

‘Sexercise’: Working Out Heterosexuality in Jane Fonda’s Fitness Books

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Abstract

This paper explores the connection between the promotion of heterosexual norms in women’s fitness books written by or in the name of Jane Fonda during the 1980s and the commodification of women’s fitness space in both the public and private spheres. The paper is set in the absence of overt discussions of normative heterosexuality in leisure studies and draws on critical heterosexual scholarship as well as the growing body of work theorising geographies of corporeality and heterosexuality. Using the principles of media discourse analysis, the paper identifies three overlapping characteristics of heterosexuality represented in Jane Fonda’s fitness books, and embodied through the exercise regimes; respectable heterosexual desire, monogamous procreation and domesticity. The paper concludes that the promotion and prescription of exercise for women in the Jane Fonda Workout books centred on the re-production and embodiment of heterosexual corporeality. Set within an emerging commercial landscape of women’s fitness in the 1980s such exercise practices were significant in the legitimisation and institutionalisation of heteronormativity.

KEY WORDS

Heteronormativity, Desire, Representation, Procreation, Monogamy, Domesticity.

Introduction

Amongst her acting, political and philanthropic credits Jane Fonda is known for her brand of commercial female fitness regimes most notable of which is the Jane Fonda Workout series originating in 1979 with the opening of her Workout Studio in Beverly Hills (Fonda, 2005). Jane Fonda cannot be credited with being the first to imagine and promote organised fitness classes for women. There is a long history of women’s involvement in physical activity around the world marked by complex struggles for recognition and legitimisation (Atkinson,

1978; Ashburner, 2005; Hargreaves, 1994; Mansfield, 2008; McCrone, 1988; Stack, 1998; Smith Maguire, 2008; Vertinsky, 1994). Nevertheless, in the 1980s Jane Fonda emerged as a fitness icon, perhaps the original celebrity fitness guru, whose stylised and glamorised approach marked a take-off point in commercial fitness for the development of (western) commodity female bodies; lean and toned, symbols of youth, health, vitality and longevity, and models of heterosexual femininity (Cole and Hribar, 1995; MacNeill, 1988)

This paper discusses the centrality of a heterosexual narrative in the Jane Fonda Workout books. There is a brief contextual introduction to the Jane Fonda fitness texts. The theoretical framework is presented by examining the significance of critical heterosexual scholarship and the idea of the heterosexual imaginary in understanding the spatiality of fit bodies. Next comment is made about the absence of overt discussions of normative heterosexuality in leisure studies and I introduce the ways that some of the more recent conceptual frameworks for exploring sexuality in the fields of geography and the sociology of sport dovetail with critical heterosexual studies. An overview of the method is provided. The remaining sections focus on three key themes that are central in understanding the making and privileging of heterosexual female bodies within a set of heteronormative structures and ideologies in female fitness space. These themes are the representation of heterosexual desire, heterosexual necessities of procreation and monogamy, and the home, fitness space and domesticity. The paper seeks to advance contemporary thinking about the ideological and spatial development of female fitness in the late twentieth century. In doing so, it is argued that since the 1980s, Fonda's exercise regimes, and variations of them, practiced in an increasingly diverse range of public and private leisure spaces, have been characterised by corporeal and discursive conventions that make the female body simultaneously internally and externally heterosexually feminine.

The Jane Fonda Workout: Fitness Texts and Lifestyle Media

The Jane Fonda Workout books, which provide the focus for discussion in this paper were closely linked to her Workout videos and were popular exercise manuals of the time. The books are arguably less well known than the videos but, as will be discussed, they represent

an important source of analysis in locating and making sense of female readership of fitness manuals in a growing commercial market of women's exercise. The original Jane Fonda Workout video (1982) sold approximately 17 million copies world-wide; the most of any home video which stimulated sales of the then new videocassette recorder (VCR), enabled people (mainly women) to do the Workout at home and helped to develop the home video industry (Fitzpatrick, 1992; Melillo, 1992, 1993). Fonda released 23 workout videos (also available in long play vinyl format), thirteen audio programs and five workout books during the 1980s and 1990s. The first *Jane Fonda's Workout Book* (1981) stayed at number one on the *New York Times Best Seller List* for twenty-four months (Fonda, 2005; Smith Maguire, 2008).

The Workout books provided a set of instructions and visual materials about how to execute a series of exercises for burning calories, sculpting muscles and building stamina and flexibility and were produced in the genre of 'How-to' / 'Self-help' guides. Such mass media is significant in the formation of public opinion about women, fitness and health (Gill, 2007). In the commercialised network of fitness, exercise manuals represent part of a strategic, mediated and packaged approach to the selling of fitness (Kane, 1995; Dworkin & Wachs, 2009; MacNeill, 1998; Smith-Maguire, 2008). By the mid 1980s, female readership of health related books particularly in relation to diet and exercise out-numbered men by a ratio of about two to one. The original Jane Fonda's Workout book published in 1981 was the enduring best seller in an exercise market that included fitness texts, newspaper coverage, video and magazines. (Smith Maguire, 1992). The first Fonda Workout book was reprinted six times in 1982 and twice in 1983 (Fonda, 1981). A range of fitness goods and services developed from Fonda's initial foray into the fitness world and in the mid 1990s it was estimated that Fonda's fitness empire netted \$35 million annually from videos, books, audiotapes and records (Conant, 1997).

Fitness texts operate as "mechanisms of consumer education" (Smith Maguire, 1992, p. 450). It can be argued that "Fitness texts transcend the short-lived experience of working-out, transforming fitness from an immediate activity into a gradual discourse of instruction, and an intellectual, critical and aesthetic issue" (Smith Maguire, 1992, p. 450). I agree with

Smith Maguire's (1992) analysis that the logic of fitness discourse within exercise manuals focuses on corporeal production and consumption, deferred gratification/reward, and motivational challenges. Jane Fonda's fitness texts are marked by a dominant discourse and logic of heterosexual femininity and it is this aspect of bodily representation that was central to my analysis.

Lifestyle media reflect the connections between corporeal aesthetics, bodily knowledge/expertise and the problematization of the self in contemporary western societies (Featherstone, 1991; Ingham, 1985; Silk and Andrews, 2006). In the 1980s an emerging lifestyle politics promoting individual responsibility for health and fitness through a developing economic, political and cultural reliance on the twin forces of employment discipline and consumerism underpinned the corporeal narcissism of the time (Ingham, 1985; Silk & Andrews, 2006). In the UK the promises and desires of heterosexually desirable female bodies (lean, tanned and toned) were increasingly being transmitted in the public leisure domain through mediated images in advertising and film and through the formalised exercise regime whether that be in the home, in a community setting like a church or school hall, a public leisure facility or the rapidly rising commercial provision for such exercise programmes in health and fitness clubs (Gratton & Taylor, 2000). Such discourses, circulated as they were through a diversity of fitness media and within a network of fitness landscapes appear to have been an effective medium for heterosexualising female bodies because so many people engaged with the exercise endeavour (MacNeill, 1998). The requirements for female fitness and the emerging landscape of fitness reflect shifting boundaries of public and private spaces in which women have to negotiate the appearance and performance of their bodies. In the UK, the more private borders of the home were permeated as they entwined with the more public bodily displays and health/fitness agenda presented through home video, television programming and exercise manuals.

Approaching Heterosexuality and Heteronormativity

The analysis in this paper draws on the idea of the heterosexual imaginary as a sensitising framework for understanding representations of fit female bodies in Fonda's fitness texts and discourses of fitness more broadly. In Ingraham's (1999, p. 16) view:

"The heterosexual imaginary is that way of thinking that conceals the operation of heterosexuality in structuring gender (across race, class and sexuality) and closes off any critical analysis of heterosexuality as an organizing institution. It is a belief system that relies on romantic and scared notions of heterosexuality in order to create and maintain the illusion of well-being. At the same time this romantic view presents us from seeing how institutionalized sexuality actually works to organize gender while preserving racial, class and sexual hierarchies as well".

The discussion considers how the exercise regime operates as an institutionalising force for heterosexuality within a set of multi-level structures and ideological effects that are heteronormative in character. The heterosexual imaginary is at work through the mediation of fitness. Fonda's exercise manuals construct and maintain the dominance of hegemonic heterosexuality marked by powerful images of feminine appearance and bodily function. A type of female narcissism is promoted through the constant requirement for self-surveillance and bodily comparison in the programmes of exercise prescribed by Jane Fonda.

To an extent the paper takes a representational approach illustrating how surface relations of appearance, positioning and performance of fit female bodies support dominant ideals of heterosexual femininity. But, drawing on Colls (2007, p. 353) ideas about "materialising bodily matter" reveals the ways that bodily matter is not something simply acted upon in the exercise context but a fleshy substance that is active in processes of materialising fit female bodies in specific contexts of time and space. The social production of the body is inextricably connected to its materiality and boundaries (Longhurst, 2001a). Corporeal dynamism defines a body in terms of the "activity of matter", its "internal momentums" and the centrality of internal-external relations of bodily space in understanding the legitimation of some bodies over others (Colls, 2007, p. 353). The precise mechanism of

such bodily activities depends on the context and relations under investigation and it is important to recognise that bodies have the capacity to extend beyond established ideals as well as materialising as reproductions of dominant appearance and performance norms. In work seeking to re-materialise the body in social and cultural geography there are many ways of thinking about geographies of heterosexualised bodies (Longhurst, 2005; Binnie & Valentine, 1999). In this paper geographical themes relating to cartographies of bodies (i.e. the landscape of physical spaces); embodied typographies (i.e. the textures, shapes and sizes of bodies, bodily abjection / bodily other), and bodily boundaries (i.e. the interplay inside and outside bodies) suffuse the discussion (Colls, 2007).

As will be shown, female fitness spaces are heterosexual spaces constituted through the practices of exercise. Lean, toned female bodies, internally and externally controlled to be desirable to the opposite sex and capable of conceiving, bearing, birthing and raising children are privileged ones in Fonda's fitness texts. What is also of interest is the way that Fonda's fitness books are implicated in the construction of popular images of heterosexual femininity representative of wider 1980s lifestyle politics. The discussion illustrates that such body politics were connected to a growing emphasis on individual responsibility for health and fitness and to an intensifying consumerist ideology promoting the consumption of fitness goods and services all of which appealed to essentialist narratives of female empowerment and the authentic self. Thus, the heterosexual imaginary defined above provides a theoretical framework for thinking about the interplay between the representation of female heterosexuality in Fonda's fitness manuals and wider social structures and processes that spatially orientate and secure the hegemonic status of heterosexuality.

With the idea of the heterosexual imaginary in mind, turning to the task of defining and conceptualising heterosexuality in more detail is important yet complex. The precise character of the relationship between gender and heterosexuality varies in scope and strength depending on the social and historical dynamics and the current state of knowledge about each category (Richardson, 2007). In the simplest terms heterosexuality refers to sexual desires, practices and identifications between men and women. In Richardson's

(1996, p. 2) view, heterosexuality for women “is an identity defined primarily in relation to desire for men and / or the social and economic privileges associated with being the partner of a man, in particular the traditional role of wife and mother”. Heterosexuality is a form of sexual identity. Since the late 19th century heterosexuality has been commonly defined by sexual desires and practices based on biological and moral assumptions about the naturalness, appropriateness and fixed character of man-women relationships (Jackson, 1999; 2005; Richardson, 2007).

Heterosexuality is framed by the idea of a stable connection between sex, gender, desire and sexual practice, and a belief that opposite-sex sexual relations are the only legitimate / normal form of sexuality. By this taken-for-granted view heterosexuality is connected to gender by marking out differences between men and women that are assumed to be reducible to the “reproductive imperative; the “need” to find a mate and pass on our genes to the next generation” (Jackson, 2005, p. 15). And what it is not; homosexuality or the homosexual ‘other’, a set of sexual desires and practices based on same-sex relationships also defines heterosexuality. Heterosexuality operates within a system of heteronormativity; a set of values that construct heterosexuality as normal, natural and privileged and that set homosexuality as its binary opposite presented as deviant, dissident and unnatural. This is not to argue that in understanding sexuality we must work within a dualistic framework. Rather, and in the context of the heterosexual imaginary, it is to illustrate the ways that dominant, common-sense ideas about heterosexuality and homosexuality come to the fore in peoples’ sexualised lives. Most recent approaches to understandings of gender and sexuality reflect the idea that the categories are conflated, indivisible and interdependent (Richardson, 2007). The pervasiveness of heterosexuality and the institutionalised character of heteronormativity in social life is set out by Richardson (1996, p. 13) who argues that “heterosexuality infuses the social realm; it represents the idea of normal behaviour which is central to the concept of the social and the process of socialisation into the social realm”. The hegemonic status of heterosexuality, the institutionalisation of heterosexuality, and the production and reproduction of the

heterosexual imaginary operate in sexual and non-sexual aspects of social life (Jackson, 2005).

Leisure Studies, Heterosexuality and Space

There is a general lack of work that interrogates the complexity of heterosexuality or unpacks the dynamics between and within heterosexual and homosexual relations in an adequate theoretical-empirical framework in leisure studies. A modest amount of work has begun to address questions of sexuality in more explicit ways (see for example Clift and Carter, 2000; Jeffreys, 2003; Johnston, 2000; Green & Chalip, 1998; Pritchard, 2001; Ryan & Hall, 2001). And there are some studies, notably by Mowl and Towner (1995) on leisure, place and gender/class relations, and by Scraton and Watson (1998) on the postmodern city, women and public leisure spaces which identify the intersections of leisure with geography, gender, race/ethnicity and social class. The need to explore further the leisure/sexuality/space dynamic, and the complexities of gender-power relations in leisure spheres has been identified (Aitchison et al., 2000; Aitchison, 2005). Nevertheless, leisure studies scholars have not, as yet, taken a theoretical lead from wider developments in critical studies of sexuality as has been the case in other related disciplines such as geography (Casey, et al., 2004; Browne et al., 2007; Nast, 1998; Hubbard, 2008), and the sociology of sport (Broad, 2001; Caudwell, 2003, 2006; Hargreaves, 2001; King, 2008; Sykes, 2006; Wright & Clarke, 1999)

In sport studies Sykes (2006) argues that the deconstruction and critique of sexual identity that frames the approaches of queer theorists has the potential to change how we think about sexuality, desires and bodies. Focusing on “heteronormativity which aligns the dominance of whiteness and late capitalism with heterosexuality” queer studies of sport can make sense of the hierarchical arrangements of masculinity and femininity, ideas about sexual ‘others’ and the production of heterosexuality in sport (Sykes, 2006, p. 16). Such a critical approach to sexuality helps to identify and understand the hegemonic dominance of particular bodies within a broader political framework of individual responsibility for fit bodies,

consumption of fitness goods and services and the concomitant narcissistic focus on body image and function.

In cultural geography, feminist geographers have identified the centrality of space and place in the embodiment of gendered and sexual identities. Browne et al. (2007) emphasise that sexuality cannot be understood without examining the spatial arrangements through which it is regulated, negotiated and lived. For Browne et al. (2007) bodily space is always contested and connected to the ability of some groups of people to define what bodies can and cannot do or look like, and the capacity to delimit when and in what spaces bodies can operate. "Sexualised imagined geographies" are at work in the production and reproduction and dominance of heterosexuality in which "imaginative, representational and figurative spaces" are central to "material effects that make a difference to peoples' lives" (Browne et al., p. 4). Norms regarding acceptable or expected sexual behaviour in different places including the work place (McDowell, 1997), the home, (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Johnson & Valentine, 1995) and in a variety of public and private spaces (Casey et al. 2004, Nast, 1998; Hubbard, 2000) regulate sexualised experiences of space.

Some feminist geographers have been at the forefront of examining the complexities of spatiality, gender and sexuality within local-global dynamics (see for example Massey, 1994, 1999; Rose, 1993, 1999). Global-local spatiality serves to limit the movement of some people while extending the mobility of others (Massey, 1994, 1999). The social arrangements, practices and relationships of everyday life are connection to the ways that people give meaning to their lives. Everyday meanings and identifications are intertwined with the materialistion and bounded character of bodily matter in space and time as previously noted. Geographical critiques of heteronormativity and homonormativity are increasingly coming to the fore in the literature on the relationships between geography, sexual identities, policies and practices (Hubbard, 2007, 2008). As Hubbard (2008, p. 654) concludes "Studies of both 'sexy' and 'unsexy' spaces reveal heterosexuality as a fractured and complex set of practices, albeit with certain performances of masculinity and femininity being deemed normal (and hence bequeathed with certain privileges and powers)". The

conceptual overlaps between critical heterosexual scholarship, and theoretical approaches to bodies and sexuality in cultural geography and the sociology of sport provide the framework for the analysis in this paper which can be thought of as a discussion of the heterosexualised imagined geographies of Fonda's exercise manuals. The next section explains the method used in the analysis.

Making Sense of Jane Fonda's Workout Books

The research draws on the broad principles of qualitative content analysis and a discourse analysis framework to elicit empirical evidence upon which a critical discussion of hegemonic heterosexual femininity can be based (Dworkin and Wachs, 2009). Qualitative content analysis is a method that includes the categorisation of themes but also the examination of those themes to explore the meaning of a given text (Altheide, 1996; Gill, 2007). In this study, the manner in which the words, photographs and diagrams in the text were presented provided the focus for examining the ideology, themes, topics and symbols of fitness instruction in Fonda's Workout books. In doing so, the method of analysis was not limited to *manifest content*, that which is physically present and countable, but also extended to *latent content*, an interpretive reading of symbolism that underlies the data (Berg, 1998). Drawing attention to the analysis of media content it has been suggested there is, "no strict distinction between content analysis on the one hand and explicit discourse analysis on the other hand" (van Dijk, 1985) The aims of discourse analysis are concentrated on "revealing the ways in which communication legitimises or maintains ideology" which assumes "a sense of reality is constructed through the use of language" and that power relations are embedded within a given text (Kramarae & Spender, 2000). Thus, both the tenets of qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis were central in identifying and exploring a pattern of representation in terms of the intersections of femininity, fitness, heterosexuality and space.

Five texts published in the 1980s were selected for analysis in this paper: *Jane Fonda's Workout Book* (1981); *Jane Fonda's Workout Book for Pregnancy and Recovery by Femmy DeLyser* (1982); *Women Coming of Age with Jane Fonda's Prime Time Workout* (1984); *Jane Fonda's New Workout and Weight-Loss Programme* (1986); and *Jane Fonda's*

New Pregnancy Workout and Total Birth Program by Femmy DeLyser (1989). The author of the *Pregnancy Workout* books, Femmy deLyser was a certified birth educator employed by Jane Fonda as a birth 'coach' during her second pregnancy. She was commissioned to write an exercise programme in Fonda's name which intended to bring DeLyser's "insights, humanity, feminism, medical knowledge and sensuality to every page on pregnancy, birth recovery and parenting (Fonda, 1982, p. 14). The selection of these particular manuals was based on their publication dates in the 1980s that reflects the wider boom in fitness publications since Kenneth Cooper's *Aerobics* in 1968 (Markula, 1995; Smith Maguire, 1992, 2008). These are lengthy / weighty tomes with all but one (*Jane Fonda's New Pregnancy Workout and Total Birth Programme by Femmy DeLyser*) printed in hard back. They vary in length between 239 and 446 pages and include a series of chapters beginning with Fonda's personal reflections about her body, exercise and health, various commentaries about women's bodies informed by biological / medical / scientific models of women's health, pages of exercise instruction, concluding reflections, and a guide to additional exercise and health resources. The Workout books provide a mix of narrative and visual (photographic and diagrammatic) material helping the reader to learn how to exercise, providing them with a rationale for doing so and encouraging them through a range of motivational advice.

The method used reflects "a recursive and reflexive movement between concept development and sampling-data, collection-data, coding-data, and analysis-interpretation (Altheide, 1996, p. 16). The intention was to be systematic and analytic but not rigid. Categories and variables initially guided the study. The reading began by identifying narrative and visual examples of fit female body appearance and performance (including body size, shape, skin tone, muscularity, clothing, hair style, cosmetic practices, positioning and accomplishment of correct exercise technique); gendered relationships (such as depictions and discussions of the biological female body, female-female relations, female-male bonds and male-male identifications); and heterosexual identifications (linked to the variables of gendered relationships but also reflecting ideas about romance, marriage, sensuality, desire, sex, procreation, monogamy and female re-productivity). Guided by a

theoretical sensitivity to gender and heterosexuality and focused on the discovery of how heterosexuality is represented, imagined, given meaning and spatially organised in the production of fit female bodies in Jane Fonda's Workout books I was mindful of orientating the research to "constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situation, settings, styles, images, meanings, and nuances" (Altheide, 1996, p. 16). The following discussion examines how a particular form of heterosexuality is represented in Fonda's texts. It identifies and discusses the character and status of a type of heterosexuality founded upon the promotion and representation of a set of overlapping core values; respectable heterosexual desire, and the maximisation of corporeal health for procreation within monogamous man-woman relationships.

'Sexercise': Representing Heterosexual Desire

Ideals of female fitness crystallise through the visual and narrative texts of Fonda's books and harden into ideological beliefs about the naturalness and permanence of heterosexual desire (Davidson et. al. 1997). Heterosexually desirable females are visually captured on the glossy front covers of each of Fonda's fitness texts where there are colourful depictions of women in peak physical condition; lean, fresh-faced and bright eyed, with golden tanned, toned skin. Fonda is photographed with shoulder length hair, immaculately dressed/set, the darker shade lifted with more golden coloured highlights. She is made up with glossed lips, eyes defined by mascara and black kohl liner and her earrings are large gold hoops. In *Jane Fonda's Workout Book* (Fonda, 1982) and the *New Workout & Weight-loss Program* (Fonda, 1986) Fonda and the other models are dressed in leotard, leggings, leg warmers and a tightly fastened belt; clothing which reveals the leanness of her body as well as the curves of the thighs, bottom and small (tiny), cinched waist. Fit female bodies are bound by the clothing they wear as well as the exercise techniques they engage in. Fonda's body shape, tone, clothing, style of hair and cosmetics are all powerful markers of heterosexual femininity (Markula, 1995; McNeill, 1998).

Fonda poses effortlessly on the covers of the aforementioned texts, directly smiling to camera and demonstrating her flexibility as she leans back on one arm, both legs and feet

lifted straight up and slightly parted, her other arm reaching up to grasp one of the outstretched legs. She positions the fit female body as respectably sexy. A coy or demure image of female heterosexuality is represented. Fonda's pose is a legitimate expression of sexuality made possible, permissible and pleasurable in fitness space and through the fitness regime. Throughout the texts, the images invite the reader to engage in an "acts of voyeurism", surveying and assessing the topography of Fonda's body; its shape, tone and texture, learning how to develop a capacity to engage in the fitness regime. Taking instruction from the books encourages participants to construct "recreational/sensual" pleasures from the fitness acts themselves (MacNeill, 1998, p. 172).

The idea of the sensual experience of physical activity is introduced in the claim that "Exercise teaches you the pleasure of discipline" (Fonda, 1982, p. 53). Furthermore, participants are promised they can "experience the exhilaration" and a "regular energy-rush and tension-release" from exercise as well as the psychological gratification of obtaining and displaying a fit female body (Fonda, 1986, p. 73). This pleasure theme is linked to Fonda's promotion of effective exercise; that which is of a high enough intensity to cause a burning sensation in the muscles, popularly known as 'going for the burn' (Fonda, 2005). 'The burn' appears to be the internal signification of fitness synchronising with the acquisition of a fit/desirable body topography (lean, tanned and tight). And the health, psychological and emotional problems of an unfit body are reinforced in the fitness narratives. For example, Fonda (1986, p. 52) denigrates body fat, disassociating fat from fitness and femininity by using patronising references to "those saddle-bags, dingle-dangles, love handles and plain old lumps and bumps". She promotes exercise "as a matter of muscle toning and tightening", a regime "which shrinks the size of the fatty deposits" all of which signals a body tightly controlled in its internal systems and its external architecture.

The permanence of heterosexual desire is reinforced through representations such as those on the covers of *The Workout Book for Pregnancy and Recovery* (DeLyser, 1982) and *The New Pregnancy Workout and Total Birth Program* (DeLyser, 1989) which feature women who have 'retained' a tight and toned body form through pregnancy, and women who

have had children and can reveal a body 'reclaimed' from the pregnant state. The durability of health, youth and vitality characterises heterosexual desire in the older woman in *Women Coming of Age* (Fonda, 1984) where close up photography emphasises the tightness of the facial skin, the lack of lines in Fonda's 'middle-aged' face. The typography of the ageing female body is bounded by a requirement for a smooth, un-lined face. Still dressed in leotard, tights, leg warmers and dance belt, the photography emphasises that while Fonda is advancing in years, at forty six, her embodied typography remains youthful and desirable and her body protected against the internal ageing process (accumulation of fat, hormone imbalance and collagen depletion) and the external appearance of age (sagging skin, wrinkles and excess fat).

In Fonda's fitness texts, the making and re-making of heterosexual desire both in terms of feminine body appearance and bodily function not only provides a visual marker for heterosexual female desire but brings with it a sense of morality. As will be discussed further on in this paper sex is a key theme in Fonda's fitness books. Whenever sex is discussed issues of morality come to the fore (Hubbard, 2000). Here it is emphasised that the representation of heterosexual desire in terms of the idealised body topography of fit female bodies operates within the heterosexualised imagined geography of respectability, marked by the superiority of middle-classness, the able body, whiteness, and in spite of advancing years the appearance of youth and vitality. Not only do these Fonda's fitness texts reinforce a heterosexual contract between women and men, repudiating 'other' sexualities from the fitness space and wider social networks, but they mark out a hierarchy between women, particularly because heterosexuality is glamorised and commodified as style (Dworkin and Wachs, 2009).

In Skegg's (2002, p. 2) view respectability is a class signifier incorporating judgements of gender, sexuality and race/ethnicity and "different groups have differential access to the mechanisms for generating, revisiting and displaying respectability". Fitness, appears to be a mechanism for constructing and displaying respectability in middle-class terms. Middle-class values are assumed in Fonda's texts. Fonda (1981, p. 55) advocates

liberal democratic ideals of individual self-discipline in her approach to fitness saying “There are no short cuts. No sweatless quickies. You must be committed to working hard, sweating hard and getting sore”. This ‘commit to get fit’ attitude is “the means to attaining Hollywood depictions of the “good life”” (Ingham, 1985, p. 47). The visual imagery of women working out in the fitness texts is dominated by depictions of Fonda’s Beverly Hills Workout studio. Here are women who can financially afford to attend the classes as well as schedule time to do so. These women are likely to purchase the VCR and fitness video tapes and the exercise manuals as well as having the capacity to buy the contemporary Workout attire. Such women have the economic resources and time to consume fitness goods and services and, thus, effectively mark out a right to occupy fitness spaces.

Active rather than passive lifestyle characterises the Workout regime which, at the same time as silencing the experiences of lower status women, is differentiated from lifestyle activities that might be associated with higher status women. The dominance of middle class corporeality is secured by reinforcing the centrality of the deferred gratification of intensive body work (Shilling, 1993). In Fonda’s (1981, p. 55) words, “You cannot do it passively by going to a spa and having your bottom jiggled on a vibrating belt, taking a few swipes at bicycling and sitting in a sauna.” Corporeal control goes hand in hand with economic, social and sexual independence of middle class women. Fitness, then, is a strategy of investment in middle-class femininity (Skeggs, 2002). The fit female body, heterosexually defined and connected with others like it through Fonda’s fitness regimes, is a marker of middle-class respectability.

Female physicality is also defined by ableism in Fonda’s workout programme; the idea that social life should be organised and lived without disability (Carlise-Duncan, 2001; Howe, 2004; Oliver, 1996). Fonda places a high value on ability, and physical capability is presented as normal. Part/Chapter three of the original Workout manual is titled “Being Strong”, a theme that suffuses each of the fitness texts (Fonda, 1981, p. 43). Fonda (1981, p. 47) directly links the physical strength and skill developed through the exercise regime with an emerging feminist consciousness about “economic, political and social equality” for

(middle-class) women, the rising importance of female independence and the requirement for female beauty. In her words “We not only need to develop and extend our physical limits, we want toWe now recognize the strong, healthy woman who has fulfilled her physical potential, as beautiful” (Fonda, 1981, p. 47). The strong, healthy, independent woman in Fonda’s narrative and her photographs range from farm and factory workers to athletes but apart from one example discussed below, each is also able-bodied.

The only ‘story’ of disability in the original Workout text is one framing physical impairment within the acceptable model of disability in which exercise has been used to overcome adversity (Schell and Rodriguez, 2001). We are told the story of an actress and instructor at Fonda’s Workout Studio, Janice Darling. Janice was hit by a car and thrown through a glass window, crushing her pelvis, breaking her legs and severing an eye muscle. Her injuries left her blind in one eye and photographs in the fitness manual show her wearing an eye patch. But her physical impairment is portrayed in terms of a woman to be admired because she has conquered her disability. Fonda (1981, p. 48) explains that Janice “has taught all of us who know her what it means to be strong in the full sense of the word”. Janice is the wounded heroine, a symbol of grace under pressure. In media representations of disability, the disabled heroine is determined, committed, courageous and inspiring (Schell and Rodriguez, 2001). Indeed, Janice’s story includes reference to the way that “the doctors and nurses were amazed at her determination” (Fonda, 1981, p. 47). Fonda (1981, p. 47) charts Janice’s recovery during her month long stay in hospital and explains that “even though she was confined to her hospital bed, she managed to devise a special exercise regime for her upper body and torso. To strengthen her legs, she did the exercises with weights strapped to her ankles”. Her swift recovery returned her body to ‘normal’, still able to instruct and practice the able-bodied techniques of the female fitness endeavour and retaining her lean toned heterosexually desirable physique. Janice Darling is a non-white¹ instructor. Her prosthetic eye and eye patch reflect the racialised and sexualised character of the heterosexual imaginary being linked to the possibility of Janice having a “crack at more exotic roles” in her acting career (Fonda, 1981, p. 47). Here her disability is further

stereotyped in terms of the assumed exotic/erotic nature of black female sexuality. While Janice is physically impaired, her story reflects a celebration of the able-bodied, fit female which match ideals of corporeal normality to the quest for peak physical capacity (DePauw, 1997). Janice is one of the few non-white women to appear in the fitness texts and as the following examples illustrate, it is also the case that whiteness centres the respectable, heterosexual, fit female body in Fonda's fitness manuals.

Apart from one participant in the *New Pregnancy Workout and Total Birth Program*, all those photographed and identified as participants would be categorised as white. Some of those identified as instructors are non-white. One non-white female instructor from the Beverly Hills Workout studio is used in the photographic representations in the original Workout book and two non-white instructors are featured in the *New Workout & Weight-Loss Program*. The non-white instructors are workers rather than participants and their work is in instructing white women through programmes of exercise that reinforce white body ideals. The fitness texts offer limited space for the inclusion of fit non-white participants potentially reinforcing broader notions of poor health in ethnic groups that are 'other' than white (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009). Fonda's fitness manuals offer iconic representations of productive, white, female bodies; heterosexually attractive, maternal and able to balance the domestic, procreative, and health/fitness requirements of respectable womanhood (McDonald, 2002). The projection of white female heterosexuality effectively silences any potential "threats" that the bodies of non-white women present to "the presumed normality of white heterosexuality" (McDonald, 2002, p. 382). While far more can be said about the intersections of heterosexuality with class, ableism and race/ethnicity and how these aspects of the self interplay with other significant aspects of identification, it is hoped that this paper will serve as a starting point for this work. The next section explores, in more detail, the representation of heterosexual desire in Fonda's Workout books in a discussion about the promotion and spatial orientation of heterosexual procreation and monogamy.

Fonda's Workout Books: Heterosexual Necessities of Procreation and Monogamy

Fonda's fitness instruction articulated the requirements of heterosexual femininity in terms of sculpting a body for the necessities of monogamy and procreation (Jackson, 1999; Hubbard, 2007, 2008, Richardson, 1996). The pregnancy workouts provide some clear examples. Exercise during pregnancy is associated with a series of "pay-offs" including "a quicker return to the configurations of the non-pregnant body" and the potential to "look as good as or better than before conception" (DeLyser 1989, p. 35). The exercise-pregnancy narrative also introduces the requirement for the contemporary mother to be knowledgeable about her body and feel informed and successful in regulating its appearance and function (Jette, 2006). Pregnancy workouts are framed by an emerging sense of "moral motherhood" characterising the good mother as one who is fit before, during and after pregnancy (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009, p. 124). Exercise is prescribed as a regime for learning to endure the pain of delivery and understanding the interplay between the baby inside, the materialisation of the pregnant body and the return to 'normal'. Exercising is, thus, a solution to the 'other' typography of the pregnant body and a mechanism for managing shifting body boundaries during and after pregnancy.

Promoted as a way to improve women's ability to labour and give birth exercise, it is claimed, simultaneously improves stamina, endurance and pain control, and ensures the safety of both mother and child in the process. DeLyser (1989, p. 73) reports that for those women engaging in Fonda's pregnancy workout "birth attendants were astounded by their endurance and strength, as well as their ability to bear down well with the expulsion contractions in positions such as squatting and kneeling". Yet, exercise promotion to build the strength and stamina required for giving birth feminises and normalises women's strength in ways that retain the heterosexual imperative of a woman's reproductive role. Developing strong thighs is centred upon capability in child birth not as a mechanism for shaping the thighs so that they may be attractive to other women.

Pregnancy is narrated as a temporary condition, an abject body form producing anxiety, fear and loathing, a body to be managed within the boundaries of heterosexual desire and procreation (Longhurst, 2001b). Fonda (1982, p. 12) explains that without

exercise during her first pregnancy she grew “puffier” and “sluggish” resulting in her “feeling like a sack of overripe tomatoes”. But, with an exercise regime Fonda claims she could improve her pregnant “body awareness, endurance and flexibility, as well as increasing muscle control in the pelvic region”. For Fonda (1982, p. 86) some of the special concerns of pregnant women include; “Will my breasts sag will I get stretch marks and will my belly ever be flat again?” These are questions about the impact of pregnancy on a heterosexually desirable body typography. Exercise is promoted as the answer to such questions with Fonda (1984, p. 86) having seen “many women with flatter stomachs one year after childbirth than before they conceived, because during pregnancy they got into the habit of exercising regularly”. A corporeal spatiality characterised by sagging breasts, stretch marks and a round/fat belly are synonymous with being unfit, out of shape and undesirable to a male partner/lover/husband. The pregnant body is viewed as one waiting to be reclaimed and returned to the ‘normal’ state of the body beautiful; trim and taut, clearly and tightly bounded, materialised in the controlled flesh of the fit body (Longhurst, 2001a, 2001b).

Like the pregnant body, the contours, textures and internal momentum of the ageing menopausal body is represented as one to be managed through exercise. Exercise regimes are prescribed as a way to control leaking, flowing, expanding female bodies and retaining and/or returning to the tight, heterosexually desirable female body thus resisting the “transgressive capacity of the ‘gaping body’” that is central in “the quest for control in the technology of physical fitness” (Pronger, 20002, p. 235-236). Vigorous exercise is promoted as a “home-brew estrogen”, serving to fine tune the endocrine system and helping endure the hot flashes of menopause (Fonda, 1984, p. 137). Enhancing the capacity and responsiveness of the sweating mechanism is another prescribed benefit for menopausal women framing exercise as a control mechanism for the internal ‘flows’ of the menopausal body.

Illustrating the centrality of heterosexual sex in *Women Coming of Age* (Fonda, 1984, p. 148-153) there are sections discussing ‘Sex Fitness’ and ‘Other Helps’ (for successful sexual intercourse) contained in a chapter titled ‘Sexual Passages’. The focus is on the

possibility of continued fitness, sex, sexuality and vitality in mid-life and beyond. A full sex life and regular exercise are promoted for the pleasures and fitness gains that both activities can provide. "Sex Fitness" involves a series of isometric 'Kegel' exercises developed by the physician, Arnold Kegel in the 1940s (Fonda, 1984, p. 148). The focus is on strengthening the pubbocccygeus muscle situated deep in the pelvis for greater sensitivity and pleasure in sex as well as treatment and prevention of urinary incontinence, improved posture and lower back strength. According to Fonda (1984, p. 150) "some women have reported experiencing orgasm for the first time after doing the exercises!" Fonda also explains that lovemaking between a man and a woman can be improved through such exercise because the Kegel exercises "bring blood to the vagina tissues, helping to make the walls thicker and more moist, in addition to improving lubrication" (Fonda, 1984, p. 151). The internal-external contours of heterosexuality collapse into the 'sexercise' regime which acts to optimise the production of internal bodily matter for effective heterosexual intercourse and secure the materialisation of a heterosexually desirable body surface.

Sexual desire and sexual intercourse is also narrated in terms of legitimate female-male relationships. The shape and function of the female abdominal/pelvic region is identified in the retention of heterosexual intimacy and romance and the right/ability to have sexual intercourse in relationships that reinforce the normality of penetrative sex by men with women (heterosexual intercourse). Gaining weight and changing shape in the abdominal region in pregnancy is presented as "often more rather than less attractive" for the father (DeLyser, 1989, p. 21). Furthermore, being pregnant is claimed to deepen the "intimate relationship" between a (married) woman and man and strengthen feelings of "love and romance" (DeLyser, 1989, p. 21). The relationship between mother-to-be and father-as-coach reinforces a romanticised notion of the pleasure and intimacy of consenting, sensual heterosexual sex in the claim that a special understanding based on the "intimate knowledge" of lovers is fostered between a man and a woman in the labour and birth process (DeLyser, 1982, p. 32). There are specific instructions in massage techniques for relaxation focusing on the man "stroking" and touching with "gentle pressure" the woman's

abdomen, hips, buttocks, inner thighs, feet and head/neck. The language of such instruction blends erotic and romantic aspects of heterosexual desire and relationships with everyday social interaction between men and women.

The possibilities of “increased sexual desire” and the safety of female orgasm are presented as a normal and natural part of heterosexual intercourse in pregnancy (DeLyser, 1989, p. 21). At the same time the privilege of male libido is secured in the advice that pregnant women who experience pain or cramping during or after orgasm “can continue lovemaking if they avoid climax” (DeLyser, 1989, p. 21). Monogamy is directly advised for protection against sexually transmitted disease in a clear statement about risk to the unborn child. DeLyser (1989, p. 22) explains that “Because of the danger of sexually transmitted diseases to the child within, people who continue sexual intercourse during pregnancy are well advised to be monogamous”. Such commentary reinforces the fragility of pregnant body boundaries and the danger of bodily fluids being exchanged when they are penetrated by external bodies. It marks out further the productive, normal heterosexual female body from any unproductive, abnormal, ‘immoral’, sexual practices and arrangements (abstinence, more than one partner or same-sex relations) and particularly those associated with the risk of disease that forms part of the logic of heterosexuality (Binnie & Valentine, 1999; Cole, 1993; Cole & Hribar, 1995; Hubbard, 2008). Fonda’s regime naturalises heterosexual spatiality through “the idea that sex must involve a *meaningful*, material and emotional exchange based on procreative sexual intercourse” (Hubbard, 2000, p. 8).

Home Fitness: Body Work, Space and Heterosexual Domesticity

The Jane Fonda Workout was initially developed as an exercise class, conducted in a dance studio with an instructor. But the emergence of the Workout books and videos encouraged the use of the comfort, privacy, convenience, and security of domestic / home environments for practising the fitness regimes. Illustrating the place of the Workout in the home, as well as an emerging neo-liberal politics based on an individual and disciplined approach to health improvement Fonda (1981, p. 67) explains “you are going to have to find time to work out despite the telephone, the refrigerator, the children, the television set, a dirty

house and all the rest". Domestic duties are not intended to be dismissed or used as excuses for skipping a workout (Fonda, 1986). Rather domestic labour and leisure activities are to be scheduled alongside a workout 'timetable'. Bodywork, managed within the context of household labour is central to a sense of "dutiful femininity" (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009, p. 114). Fonda advocates her own ability to work long hours, run a house, keep a husband and schedule in four to six work outs a week; a lifestyle she refers to as "the works", as a way of life for any woman (Fonda, 1986, p. 73). Fonda's fitness regimes operate to blur private and public roles for heterosexual females in that fitness is promoted as compatible with child care and domestic routines as well as work. The manuals are characterised by "domestic imperatives" reinforcing heterosexual relations, a key feature of later consumption-based fitness texts (Dworkin & Wachs, 2009, p. 122). Women are constituted as requiring fitness to perform their domestic roles in the home.

The home can be thought of as an escape from the disciplinary practices of corporeal control in everyday life (Bell & Valentine, 1995). Yet in the context of Fonda's Workout regimes, there was an increasing potential for the home to become a more private realm of bodily regulation through fitness instruction in books and video, and an emerging market of television fitness. Exercise manuals formed a part of an emerging leisure technology characterised by privatisation of leisure, a retreat to the interior spaces of the home, constituting the development of the family as a unit of consumption (McKay, 1997). Televisions and video recorders brought a public, popular and celebrity realm of commercial fitness into the private spaces of the home (MacNeill, 1998). And the exercise manuals offered the opportunity to engage in life-long learning about fitness and corporeal control. Such lifestyle media did not produce a simple shift from public/outer to private/interior organisation and use of space. Rather, in the production and consumption of Jane Fonda's Workout programmes, public and private locations and spatial dimensions were simultaneously at work in the enactment and positioning of heterosexuality (Casey, et. al., 2004).

Fonda's fitness regimes came to form part of the routine social practises for some women acting as a force for heterosexual institutionalisation through the construction of meaning in localized contexts. There is a close relationship between the use of space, the meaning of femininity and heterosexuality, and embodied practice (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). "Doing Jane" at home in one sense had the potential to re-articulate the meaning of female body space for example around the television and video recorder and/or in a shared or dedicated home space where the focus was on learning to be fit through instruction from the exercise manuals (Fonda, 1981, p. 89). Advice is provided in the exercise manuals about preparing to workout at home including setting aside regular time, turning off the phone, choosing a space in which you can jump and run (preferably with a mirror), selecting a mat/towel, chair and music (easily accessible in the home), and ensuring water is available. While the place where the video, television and/or audio sound system were sited (more usually a family or common room such as the lounge) were at times being monopolised, marked out and came to take meaning as a woman's fitness space much of the preparation required signals the delineation of time and space within the framework of heterosexual domestic arrangements (Hargreaves, 1994; Johnston & Valentine, 1995). Along with "getting up earlier, exchanging exercise for lunch (you can brown-bag it afterward), stopping at class or the gym on your way home from work, using time when your kid is napping or arranging with another family member to help with cooking three or four times a week so you can work out instead of preparing dinner" Fonda intended her Workout books and the video and audio tapes to be part of feminine lifestyle strategy.

Fonda's workout program was not a female fitness regime that might transcend the structures of heteronormativity in the home or any other public or private fitness space. Rather it was a program serving to fit in with and normalise ubiquitous, taken-for-granted assumptions about heterosexual domesticity (Best, 2005; Hubbard, 2008; Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004). The instruction required women to take control of their corporeal health and fitness at the same time as supporting their male partners, their children and retaining responsibility for the home environment. This type of exercise incorporated a philosophy of

women's well-being that Jane Fonda promoted within the context of a growing "popular feminism" (Cole and Hribar, 1995, p. 349). That is to say, Fonda's regimes re-articulated corporeal control as female empowerment and positioned fitness as emancipatory; a solution to the 'problems' of women's bodies be they appearance or performance related. Fonda's prescription of exercise is somewhat duplicitous. Her philosophy explicitly promotes the development of empowered, healthy, strong women as a challenge to traditional ideas as women as the 'weaker' sex. Yet, at the same time the narrative and visual material reinforces women's bodies as problematic and in need of discipline and control, promotes the domestic role of women, and encourages female support for male partners in domestic and child rearing arrangements that are central to heterosexual home life (Johnston & Valentine, 1995).

Conclusion

This paper brings critical heterosexual studies to the fore in discussions about leisure spaces to encourage further work interrogating heterosexuality and heteronormativity. Exploring the complex ways in which leisure practices operate as places for the expression and reproduction of heterosexuality is important. As Jackson (2005, p. 16) emphasises "we must know what we are up against" if we are to be able to understand sexual inequality and be able to challenge and change such social injustice. Within the heteronormative framework of the female fitness industry in the 1980s, Fonda's exercise regimes operated to reinforce heterosexual relations at the level of meaning (language and discourse), routine (the practice of fitness), and subjectivity (desire and emotion). Jane Fonda's fitness manuals provided instruction in a set of practices serving to shore up the hegemonic status of female heterosexuality characterised by the production and consumption of respectable heterosexual desire, the necessity of procreation and monogamy, and the continued importance of domestic imperatives.

Exploring the everyday social practice of fitness with a historical eye, sheds light on how gender and heterosexuality are constructed, negotiated and sustained over time and in particular spaces and places. The internal and external spatiality of fit female bodies is

regulated through body work. Yet dominant, normalised representations of heterosexuality are not all encompassing of every heterosexual form. There was/is no single or inevitable consequence of engagement with Fonda's exercise regime. Female fitness is a complex, ambiguous and historical phenomenon having a multiplicity of meanings, affects and relations which cannot be confined to spaces that are independent of a wider network of social, political and economic forces in popular culture (Cole and Hribar, 1995). Interrogating heterosexuality in leisure studies requires approaches that can account for temporal and spatial dimensions, as well as the intersectional dynamics of sex and sexuality with, for example the forces of gender, class, race/ethnicity, disability and age which is what heteronormativity attests to.

Notes.

1. For the purposes of this analysis I use the term non-white as a wish to refer to whites and non-whites in a critical discussion of exclusionary racial practices. I recognise here that the word 'black' is commonly used to refer to a variety of non-white groups and, notwithstanding the many negative connotations of the word, has come to imply solidarity against racism. I also recognise that it would be preferable to be able to identify people in their own terms. But it is impossible to precisely explain the ethno-racial profile of all of the women photographed in the manual simply by looking at the pictures.

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