Exercise regimens, like diets and PCs, require updates. In the perpetual quest to obtain physical perfection, insider knowledge is coveted. Women must know the secrets of the “celebrity,” a need met by the reduced, reused, and recycled content of magazines. This mirrored regurgitation of women’s needs and desires is published again and again with new faces, in new outfits, every season. The audience for these periodicals is a population of women who have seemingly forgotten how to nourish and move their own bodies.

“Celebrity endorsements include super model Christy Turlington and Broadway and film star Alan Cummings.”

Yoga (both the practice and the idea(l)) performs a tripartite function, in that it conditions the mind, body, and spirit. Yoga enables urbanites to stay sane, stay fit, and stay connected to themselves, to nature, to an imported spirituality, to whatever aspects of the wisdom of the East, to whatever aspects of the practice they choose to emphasize or neglect. With cheaper rates than a therapist, yoga’s convenience and wide appeal lies in the fact that its ancient wisdom can be crammed into an hour-long session with an optional spirituality component. According to one’s whims or busy schedule, yoga as$Sions may be added or dropped; the practice of yoga can be modified according to the customer. The yoga classroom (and the general fitness discourse) creates space for the hyper-competitive and individualistic strain of Americana to thrive without guilt.

“Coming soon on Discovery Health ‘She TV’ Magee Hickey has produced a fabulous 3 minute segment on how Yogilates helps a stressed out TV producer release her worries for awhile and get back in touch with her body and spirit.”

In addition to her dependency on the next endorphin fix, the compulsive exerciser is in constant need of new tips, increased efficiency, stimulation, and variation. Yoga has outwarded other trends of the physical fitness industry precisely because it is not new—although it may be novel for American (sub)urbanites. Its long shelf-life is sustained by the telling fact that humans have been practicing yoga since Before the Current Era, which lends the latest, greatest ”fad” considerable historical weight, credibility, and status (and serves as a selling point). But even with its seemingly endless array of postures and variations, and the option to tap into an infinite spirituality, yoga is not enough for the insatiable American consumer and her limited attention span. She wants quick fixes, instant results, fast returns on investments, and immediate satisfaction. With her lotus-embroidered Lycra, workout top, spandex pants, macchiato in hand and synthetic yoga mat strapped on back (with a hidden compartment for cell phones, cash or credit), the modern woman requires an exercise routine that fits tidily into her demanding lifestyle. She wants to have her low-fat, sugar-free cake without feeling compelled to throw it up afterwards. She wants Yoga to Go.

“FAQ: I’m looking for an exercise system that isn’t too straining or difficult so I can do it every day without interfering with my work.”

From fusion cuisine to the Prius and the Labradoodle, the trends show that hybridism is in. The emergence of yoga hybrids includes disco yoga, in-flight yoga, bed-top yoga, and Yogilates. Conceived in 1997, Yogilates is a registered trademark that represents the fusion of hatha yoga and the Pilates Method, an exercise regimen developed in the early 20th century by Joseph H. Pilates. In combining the antique with the ancient, Yogilates provides Baby Boomers and GenXYZers with necessary physical fitness program updates.

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“The mass media, fashion, and health and fitness world seem to understand that the combination of these two disciplines makes sense, and they appreciate its appeal to all people interested in health and fitness.”
Perpetually dissatisfied with their own bodies, women are always in the market for improvements: the Rock-Hard Body, the Celebrity Body, the Yoga Body, the Pilates Body (or the hybrid Yogilates Body). As Jazzercise becomes dated, white urban and suburban women are turning toward more exotic fare: belly dancing videos, pole dancing classes, and Carmen Electra's Aerobic Striptease. Here arises a perverse and privileged craving for the Stripper Body—representing the exerciser’s voluntary reenactment of a sex-worker's labor hours, while conveniently avoiding customers or compensation. All of this within the comfortable, heterotopic space of your living room, turned health club, turned strip club.

“In addition to the Yogilates classes in top health clubs, yoga studios, and corporate wellness programs, Yogilates is now a recognized brand name that has caught the eye of the media and health and fitness world as few exercise trends have before. Vogue, Elle, Jane, Bazaar, Mode, YM, CosmoGirl, Child, Weight Watchers Magazine, the New York Times and the Village Voice have all run features on Yogilates.”

Today’s domestic goddess must incorporate a block of time for the maintenance of her figure in addition to maintaining her family and home. Exercise is thus added onto her list of household chores. With the latest technology and fitness accessories, it can be performed entirely within the domestic sphere. From SELF magazine to Pro-Anorexia Blogs, Lifetime TV to the Home Shopping Network, eDiet.com to meditation podcasts, information technologies arise as the secret keys to physical fitness. This mediated process creates a population of fitness-info-addicts—displacing the impetus to know and command one’s own body and replacing it with the desire to intimately know and own a prototype, a model.

1 All quotes from yogilates.com