YOUTH SPORTS PARTICIPATION, TRAINABILITY AND READINESS

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CHAPTER 2; YOUNG BODIES IN SPORT - ascetic “hard work” and new wave “just do it”

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INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a critique of the processes by which health, exercise, and the body have emerged and moved on the cultural agenda of young people. Contemporary life has transformed the body into an object, as a material of ideal appearance and depository of social norms and rules. It is argued that the development and promotion of cultural beliefs among young people flow from and help to reproduce discourses about the human body as a perfect image. Of interest is the body-young person relationship, specifically when young persons address this relationship in the context of the ideals and models of contemporary western culture. This idea is explored through three discussions organized around the theme of the construction of a new subjectivity of young people:

- First, how health is embodied through sport practices, and how it is used in the formation of a new self by young people is initially summarized;

- Second, the link between sport for young people and the concept of healthy lifestyle and the meaning of contemporary healthy behaviour are critically examined; and

- Third, construction of the self is examined, specifically that young people are lead to inclusive and/or exclusive systems of normalization on the basis of cultural patterns, ascetic behaviors (strict diet, severe training, etc), and/or new ethic regimes (focus on the body, lifestyle, etc.).

THE MYTH OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE PERFECT BODY/HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR AND THE EMBODIED SELF

The body has never been as present in daily life as it is today. In recent years, the public sphere is rooted in a body creed: magazines, television shows, newspapers, advertising, and medical discussions are full of information about