll, K. R. 2009. Feminist disability studies pedagogy. *Feminist Teacher*, 19(2): 122-133.
- LaMarre, A., and Rice, C. 2017. Hashtag recovery: # eating disorder recovery on Instagram. *Social Sciences*, 6(3): 1-15.
- LaMarre, A., Rice, C., and Jankowski, G. 2017. Eating disorder prevention as biopedagogy. *Fat Studies*, 6(3): 241-254.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21604851.2017.1286906>
- LaMarre, A., Rinaldi, J., & Rice, C. 2019. Tracing fatness through the eating disorder assemblage. In J. Rinaldi, C. Rice, and M. Friedman, (Eds.). *Thickening fat: Fat bodies, intersectionality and social justice* (pp. 64-76). Routledge.
- Leahy, D., and Malins, P. 2015. Biopedagogical assemblages: Exploring school drug education in action. *Cultural Studies=>Critical Methodologies*, 15(5): 398-406.
- Lorde, A. 1984. *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches by Audre Lorde*. Crossing Press.

Lupton, D. 2013. *Fat*. Routledge.

Machin, D., and Mayr, A. 2012. *How to do critical discourse analysis: A multimodal introduction*. Sage.

Martin, E. 1994. *Flexible bodies: Tracking immunity in American culture from the days of polio to the age of AIDS*. Beacon.

Mitchell, W. J. T. 2002. Showing seeing: A critique of visual culture. *Journal of Visual Culture* 1(2): 165–81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/147041290200100202>

Muntaner, C., Borrell, C., and Chung, H. 2007. Class relations, economic inequality and mental health: Why social class matters to the sociology of mental health. In W. Avison, J. McLeod, B. Pescosolido (Eds.), *Mental health, social mirror* (pp. 127-141). Springer.

Page, E. H. 2016. Enclosing yoga as white public space. In B. Berila, M. Klein & C. Jackson Roberts (Eds.), *Yoga, the body, and embodied social change: An intersectional feminist analysis*, (pp. 41-64). Lexington.

Price, M. 2015. The bodymind problem and the possibilities of pain. *Hypatia*, 30(1): 268-284. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12127>

Research and Markets. 2020. Yoga equipment: Covid-19.

<https://www.researchandmarkets.com/issues/yoga-equipment-sees-154pct-growth>

Rice, C. 2014. *Becoming women: The embodied self in image culture*. UT Press.

Rice, C. 2015. Re-thinking fat: From bio- to body becoming pedagogies. *Cultural Studies<=>Critical Methodologies*, 15(5): 387–397.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708615611720>

Rice, C. 2018. The spectacle of the child woman: Troubling girls in/and the science of early puberty. *Feminist Studies*, 44 (3): 535-566.

<https://doi.org/10.15767/feministstudies.44.3.0535>

Rice, C., Chandler, E., Harrison, E. Ferrari, M., and Liddiard, K. 2015. Project Re•Vision: Disability at the edges of representation. *Disability & Society*, 30(4): 513-527. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2015.1037950>

Rice, C., Chandler, E., Liddiard, K., Rinaldi, J., and Harrison, E. 2018. Pedagogical possibilities for unruly bodies. *Gender and Education*, 30(5): 663-682.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1247947>

Rice, C., and Chandler, E. 2020. Representing difference: Disability, digital storytelling, and public pedagogy. In K. Ellis, G. Goggin, B. Haller & R. Curtis. (Eds.) *Routledge companion to disability and media*. (pp. 377-387). Routledge.

Rice, C., Pendleton Jiménez, K., Harrison, E., Robinson, M., Rinaldi, J., LaMarre, A., and Andrew, J. 2020. Bodies at the intersection: Refiguring intersectionality through queer women's complex embodiments. *Signs*, 46(1): 177-200.

- Rice, C., Riley, S., LaMarre, A., and Bailey, A. 2021. What a body can do: Rethinking body functionality through a feminist materialist disability lens. *Body image*, 38: 95-105. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2021.03.014>
- Riley, S., Evans, A., Elliott, S., Rice, C., and Marecek, J. 2017. A critical review of postfeminist sensibility. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 11(12): e12367. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12367>
- Rinaldi, J., Rice, C., Kotow, C., and Lind, E. 2020. Mapping the circulation of fat hatred. *Fat Studies*, 9(1): 37-50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21604851.2019.1592949>
- Rose, N. 2007. *The politics of life itself: Biomedicine, power and subjectivity in the twenty-first century*. Princeton.
- Strings, S. 2019. *Fearing the black body: The racial origins of fat phobia*. NYU press.
- Strings, S., Headen, I., and Spencer, B. 2019. Yoga as a technology of femininity: Disciplining white women, disappearing people of color in Yoga Journal. *Fat Studies*, 8(3): 334-348. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21604851.2019.1583527>
- Toll, M., and Norman, M. 2020. More than meets the eye: A relational analysis of young women's body capital and embodied understandings of health and fitness on Instagram. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 13(1): 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2020.1836512>
- Turrini, M. 2015. A genealogy of "healthism". *Eä-Journal of Medical Humanities & Social Studies of Science and Technology*, 7 (1): 11–27.

Vinoski Thomas, E. R., Webb, J. B., Warren-Findlow, J., Brewer, K. A., and Kiffmeyer, K. A. 2017. Got yoga?: A longitudinal analysis of thematic content and models' appearance-related attributes in advertisements spanning four decades of Yoga Journal. *Body Image*, 21: 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2017.01.006>

Vinoski Thomas, E. R., Warren-Findlow, J., and Webb, J. B. 2019. Yoga is for every (able) body: A content analysis of disability themes within mainstream yoga media. *International Journal of Yoga*, 12(1): 68-72. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijoy.IJOY_25_18

Webb, J. B., Vinoski Thomas, E. R., Warren-Findlow, J., Padro, M. P., Burris, E. N., and Suddreth, E. M. 2017. Is the "Yoga Bod" the new skinny?: A comparative content analysis of mainstream yoga lifestyle magazine covers. *Body Image*, 20: 87-98. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2016.11.005>

Webb, J. B., Vinoski Thomas, E. R., Rogers, C. B., Clark, V. N., Hartsell, E. N., and Putz, D. Y. 2019. Fitspo at Every Size? A comparative content analysis of #curvyfit versus #curvy yoga Instagram images. *Fat Studies*, 8(2): 154-172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21604851.2019.1548860>

Wright, J. 2009. Biopower, biopedagogies and the obesity epidemic. In J. Wright and V. Hardwood (Eds.), *Biopolitics and the "obesity epidemic": Governing bodies* (pp. 1-14). Taylor & Francis.

Zola, I.K. 1977. Healthism and disabling medicalization. In I., Illich, I.K., Zola, J. McKnight, J. Caplan, and H. Shaiken, Eds., *Disabling professions* (pp. 41–67). Marion Boyars.