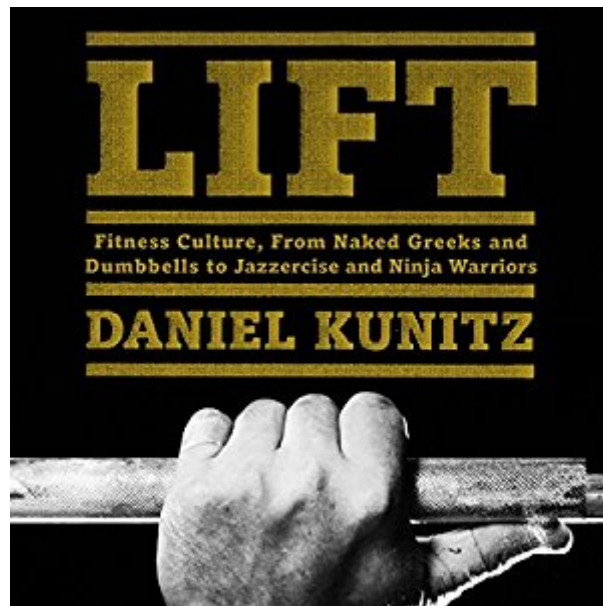


The book was found

Lift: Fitness Culture, From Naked Greeks And Acrobats To Jazzercise And Ninja Warriors



Synopsis

A fascinating cultural history of fitness, from Greek antiquity to the era of the "big-box gym" and beyond, exploring the ways in which human exercise has changed over time - and what we can learn from our ancestors. We humans have been conditioning our bodies for more than 2,500 years, yet it's only recently that treadmills and weight machines have become the gold standard of fitness. For all this new technology, are we really healthier, stronger, and more flexible than our ancestors? Where *Born to Run* began with an aching foot, *Lift* begins with a broken gym system - one founded on high-tech machinery and isolation techniques that aren't necessarily as productive as we think. Looking to the past for context, Daniel Kunitz crafts an insightful cultural history of the human drive for exercise, concluding that we need to get back to basics to be truly healthy. *Lift* takes us on an enlightening tour through time, beginning with the ancient Greeks, who made a cult of the human body - the word gymnasium derives from the Greek word for "naked" - and following Roman legions, medieval knights, Persian *pahlevans*, and 18th-century German gymnasts. Kunitz discovers the seeds of the modern gym in 19th-century Paris, where weight-lifting machines were first employed, and takes us all the way up to the game-changer: the feminist movement of the 1960s, which popularized aerobics and calisthenics classes. This ignited the first true global fitness revolution, and Kunitz explores how it brought us to where we are today. Once a fast-food inhaler and substance abuser, Kunitz reveals his own decade-long journey to becoming ultra-fit using ancient principals of strengthening and conditioning. With *Lift*, he argues that, as a culture, we are finally returning to this natural ideal - and that it's to our great benefit to do so.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a book about the history of fitness *CrossFit*, how society has accepted fitness *CrossFit*, and how it has evolved into something superior *CrossFit*. And, oh yeah, by the way, CrossFit. I love working out and have often been intrigued by the history of how picking up heavy things and setting them back down again turned into the science we know today. I quickly realized I'd be disappointed, as this type of historical depiction was absent from the book. What was there, however, were a lot of views into societal norms, which I found to have the potential to be equally fascinating. Do we base our opinions of attractiveness on the fitness/athletics that are in the mainstream, or do we choose our fitness/athletic activities based on what we find attractive? Daniel Kunitz started exploring this, and I really would love to know the answer. Alas, the author contradicted himself here so many times that I never really found out. For a former Paris Review editor, I would have expected better prose and a flow of supporting ideas. What really was the nail in the coffin for me was the author's obsession with CrossFit. Full disclosure: I'm not a fan of CrossFit. But I know people who have had success on it, so good for them. I have no desire to judge someone based on how they workout. But I would be remiss if I didn't point out the book's fatal flaw is the cult like belief that CrossFit is the most superior fitness activity in the history of mankind. If it was limited to CrossFit's place in a chronological timeline, and concluded with CrossFit and its importance (even dominance as a fitness choice) in the 21st century, that would be understandable and tolerable.

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