



Million Dollar Muscle: A Historical and Sociological Perspective of the Fitness Industry

Adrian James Tan, Doug Brignole

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Million Dollar Muscle is a unique anthology, co-authored by a "gym rat" with a Ph.D. in Sociology and a former competitive bodybuilder, fitness expert, and entrepreneur. The book offers a sociological perspective on the fitness industry, discussing how it is driven both by market forces and the culture of individual consumerism.

Within a capitalist system the fitness industry is driven by the need to earn profits. From a small sub-culture it has grown into a multi-billion dollar industry. The market is now flooded with gyms, nutritional supplements, workout apparel, exercise equipment, and health and fitness magazines. With massive advertisements, and aided by the Hollywood culture and its emphasis on appearance, the fitness industry has grown to new dimensions, influencing individual choices and behaviors.

Million Dollar Muscle discusses this evolution, along with what motivates people to make the choices they do. The material recognizes that these choices have important social implications. By combining an academic and theoretical approach with an "in the trenches" point of view, the book is able to bridge micro-macro aspects of the industry. It provides a comprehensive exploration of the individual choices regarding fitness, and why this is an important topic for sociological consideration.

The following topics are discussed:

- Market forces and the power these forces have to shape perceptions of reality;
- The mechanics of capitalism and how these have changed traditional norms and customs which previously served practical purposes;
- The danger of conforming to social norms;
- Individual choices and how they are, in reality, driven by social forces

Million Dollar Muscle is an unusual and intriguing text that successfully combines the thoughtful consideration of the social sciences with the "in-the-know" sensibility of an industry insider.

Dr. Adrian James Tan, a Singapore-born American, is currently a faculty member at Southern Methodist University in the Sociology Department. He teaches courses in Introduction to Sociology, Marriage and Family, Sociological Theory, and Person vs. Society. Adrian obtained a bachelor's degree majoring in English and philosophy, and master's degrees in sociology and international affairs at Ohio University. Specializing in social psychology and ethnic identity, Adrian earned a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of North Texas, submitting his dissertation on the ethnic identity of Mexican-American children.

Doug Brignole is a 37-year veteran of the fitness industry and a former Mr. California, Mr. America, and Mr. Universe winner. His competitive career spanned from the age of 16 until the age of 51. Doug is also a former gym owner, lecturer, author, fitness TV show host, and personal trainer. He writes for *Iron Man Magazine*, appears on MuscleXL (an iPad app) where he gives video tips on biomechanics, and is currently working on a biomechanics book that explains the physics of exercise and how one can assess which

exercises are productive and which ones pose a risk of injury. He has been certified by the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Council on Exercise.

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