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The Power of Sets and Reps: How Fitness Bloggers on Instagram Construct Authenticity

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Abstract

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This study employs a combined framework of Bourdieusian field analysis and Foucauldian discourse analysis to examine discourses and relations of power pertaining to personal branding authenticity. The central inquiry of this study is how male fitness bloggers on Instagram create and maintain their authenticity on different levels of popularity. The analysis shaped men's online fitness blogging practices on Instagram as a field and as a discourse. The findings of the study reinforce previous studies in the literary field personal branding, but also point to some research gaps on how authenticity is conceptualized. By this combined framework, this study concludes that there are several factors that determine how authenticity is constituted and maintained in the online fitness blogging field, such as position in the field, cultural and external capital, power relations, and the field's doxa.

Keywords: strategic communication, personal branding, authenticity, Foucault, Bourdieu, Instagram

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1. Introduction

The introduction and public reception of The World Wide Web led to drastic changes in our society and the fundamental principles which serve as building blocks for communication and social and professional relations. Both individuals and markets began migrating to, and adopting, new ways of information management, communication, etc. (Abe 2011). Moreover, this migration has become increasingly visual, with several social media platforms that primarily rely on visual communication. Thus, corporations have been able to employ more effective marketing communications toward their publics (Durmaz & Efendioglu 2016). However, in the same vein, with the arrival of social media, the private individual had also become a private commodity. Social media platforms set the stage for *the commodification of the self* by allowing private individuals to share their ongoing thoughts and activities (Pagis & Ailon 2017). Thus, a new trend developed. Internet-based personal brands—typically sustained by, and centered around, one individual—seemingly began blurring the line between corporate and private online branding activities.

Contemporary issues stemming from the transition to contemporary information communication technologies presents itself as a circumstance of mass production and mass reproduction of ideas, arguments, and matters of text (culture). As proposed by both Jean Baudrillard and Umberto Eco (1981; 1973), our society has long been in the process of mass production and replication. While Baudrillard employs a more extreme postmodernist outlook claiming that society only manages to simulate reality through simulacra, Eco maintains that our place in society is one of replication and ‘whitewashing’. In a general sense, the absence of the ‘genuine’ and ‘sincere’ are central notions in both disciplines of thought.

In light of such mass-production and -reproduction capturing the attention of any giving audience becomes more difficult, particularly challenging for corporate brands. The formation of *Crowdcultures*—online culture groups formed around niche interests—limit the involvement of corporate activity due to their incompatible nature, in the form of market interest vs. entertainment interest (Holt

2016). Corporate brands are thus likely unable to act as representatives of online interest groups due to being unable to represent their interests, and so, struggle to establish positions of authority and influence. On that account, personal brands and influencers are closer to online audiences due to their personal nature, and thus, may be perceived as more *authentic*, and therefore are more easily able to influence their followers (Nandagiri 2018). Subsequently, contemporary corporate marketing approaches consist of strategies which involve ‘borrowing’ authenticity from personal brands by engaging in collaborations and sponsorships.

1.1. Problem

In 2019 fitness influencer Brittany Dawn Davis had a status of being a credible source of health and fitness, with more than 560.000 followers on Instagram. When advertising a fitness and diet product, her audience was in outraged when the product did not deliver what it advertised, and her popularity dropped significantly. While this could serve as a good example of a social media crisis (e.g. Apuke & Tunca 2019), I argue that the underlying issue at stake is how authenticity is constituted and maintained in an online environment. There is, therefore, a need for personal brands, influencers, and micro-celebrities to develop and maintain a status of being perceived as authentic, as the main source for achieving social capital/popularity (Bourdieu 1985). Furthermore, with the advent of many social media, and especially Instagram, this communication is increasingly done through visual strategies.

As such, being a personal brand in the contemporary digital environment places many challenges on the operator. Gaining the attention of a larger audience becomes even more difficult in light of the mass consumption culture prevalent in society. Personal brands are tasked with the difficulty of understanding the complexity of what gains online tractions and generates interests, and what type of behaviour may spark negative reactions. That is also contingent on the type of content they ultimately find themselves to be generating, and the social media platform(s) they inhabit (Berger & Milkman 2011). Fitness is a concept which is widely recognized in many facets of social life. The fitness trend has also become much more widespread on social media, and personal brands have been established

around fitness. Fitness bloggers, then, become influencers that communicate ideas on healthy being to audiences on various social media platforms. By this approximation, these fitness bloggers also have large disparities in how much traction they can accumulate through their content. That implies the difference in the amount of influence one fitness blogger has in relation to another. As such, we can imagine that they have different means of creating authenticity.

1.2. Aim and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to analyze how various relations of power and discourses related to the positioning of fitness bloggers on Instagram constitutes authenticity in the field.

The central research question of the study is:

How is authenticity constituted and maintained in the online fitness blogging field, and how does it change with increased levels of personal brand popularity?

For the purpose of answering this question, I will employ a combination of a Bourdieusian field analysis and a Foucauldian discourse analysis, leading to the following sub-questions that serve to assist the answering of the primary research question.

Sub-questions:

1. How are men's online fitness blogging practices on Instagram constituted as a field?
2. What are the governing discourses of the men's online fitness blogging practices on Instagram? How are these connected to the Habitus of the blogger?
3. What discourse(s) is present in the text of fitness bloggers of varying levels of popularity?

1.3. Motivation for Choice of Topic and Relevance to Strategic Communication

This study is about the constitution of authenticity in an online environment. The reason for investigating this is, firstly, that authenticity is perceived to be a vital resource in the strategic communication of personal brand - whether this communication aims at fulfilling their own mission and vision or whether they act as influencers on behalf of commercial partners. Secondly, the constitution of authenticity in an online environment can be seen as a radicalization of the conditions already present in a mass production society, a condition that Baudrillard and Eco have observed and described through the terms of simulacrum and hyperreality. The specific choice to analyze fitness blogging is motivated by the fact that fitness is an inherently physical activity. Thus, the peculiar connection observed by Baudrillard and Eco between original and replication, or between reality and representation, is pushed to the extreme in fitness bloggers' attempt to constitute authenticity. The relevance of the study to the field of strategic communication is thus established through the attempt to use fitness blogging as an example of a general phenomenon concerning the condition for strategically communicating authenticity in the society, where interactions are increasingly becoming virtual.

1.4. Delimitations

Authenticity is a multifaceted term which accommodates several definitions depending on various circumstances (e.g. Martinee 2004; Wang 1990; Cohen 1988; MacCannell 1973). However, authenticity is also conceptualized differently depending on whether one adopts an essentialistic or a constructionist definition (see discussions in the literature review). This study adopts a constructionist definition, which traditionally has emphasized how authenticity is constructed as a perception within the receiver of communication. In this study, I analyze the production or constitution of authenticity in communication. Thus, the study will not address whether or not the audience perceive the visual communication from fitness bloggers as authentic or not. Nor will it address the intentions or underlying strategies of fitness bloggers. The study is limited to analyzing how visual communication as a cultural artifact manages to present itself as authentic.

2. Literature Review

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the previous research conducted within the topics of personal lifestyle branding and authenticity in three related fields: Influencer marketing, personal branding, and micro-celebrities. I will address key concepts for each phenomenon in a combined setting. Furthermore, I will discuss theoretically and empirically underdeveloped aspects to identify potential research gaps and conflicting evidence in the context of potential patterns or relationships. I will conclude the chapter by providing an argumentation of how this bears relevance for the particular aim of this particular study and, finally, expand on the problematization that will be explored throughout the paper.

2.1. Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is typically defined as a marketing tool for traditional corporate brands, by forming long- or short-term collaborations with private actors, such as influencers, in order to reach potentially niche online target audiences (Kádeková & Holiencinová 2018). To a large degree, corporate brands' inability to appear authentic and credible to online audiences is a central factor to this particular type of strategy (Gürkaynak et al. 2018). In stark contrast, influencers, to their audiences, appear superior in terms of authenticity and credibility which consequently lends them the power to affect, i.e. purchase behaviours among their audience (Kádeková & Holiencinová 2018; De Vierman et al. 2017). The authors (Kádeková & Holiencinová 2018) only provide a seemingly essentialist definition of what authenticity means, referring mostly to the absence of commercial actors. Kádeková & Holiencinová (2018:92) define an influencer as "... an individual with a significant following on social media who is paid by brands to promote their products to said followers, via free products and trips and/or cash payment per promotional post." Similarly, Lagrée et al. (2018) contend that influencer marketing is defined by sponsorships bound by contract where the sponsoring brand gains promotional posts on the influencer's behalf.

Engaging in a Youtube marketing influencer discourse with a constructionist approach, Xiao, Wang & Chan-Olmsted (2018) highlight the importance of influencer information credibility, and audience interpretation of said information

credibility. Particularly in the case of Youtuber influencer marketing, interpretation of information credibility defined by two particular features: domain knowledge and system knowledge. That credibility may also partly be argued to be based in authentic self-presentation due to its dependency on trustworthiness (Xiao et al. 2018). In addition to the authenticity factor, the authors suggest that influencers' unique relationship with their audience, and their marketing activity, sets them apart from traditional marketing strategies and celebrity marketing.

2.2. Personal branding

As opposed to influencer marketing, personal branding employs a much wider range of applications. Literature in this field addresses the questions of authenticity and authority in relation to personal brand expression and equity. The former relates to personal brands as commodities whereas the latter implies personal branding as a byproduct of various social media activities. Labrecque *et al.* (2011) study highlights several factors which impacts the extent of a successful online personal brand. By studying the online behaviour of twelve people, the authors (Labrecque *et al.* 2011) conclude that a successful personal brand is contingent on factors such as authentic self-presentation, audience identification/message targeting, and so forth. Self-presentation on various online media platforms for the purpose of commodification is also argued to be dictated by levels of authenticity the personal brand provides its audience (Faleatua 2018). On that note, the authors (Labrecque et al. 2011) employ an essentialist conceptualization, and seemingly, only refer to it as the discrepancy between personal brands and corporate brands.

Contrastingly, Harris & Rae (2011) content that authenticity is more closely tied to 'a culture of trust'. Consequently, authenticity is primarily contingent upon being a personal brand that provides guidance through good quality practical information—in other words, it brings value to the audience. Faleatua (2018) studied young women's self-presentation on Instagram, looking particularly at female Instagram users' notions of authentic self-expression. The findings in the study suggest that online self-branding actions are made with the explicit understanding of their 'offline' implications (Faleatua 2018). This finding suggests that Instagram bloggers may potentially stage particular actions online in order to

achieve a desired offline effect. As such, authenticity is merely defined as a representation of ‘the real self’. Similarly, looking at the discourse surrounding travel blogs, Nuenen (2015) contends that travel bloggers engage in paradoxical and complex practices in order to establish an authentic personal brand. The dominant factor in this discourse is labeled as a paradoxical relationship between the mediated and the real lifestyle of the blogger (Nuenen 2015). In this case, authenticity is primarily determined by how close mediation of lifestyle pertains to the blogger’s actual reality.

It does not necessarily assume that authenticity is actively staged by the blogger, rather, that mediation of lifestyle may be presumed to have an inherent inability to be authentic for it cannot actively represent the actual lifestyle of a blogger. Notably, the absence of commercial and/or corporate affiliations in personal branding practices is something which affects the perceived authenticity of the brand (Maguire 2015). In a general sense, this notion of authenticity may be regarded as a broad description of what it means for personal brands to be authentic.

2.3. Micro-Celebrities

Recent developments and public accustomization of social networking channels and other digital media have made it possible for the regular individual to be elevated to a position adjacent to celebrity practice (Khamis et al. 2016). Subsequently, bloggers have, in the past decade, been labeled micro-celebrities (McRae 2017). To that extent, though, micro-celebrities have varying definitions, i.e. Senft (2013) contends that micro-celebrities are those who commit to a position and maintain their online identity as a branded good, while Marwick (2013) suggest that it is sufficiently defined through the state of being famous to a certain online cultural niche. These definitions primarily serve the purpose of explaining how the micro-celebrity concept can be justified in light of traditional notions of celebrity. Boyd and Marwick (2011) describe celebrity as dynamic performative practice. Supposedly, that is the connection which, according to McRae (2017), deems micro-celebrity to be a concept near equal to celebrity in terms of practice. Incidentally, this relationship appears to be inherently paradoxical, as McRae (2017)—departing from a constructionist conceptualization—points out, that

micro-celebrities are expected to stay more true/authentic to their branded selves by their audience, despite their celebrity-like status. That may, however, be understood by the fact that unlike 'real' celebrities, micro-celebrities (personal brands) are more dependent on interacting with their audience and maintaining/staging authenticity to preserve their brand equity (Maguire 2015). To which extent, traditional celebrities typically have agents who manage their brand, while micro-celebrities have to set work standards in order to achieve their desired quota, which essentially dictates the market value of the brand through self-employed digital labour (Long & Willhoit 2018).

2.4. Synthesis

Either you are authentic, or you are not. These studies have difficulties in explaining exactly what constitutes authenticity. They may refer to threats to authenticity and thus implicitly operate with a negative definition: connection to commercial partners is a threat to authenticity etc. In positive terms, they may refer to 'realness', 'being true to oneself' or similar. Yet, these definitions are rather circular and tautological: when you are true to yourself, you are authentic, and when you are authentic, you are true to yourself. It simply states the same in other words. In contrast, those operating with a constructionist notion of authenticity have very little to say about how it is actually constructed. Their answers also appear rather circular. As an example, authenticity can be constructed through a negotiation. But what does this mean? Apart from being a rather obvious metaphor. Is it a 'free' negotiation where participants can agree on whatever they might define as authentic? Or are they somehow restricted by the object they negotiate about?

The difference between studies representing an essentialistic conceptualization of authenticity and those representing a constructionist conceptualization is the where the former define authenticity as inherent and essentialistic features of the object, the latter define it as a freely floating concept with no attachment to the object. The former are then restricted to a simple and often normative dichotomy between authentic vs. inauthentic and thereby from which they can suggest recommendations about how to become authentic. Such recommendation only tends to repeat the tautology their definition is based on: "in order to be authentic,

you must be true to yourself". The latter have difficulties in saying anything at all, and state that authenticity can be anything you want it to be. Insofar we may contend that a majority of the literature that covers authenticity and internet-based professions merely scratches the epistemological surface of what authenticity means for personal brands and mediated depictions of authenticity therein.

As such, the prevalent epistemologies of authenticity in personal branding do not provide a satisfactory explanation of what constitutes authenticity. What is needed is an approach that maintains the commitment of essentialists to ground the research in the object itself but without being trapped in the circular definitions. And at the same time maintaining a commitment to the dynamic conceptualization of the constructivists but without losing track of the object.

3. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I present the central theories for this thesis. Firstly, a motivation for the chosen theories will be made. After that, I begin by delving deeper into the epistemology of authenticity and what the concept actually attempts to suppose. Following that, I outline the central ideas of Foucault and his views of [normative] power. The following chapter will explain Bourdieu and his concept of field and habitus, which include ideas of social and cultural capital, these concepts culminate in a particular view of power which Bourdieu is known for. Finally, I juxtapose the authors' interpretations of power and arrive at a general theoretical approach, which will be the structural basis for the analysis.

3.1. Motivation for chosen theories

Despite its current popularity, especially in the field of strategic communication (e.g. Molleda 2010; Frosh 2001; Leigh et al. 2006; Holt & Griffin 2003), authenticity is a concept with a long history. It appeared during cultural changes in 17th and 18th centuries in a shift from a stratified society to a society where individuality became synonymous with being distinct and unique. The concept of authenticity derives its meaning from those new ideas for what a human being is (Adorno 1973; Rousseau 1957; Sartre 1992).

Martin Heidegger (1962) and his theory about authenticity (Eigentlichkeit) captures this condition of modern life in a way that takes into account a broader perspective than contemporary applications of the concept of authenticity in strategic communication literature. Yet, at the same time by emphasizing the ongoing and thus temporal character of being (authentic), Heidegger's theory is congruent with (post)modern constructionist conceptualizations of authenticity.

While Heidegger's theory of authenticity is highly relevant for this study, it is a theory that, due to its philosophical nature, it is difficult to apply in an empirical analysis. Thus, in order to present a more applicable theoretical framework, I have chosen to combine a Bourdieuan field analysis and a Foucauldian discourse analysis. Both sociologists focus on the individual human being in their theories. And even if they do so in different ways, their respective theoretical positions are

heavily influenced by Heidegger's theory of the human being as an authentic being (Dreyfus 2008; Bourdieu 1991a). Thus, while Heidegger is an important part of my theoretical apparatus, it is the more applicable theories by Bourdieu and Foucault that will form the analytical framework.

3.2. Authenticity

Martin Heidegger (1962) is one of the most prevailing philosophers that addresses authenticity. His philosophical outlook was mainly concerned with the aspect of being, as existing in the world with purpose. To illustrate his ideas, Heidegger used the German word “Dasein” which translates to existence. To that extent, Heidegger views humans as fundamentally different from other existence in the world being Daseins with the ability to reflect upon their ontological being.

The Dasein then is an existence which is aware of its being and thus takes issue with its being by asking questions of its existence, thus fundamentally an ontological being. Secondly, a Dasein is also categorized as a being which constantly engages in tasks or actions which it cares about. In Heidegger's view, care is not necessarily understood as a positive emotional attachment. Instead, his purview of care is much broader and in general terms implies the absolute relevance of something in relation to the individual, be it positive or negative. Care is one of the underlying concepts Heidegger uses to explain purposeful action and what eventually a person chooses to care about, determined by the structure constituting care (Heidegger 1962:241). The structure consists of three articles of being, which ultimately determine care for action—Facticity, Fallenness, and Existentiality. Facticity, simply put, is being abandoned to chance factors. It is the existential conditions which an individual find themselves thrown into, i.e. the particular historical context, socio-economic class, gender, and so forth. Furthermore, Heidegger contends that the tasks or assignments we choose to engage with rarely stem from any ontological considerations. Rather, the activities we partake in are in some sense decided for us by the facticity that was handed to us.

The second stage of the care-structure is the fallenness. As the fundamental principle of Dasein is the active engagement with tasks, fallenness implies that as Daseins we do not actively think about/deconstruct the tasks we perform. Fallenness tells us that our technologically advanced society with absurd levels of information flow makes it easy for an individual to automatically fall into tasks predetermined by the influence of others and dominant paradigms. As such, on the basis of contemporary social structures, it would be quite simple to fall into a technology-oriented consumer mindset. By virtue of gossip and ambiguity, we find ourselves living in a world of others. The notion of fallenness may be even more dominant with a digital society facilitating communication through social media. Fallenness stems from Heidegger's use of "verfallen," understood as forfeiting, to which the idea of, forfeiting to the mechanisms of the social world, may be extracted.

The final aspect of Dasein, Heidegger (1962) refers to as existentiality. The reality of a Dasein is being an existence with possibilities. As mentioned previously, Heidegger places particular emphasis on human beings as Daseins due to their ability to cognitively address their existence. Consequently, humans are beings that can make choices outside the natural order of things, i.e. a tree cannot choose the path of becoming an artist.

In presenting these elements of Dasein, Heidegger concludes that there are two sides to being—the inauthentic and the authentic. The inauthentic being is depicted as one which defines itself by the first two articles, the facticity and the fallenness. That being may be, as previously noted, understood as the one who has subjected themselves to the mechanisms of the social world and only follows the conditions which were handed to him, or what the mass is doing. The inauthentic lifestyle thus limits the being by actions which almost completely conform to the environment which formed them in the first place. The antithesis, authentic being, considers and questions its possibilities in life. The authentic being knows its own facticity and fallenness and considers how these are not limitations of the possibilities they, as individuals, may obtain in life.

3.3. Foucault and Power

Foucault's primary concern is with how power works in a society which he places in opposition to traditional ideas of power (e.g., French and Raven 1959), that positions it as a commodity which may be held by certain groups of people - a repressive force. In this sense, power may be understood as a commodity only accessible to those who possess enough resources to attain it. Power is then mainly reserved for the social elite and authoritative figures in society. In stark contrast, Foucault (1975;1982) positions power as an implicit element of social activity, i.e. not a repressive exertion. Power operates at the micro-levels of social life and is therefore not held by any particular group over another, which suggests that anyone is subject to power within the social realm as Foucault (1978:93) puts into words, "power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation (sic) in a particular society." Power is not a 'thing' but a relation, yet it does not imply that power cannot be recognized as an active ingredient in social action/behaviour. Foucault (1975) argues that power is dynamically tied to knowledge and language. Knowledge, which is at the base of our social structures, continuously exerts its normative power over individuals and groups of people in society, and thus, is also a strategic tool. Power is non-subjective and intentional; no power is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. And that is not to imply that it is a direct consequence of choice or decision.

Knowledge does not necessarily coincide with the understanding of "objective" reality or facts. Rather, Foucault (1972) sees knowledge as the perception of language. And language, to that extent, is the contingency which forms the dominant discourses which are present in various social structures. In this regard, Foucault's perspectives have a social constructivist approach. Power, knowledge, discourse, and subject are one of the most central concepts present throughout the work of Foucault and particularly the intricate connection he draws between them. According to Foucault (1972:192) discourse is the purview of language and practices which constitute knowledge, such as the set of possible enunciations, groups of concepts, and a set of choices relevant to a social structure. These elements do not form an ultimate truth of any given social structure, but rather, a

‘certain way of speaking,’ i.e. a system of prohibition and values (Foucault 1972:192). As such, dominant discourses are dictated by the prevailing paradigm of that era. For a less conceptual definition of discourse, grounded in practical steps on analysis, see the chapter on Foucauldian discourse analysis in the methodology.

Furthermore, Foucault (1982) highlights the processes which transform individuals as subjects through power structures. The idea of objectifying the subject refers to the person being seen as an embodiment of knowledge, and to what extent that knowledge allows for an expression of power. To that extent, Foucault (1982) explains the subject being placed into existence and how power is exercised, and how these processes are inextricably tied. Foucault suggests a dual meaning of the idea of a subject characterized as, being subject to others through “objective” knowledge, and being subject of oneself bound by individual identity through conscience or self-knowledge. The latter meaning builds on the implicit mechanisms of power. The identity an individual subjects themselves to is a dynamic actuality which is dependent on the surrounding social structures. That is what Foucault (1982) implies is the objectification of subjects. In order for an individual’s identity to coincide with any given social category, they must be subjected to the objectified knowledge relevant to the category. Thus, one becomes subject only if they allow themselves to be objectified as an embodiment of knowledge.

3.4. Bourdieu and Power

Bourdieu is widely renowned for his inquiry into power, which he defines as symbolic power (1991). Through various concepts which culminate in his so-called field theory, Bourdieu (1998) looked into different social fields in an attempt to understand how power dynamics work in social structures. However, the field concept is not a theory but rather, as mentioned, a collection of analytical tools which consist of: various forms of capital, habitus, symbolic violence, nomos, doxa, and *illusio*. In order to better understand how Bourdieu anatomizes power, and how his idea of power is relevant for the particular phenomenon in this paper, it is important to better understand the workings of habitus, capital, and field, and how they relate to environmental conditions.

3.4.1. *Habitus*

The key to grasping Bourdieu's core principles is by getting a brief and functional understanding of the workings of *Habitus*. The *Habitus* principle, to Bourdieu (1977), is a system of predispositions in which people enjoy different positions in society which offers them a range of choices and/or strategies. It is the idea that the individual objectifies the social world into a span of probabilities and expectations. Bourdieu (1977:77) defines objective possibilities/probabilities as the probable outcome of attaining something (e.g. a good, a job, a relationship, etc.), and subjective expectations/aspirations as the behaviour adopted in order to meet a higher chance of success of the objective probability. That which, according to Bourdieu (1977), builds upon the discrepancy between the individual and society. Thus, the objective possibilities we find present in society are also markers for what behaviour is conditioned.

A more concrete example may be useful in order to further elaborate on objective probabilities and subjective expectations. An individual seeks the objective probability of becoming an astrophysicist, but their subjective expectations are limited due to their awareness of their below average math performance relative to the probability. Therefore, the behaviour adopted may lead to no action toward said objective probability. Alternatively, an individual's subjective expectations are high because they are aware of a certain talent/skill which they possess that may open a whole new spectrum of life-improving conditions. However, the environmental conditions they are subjected to severely limit the possible objective probability, i.e. the ability to demonstrate their theoretical or practical prowess.

In a general sense, *habitus* refers to the process of an internalization of the social world into the individual. The individual, through their actions, contributes to the social world and how its structures develop. In this given context, the social world is an endless cycle of production and reproduction by the *socialized* and *dynamic* people which inhabit and shape their collective reality (Bourdieu 1977). In its own right, *habitus* is also a transformative process. For instance, parents condition their children to certain behaviours when they grow up to be adults. Most of the indoctrinated 'strategies' which they use to orient the social world as adults may

be seen as the reproductive state of habitus. But, as an individual grows older and gains independence, they may, change locations, learn new languages, new skills, etc., which makes the process of habitus also transformative.

3.4.2. *Capital*

According to Bourdieu (1985), capital is labor, which individuals in society accumulate over time and may result in higher positions in society. Capital comes in three variants: economic, social, and cultural. Subsequently, acquisition of capital is not equal, due to each capital having varying degrees of measurement, and factors which determine capital value. The fourth form of capital is that which is symbolic. Symbolic capital may be understood as the culmination of the three core capitals, meaning, the complete value of an individual in the social world. Capital, in general, looks into the social statuses and power dynamics formed in society. The capital's existence is deeply rooted into the structures and functions of the social world, and Bourdieu believes that the value of society and all of its complex processes cannot be accounted for disregarding these various forms of capital (1985). As mentioned previously, Bourdieu separates capital into three core principles:

Economic capital, argued to be the most important capital (Bourdieu 1985), is largely measured through the amount of economic assets someone has. Assets include things that have direct economic value, such as currency or liquidated assets. Therefore, economic capital is not strictly limited to money because currencies may vary depending on cultural context.

Social capital is defined through the resources embedded in social relationships and networks. These networks may be family or friends, or, may be better understood as institutionalized relationships, which result from interactions and bonding through professional context(s). A person's social capital may be evaluated by different standards, such as the broadness of the network or the quality of contacts. For instance, a person may have few people in his contact network, but each of those contacts enjoys higher positions of power, influence, or knowledge. In this sense, other forms of capital also play an active role in the enrichment of social capital.

Cultural capital, in some ways, arose in opposition to economic capital. Bourdieu (1996) explained artists' struggle to free themselves from the bourgeois demand by means of artistic expression. To that extent, artists sought liberation through cultural materialism and expression which could not adhere to the logic of the economic market. Though, in its own right, cultural capital also functions as a currency, in the form of cultural knowledge. It serves as a tool for individuals to navigate culture and the opportunities present within the cultural expression. In near stark opposition to Bourdieu's early definition of cultural capital, contemporary applications of cultural capital may be argued to be closer to the market logic due to how notions of cultural capital have evolved and the environmental conditions which frame it have changed. An example of such environmental conditions is digital media technologies, which have birthed the notion of digital sociology and the 'online field.' In further elaboration of cultural capital, Bourdieu (1985) explains the concept's three core states, the embodied, the objectified, and the institutionalized. *Embodied cultural capital* refers to the inherent quality possessed by any individual, such as brain capacity, modes of self-presentation, acquired skill, and so forth. In other words, embodied cultural capital refers to the knowledge inherent in each individual and how that knowledge is applied to the external world.

The second form of cultural capital is the *objectified state*. Objectified cultural capital confers social value to materialistic possessions, i.e. apple products portray a particular form of prestige and identification with the brand, potentially portraying an abundance of cultural capital. Thus, objectified cultural capital is highly dependent on contemporary paradigmatic shifts in various fields.

The final and third state of cultural capital is the *institutionalized state*. Institutionalized cultural capital refers, to some extent, to the material manifestation of knowledge. Various certificates/diplomas of university education carry with it different levels of cultural capital, such as a Ph.D. carrying more capital than a master's degree. Subsequently, as one might expect, higher cultural capital may lead to a various increase in the other two capitals.

To conclude, various capitals exist to measure their own particular subsets but may also exchange values into each other. For example, economic capital such as money

may be exchanged for cultural capital in the form of a higher education which in turn may result in a larger accumulation of economic capital throughout a person's longevity, which finally may yield an accumulation of social capital with networks that possess high cultural/economic capital. The potential extension of a network may then also provide an increase in cultural capital through a mutual exchange of information. The various capitals may be exchanged in numerous ways and are not restricted to be exchanged in any particular order. In addition, when applying capital to different fields they have varying value depending on which field in which they are represented. To that extent, different capitals may also have an appropriated form which is particularly valuable in any given field, i.e. the political field may be comprised of a particular form of capital which borrows a collective meaning from the three core capitals.

3.4.3. *Field*

Bourdieu (1984) explains a field as space which dictates its own particular operational logic, and, where agents of various hierarchical positions engage in practices of acquisition of capital and structure *relations of power*. However, a more formal definition of the field is a social area of practice bound by power relations among the agents who belong exist in it, and collectively shared interests between those agents (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 117). Shared interests are defined through i.e. shared stakes or prizes (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Field(s) may be understood as a “tool” which separates social reality through providing agents and actors in the social sphere a criterion for distinguishing and defining themselves by marking distinctions in the perceived phenomenon, through a process of differentiation. In his book explaining Bourdieu's field concept, Benson offers the following definition of the field,

Field is a field of forces within which the agents occupy positions that statistically determine the positions they take with respect to the field, these position-takings being aimed either at conserving or transforming the structure of relations of forces that is constitutive of the field.
(2012:30)

While Benson's definition is slightly reflexive, it builds on the existing criteria established by Bourdieu. Ergo, agents' position within a field is determined by their accrued capital of various categories, and their ability to do so is congruent with the extent to which they adhere to the particular logic of the field. Agents within a field are expected to act in accordance with various sets of *nomos* and *doxa* (Bourdieu 1984) which define the field, i.e. *Habitus*. *Nomos* and *doxa*, to a large extent, refer to implicit rules and behaviours which develop as the product of historical struggles each field has undergone throughout its longevity. To that extent, *doxa* are the beliefs, or common opinions, which are taken for granted in social structures. In other words, history codified into practice.

3.5. Digital Sociology

Bourdieuian sociology has long been applicable to social reality to understand the cogwheels and mechanisms that shapes society and social interaction. New technologies such as digital media have placed a demand on understanding how social knowledge may pertain to the digital phenomenon. In response to these new environmental forces, scholars (e.g Daniels, Gregory & Cottom 2016; Lupton 2014; Marres 2017; Orton-Johnson & Prior 2013) have developed an updated framework for bourdieusian sociology in the digital age—digital sociology. In this vein, traditional concepts such as capital, *habitus*, and field, receive an extended meaning to which they are able to address behaviour and power relations in the digital universe.

This process has given rise to particular forms of capital which account for digital technologies, such as information capital which measures, i.e. financial resources to create and maintain networks, access to digital technologies, and so forth (Van Dijk 2005). In response to this development, another capital, which stays more true to the bourdieusian framework, has been established. Digital capital (Ignatow & Robinson 2017) is a form of capital which determines a person's *online worth* by looking at their potential reach, scale and sophistication of his or her online behaviour. To which Ignatow & Robinson make a distinction of digital capital:

... It is important to note here that there are particular forms of digital capital which are readily convertible into economic capital, such as programming ability, whereas other kinds of digital capital, such as social media activity, can be converted into social capital, but do not typically make the holder more attractive on the labor market. (2017:953)

To that extent, Levina & Arriaga (2014) proposed a new analytical framework for Bourdieu's Field concept in the form of an "online field." The purpose of the online field is to study the social status production processes on User-Generated Content platforms. Admittedly, most of what Levina and Arriaga apply Bourdieusian concepts to are user-generated content websites. In essence, these are social media platforms, but the emphasis on user-generated content places a higher focal point on decentralized social media communication processes, such as how social media users interact between each other (e.g. social network theory). Nevertheless, the concepts inherent to digital sociology, just like Bourdieusian sociology, has a wide range of applications due to their formulations. The authors (Levina & Arriaga 2014:477) propose how some of Bourdieu's basic tenets (based on the culminated effects of habitus and capital) may be applied to a social media setting. In light of the aim of the study, the most pivotal of these are:

1. Through the collective actions of users, digital platforms and online fields develop, over time, unique ways in which status and power may be exercised in them.
2. External (or offline) cultural capital, such as skills outside the field, becomes central for the production of content within online fields. Additional external capital, such as positions of power in other fields, may be used to gain additional capital in the field. On that account, knowledge and popularity acquired within the field may be translated into capital in external fields.
3. Higher status or popularity may lead to greater knowledge on how to please consumer tastes, higher social capital, more opportunities to engage in monetary contracts, and a higher ability to influence others within the field.

3.6. Theoretical Synthesis

In understanding the link between subject and power, both Bourdieu and Foucault have developed a framework for inquiry into these structures. Bourdieu, in the culmination of all his various concepts, establishes power as symbolic power. This power may be understood in relation to symbolic capital, insofar as the combined capitals lead to symbolic capital and lends influential power to the entity which has it. By that account, Bourdieu does contend that power is a commodity which may be owned by someone and held over others, in the form of symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1991). Accordingly, digital capital may correspond to symbolic capital in a social media setting.

Furthermore, while Bourdieu ties power to language, Foucault (1975) mainly sees power as a form of energy which covers every aspect of social life. By his contention, power is not owned or forced upon others. Power's existence is contingent upon productions of knowledge. In this sense, power may still be held over others, but not forced. Instead, it takes on a normative quality where 'objective' knowledge becomes a tool of influence which motivates behaviour rather than forcing it. Yet, Bourdieu and Foucault, in general, have similar approaches to power but differ in the practical definition of it. The connection between knowledge/power and symbolic power is similar in the sense that both definitions derive as a consequence of the production of knowledge.

Similarly, Bourdieu's field and Foucault's discourse are distinct concepts that may complement each other, in order to establish an overarching framework for understanding authenticity. The field, as Bourdieu establishes it, is a space where agents engage in actions which lead to acquired capital and power. Discourses are text(s) and social practices which constitute knowledge and create relations of power. In this sense, discourses can be seen as part of the generated practice by agents in the field. On the one hand, in line with Bourdieu, an agent can achieve greater symbolic capital and therefore hold power over others. By that contentious, it would also suggest that positions in a field will remain rather static with a strict hierarchical structure. In contrast, Foucault's idea would assert that power relations are dynamic, and therefore, the field(s) are in constant motion. Positions in the field

would thereby be characterized by constant change. Since power, in Foucault's view, suggests that influence is not forced and is ubiquitous, agents the field would be subject to multiple power relations which would affect their position in the field.

4. Method & Methodology

In the method chapter I will outline the governing epistemology for the thesis. Subsequently, the research design will be addressed and motivated, and management and selection criteria for empirical data will be highlighted. The methodology will conclude with a methodological reflection where I will address reliability, validity, and some ethical concern regarding the handling of public [personal] data.

4.1. Epistemology

Post-structuralism is a heterogeneous collection of theories, and it is thus hard to make a unified description that does justice to every branch of this epistemology. The common traits are, however, that they depart from a structuralist position that due to its heritage from semiotics emphasize language and other sign systems as crucial for our understanding of reality. Yet, unlike the structuralist that sees the structure of the sign and thus its reference to reality as stable, post-structuralist questions this stability and argues that the referentiality of language is unreliable. Thus, the language may appear to refer to states in reality, but the reference is, in fact, just a reference from a sign to another sign in an endless chain of signification that has no stable ground in the form of a fixed reality. Instead, language and other sign systems create a notion of reality by claiming to refer to something (which post-structuralists claim is just another sign).

Structuralism and post-structuralism share a constructionist conceptualization of the relationship between human interpretation and external reality. They both operate with a post-kantian understanding of the connection between Ding an Sich and Ding für Uns. But their epistemological interest lies in the relationship between language and mind, i.e. how signs can represent our understanding of reality. In this they differ: Structuralist describe this relation in almost positivistic terms, arguing that this relation is stable and at surface level identifiable in texts and other cultural artifacts. In contrast, Post-structuralist describe this relation in constructionist terms, arguing for a deconstruction of the beliefs imposed by a fundamentally unreliable sign system. Thus, what becomes important in an analysis

of language and other cultural artifacts is how the combination of signs together construct the notion of a fixed reality.

This study adopts the post-structural position in its attempt to understand how male fitness bloggers on Instagram construct authenticity by means of visual communication.

4.2. Case Study

The framework for this thesis is a qualitative multiple case study. Firstly, a case study may be described as an in-depth study about a person, object, phenomenon, etc. Robert K. Yin (1994:13) contends that a case study may be described as the following, “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident...[and] relies on multiple sources of evidence.” As such, a case study is a strategy which is good for covering a study which is based around contextual conditions.

Yin (1994)—by pointing to the supposedly common misconception that qualitative research methods are hierarchically structured—argued that we have traditionally been led to believe that case studies have only found their worth in explorative phases of research. Yin (1994) supposes that case studies also have the potential to be descriptive of a certain phenomenon. In providing a comparison to other forms of qualitative research, Yin (1994) provides three criteria for the choice of case study as a research strategy. Firstly, he argues that a case study is primarily characterized by research questions of the *how* and *why* variety, providing descriptive blueprints of a phenomenon. Secondly, supposing that researchers conducting case studies are inquiring into how and why questions, and unlike experimental approaches, they are not required to have access to/or assume control over behavioural events. Lastly, he remarks that case studies are better suited to study contemporary events. He compares this to the historical research approach but contends that case studies have the benefit of direct observation and systematic interviewing (Yin 1994). While this particular thesis does not factor in subjective interpretations as part of the empirical material, it benefits from direct observation of a highly contemporary phenomenon.

Case study research has also been met with criticism. Yin (1994) notes that often when researchers conduct case-oriented research, they turn a blind eye to ambiguous evidence and strengthen bias toward potential conclusions. He further explains the potential confusion which may occur between case study research and case study teachings (Yin 1994:10), “The possibility also exists that people have confused case study teaching with case study research. In teaching, case study materials may be deliberately altered to demonstrate a particular point more effectively. In research, any such step would be strictly forbidden.” Case studies tend to a large extent work with data in the form of text(s); therefore, it is feasible to imagine that such data may come to be manipulated. However, as will be explained further on, datasets which exist digitally are accessible to nearly anyone, and therefore, a degree of transparency accompanies contemporary case study research which focuses on digital text(s). Furthermore, in order to truly convey, e.g. validity, the research would have to, for content-based analysis, provide visual representations of the empirical data to strengthen the analytical claims.

The underlying logic for choosing a case study lies in the conceptual framework of the inquiry in tandem with the theory. This study is conceptualized through the idea of looking into a field (in a bourdieusian sense) where actors find themselves in an environment creating perpetual struggles for acquisition and occupation of capital, i.e. power.

4.2.1. Case Selection and Description

In more concrete terms, this thesis observes an existing phenomenon which in essence has been extended to social media through the digital technologies of the past decade. Again, the premise of the thesis is to investigate the phenomenon of authenticity and the power relations which constitute it. In this context, I have chosen to study personal brands which adhere to the fitness and lifestyle category. These are individuals who pertain to brand status and effectively act as a commodified self. Many of the personal fitness brands in the field have several digital channels for strategic brand communication. In order to establish and maintain consistency the primary focus of the study will be on Instagram because, as may be understood through their promotional material, many personal fitness

brands use visual body images to communicate competence and capture the attention of the user-base. To that extent, Instagram is the most established digital platform for distribution of visual content in the form of images and short video clips.

4.2.2. Selection Criteria

To extend on the consistency of the empirical material, I have chosen three personal brands, which represent only one gender—in this case, male. There is an inherent issue when it comes comparing fitness success between the two genders. Males and females have different baseline strategies for communication: most male fitness brands focus on visual muscle mass, and female fitness brands tend to show slim and fit bodies. In most cases, these strategies may also be consistent with what the audience may expect from fitness bloggers of different genders. This study does not focus on the gender issues which may exist in the field; instead, it looks at how communication strategies change *over time* with increased popularity, thus the case. Therefore, it is more consistent to observe one ‘gender behaviour’ in order to minimize irregularity in the empirical material.

As mentioned, three personal fitness brands have been selected in order to illustrate the case. The rationale for having three brands is based on the premise that the case investigates a phenomenon which develops over time. As such, the selection criteria for empirical data is vital for this study. In order to avoid the risk of homogenous sampling, a selective sampling criterion was used to determine the correct sample. Since Instagram does not provide any statistics on channel longevity, it is not possible to judge directly by the age of the channel. Therefore, the three brands that were chosen exist on various positions in the field in relation to the approximate amount of posts and followers they have: lower level (1000 posts), mid-level (3000 posts), and upper-level (6000 posts). The average pace for publishing content for active channels will be approximately the same.

To that extent, it is only possible to observe behaviour on one social media. The chosen personal brands have various social media dispositions, but their one common factor is their presence on Instagram. It would not be feasible to compare different social media channels since some brands have social media profiles where

others do not. Thus, the field and focus of the study are narrowed down to Instagram. Furthermore, another selection criteria relevant to Instagram is the verified badge that appears next to a username. The verified badge is an indication that the channel has been acknowledged to be an active and genuine brand/personality. As the description on Instagram points out “A verified badge is a check that appears next to an Instagram account’s name to indicate that the account is the authentic presence of a notable public figure, celebrity, global brand or entity it represents.”

Based on these criteria, three personal fitness brands were chosen as representations of different positions of power in the field:

✓ **Eb Samuel**, who goes under the Instagram name **ebenezersamuel23** has, has, at the time of data collection (26/4-19) **957 posts** and **80k followers**. In the context of this study, his brand is a representation of a lower position in the field.

✓ **Bradley Simmonds**, who goes under the Instagram name **bradleysimmonds**, has, at the time of data collection (26/4-19) **2476 posts** and **306k followers**. In the context of this study, his brand is a representation of a **mid-level position** in the field.

✓ **Simeon Panda**, who goes under the Instagram name **simeonpanda**, has, at the time of data collection (26/4-19) **5860 posts** and **5.1m followers**. In the context of this study, his brand is a representation of an **upper position** in the field.

20 posts per brand were picked for analytical treatment. Like the brands, these posts were selected by their relevance to the field. Meaning, potential outliers, such as content where the person representing the brand is not present, which do not have any direct relation to fitness blogging have been disregarded. With that in mind, the selection process was outlined by looking at the top 20 newest posts for each brand. The collected empirical data was defined as new at the time of data collection. Since then, additional posts have been made by each brand, and as such have been disregarded. Additionally, the fitness brands that were chosen do not adhere to any specific type of fitness category, such as calisthenics, yoga, crossfit, etc. They embody a more broad approach to fitness based on muscle building and body shaping through gym-related exercises.

4.3. Data Analysis

In this segment, I explain how the empirical material is approached in terms of analysis. I will break down Bourdieusian field analysis and Foucauldian discourse analysis and explain how various themes are established. I have chosen two analytical frameworks in order to perform inquiries into this phenomenon: a field analysis and a Foucauldian discourse analysis. The analytical tools that I have chosen are consequential in regard to the theories that have been presented so far, in the sense that they are directly related to the theory and the epistemology. On that account, the material that is being studied is primarily visual. However, that does not restrict it to only images. The post-structuralist tradition argues that any cultural artifact, including visual images and movies, are conceptualized as texts (Fish 1980).

Applying a case study to such a phenomenon may allow us to further investigate how this, in light of authenticity, and dominant discourses, creates potential trends of behaviour which dictate strategies and supposed authentic behaviour in the field. Furthermore, the study examines the development of power positions within the field of men's fitness blogging. By looking into three distinct positions of influence in the field: lower level, mid-level, and upper level, we can get an understanding of how authenticity is determined in the field. Following that, the discourse analysis will develop the case further by delving into, and problematizing, the discourse of power and authenticity that is present in each position in the field.

4.3.1. Field Analysis

As previously explored in the theoretical segment, Bourdieu (1984) coined several concepts which serve as analytical tools for determining power relations in social structures. Drawing upon Albright & Hartman (2018), I aim to establish a clear framework for analyzing the empirical data within the field. Based on Bourdieu's book (2005) on the social structure of the economy, the authors (Albright & Hartman 2018:4) provide a simplified, but concrete, profile of the methodological steps involved in field analysis. The process of conducting a field analysis consists of three methodological procedures. The *first step* aims to relate the field of study to the broader field of power—meaning, how the field is impacted by external

forms of knowledge. The *second step* is an inquiry into the field's structure of relations between positions taken up in the field. The structure of relations is dependent on the types of cultural, economic (and potentially social) capital which are available to actors, and how they are distributed between positions of various advancement/development. Subsequently, these positions of different advancement/development are outlined. *The third and final step* involves an insight into the class habitus which actors bring to their relative positions. The habitus then showcases the type of behaviour the actor inherently employs and adopts in order to reach certain goals or possibilities, shaped by the interaction with his environment.

As may be understood from the first step, the field in question must be understood within the broader context of power. In this sense, power relates to how authoritative behaviour is created and maintained within the field, and those who are subject to power. For instance, a fitness blogger uses the visual representation of his body as the central display of power. A strong and healthy body may be a direct representation of cultural capital in general. However, as Bourdieu (1993) points out, fields are not entities which exist purely by their own account. Fields are interdependent and are largely constituted in relation to other fields, and thus the field's power dynamics, which are shaped by various capital and habitus, is dictated by the overarching paradigm. For example, that which represents a healthy and attractive male body is dependent on: how journalists and critics review health and fitness, the scientific findings on health and fitness by academia, the type of fitness products offered by various corporations, how the medicinal field determines healthy being, and so forth. Consequently, the various enterprises made in other fields influence the logic which shapes the field of study.

Furthermore, in the context of the personal fitness blogs field on Instagram, the habitus is the reaction and the behaviour adopted by the bloggers depending on the broader field of power and the internal logic of the field. For instance, if the general fitness paradigm changes, then fitness bloggers would potentially have to adjust their strategy according to what the ideals of the broader field of power impose on them.

4.3.2. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA)

The method of analyzing the text(s) is based on the application of Foucauldian discourse analysis. Firstly, in a broader sense, discourse analysis is a qualitative research method interested in the usage of language in a variety of texts. A number of discourse analyses exist, such as Critical Discourse Analysis and Discursive Psychology, and to a large extent, all the variations have Foucault's philosophy as their genesis. Unlike the later developments of discourse analysis, Foucault's approach views any text as discursive, such as words, sentences, pictures, videos, and so on. Moreover, it stresses the importance of power relationships and how they are created in society through language and practices. As such, FDA seeks the understanding of how people view the world through personal and institutional relationships and ideology (Robin 2005). As was shown in theory, Foucault (1972) related power relationships within discourses to knowledge, created through, possible enunciations, choices relevant to social structures, and groups of concepts. Foucauldian discourse tends to employ a macro perspective with a focus on larger quantities of text. The macro perspective places emphasis on context rather than content.

In his book "Discourse Dynamics," Parker (1992) outlines several approaches to Discourse Analysis with an organized interpretation of Foucault's discourse. Analysis of text is then grounded a variety of categories, such as:

Hidden relations of power present in text; the different factors which influence the 'objective' knowledge that is present in the text. Which may pertain to, for instance, how health is represented in relation to fitness.

Who is exercising power, that is, whose discourses are being presented (people or institutions); the people or institutions that in actuality contribute to the 'objective knowledge' of health and fitness. These tend to be, as per Foucault (1972), a social elite which consists of actors and institutions which have, on average, a higher authority on the production of knowledge.

Who is the 'ideal subject' or audience for the text?; communicating to a particular audience benefits the entity which is exercising the discourse, such as, fitness bloggers on various positions in the field may have different forms of discourse which benefit their overall acquisition of capital.

What is left unspecified or unsaid?; the discourse may be rather explicit on some ends, and implicit on others. For instance, the immediate portrayal of a fit body may equate to health. On the other end, communicating the actual process/effort it takes to reach a certain level of fitness, may never be explicitly told to the audience. And finally, *What message does the author intend you to get from the text?*

4.4. Methodological Reflections

In reflecting upon the choices of the methodological framework in this thesis, one of the most central considerations to be tackled are; how do we, through a case study, establish valid knowledge; to what extent such knowledge may be generalized to the entire field as such; and, how the combination of field and discourse provides a suitable framework for investigating the proposed problem. As described by Yin (1994), a case study serves its purpose when engaging in a contemporary phenomenon in which there are many contingency factors.

By looking at the field of men's fitness blogging on Instagram as a whole, we can expect that there are some common denominators which serve as the foundations for the formation of the field as such. Thereby, an in-depth look at three cases should, arguably, generate a sufficient understanding of how the field is generally structured as a whole. By establishing the primary discourses and power relations within the field it is possible to facilitate the what factors in the field constitutes authenticity in the field at a general level.

Understandably, even though the study is tackling a larger conceptual problem, the findings in this study will not be applicable to multiple online fields. As will be further discussed throughout the study, online fields particular to certain niches have their own field dynamics which may differ to a lesser or larger degree. Therefore, we may not assume that authenticity may be regarded similarly in personal branding on other social media channels. This may even be the case for fitness blogging on other social media platforms that are not Instagram, since every social media platform also operates by different rules. Furthermore, the empirical material used in study is public material. Admittedly, it should be considered personal data to some degree, but anyone can access said material through

Instagram through the correct link or just searching for it (See Appendix for reference to empirical material).

5. Analysis

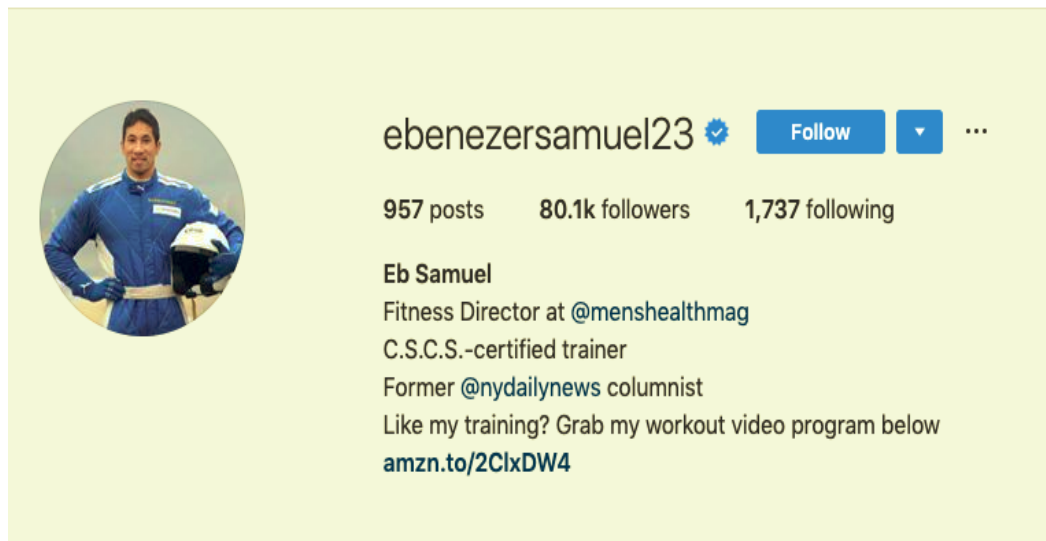
In this segment, I will begin by presenting fitness blogging as an occupation and describe what defines an active fitness blog. Following, I provide a short description of each case by referring to the composition of their profiles. After that, I will present male fitness blogging as a field and a discourse. What the field is, what the forms of accepted capital are, how actors navigate the field, and what discourses are present in it. By this account, the field is also juxtaposed to the field of cultural production, the power field, and its relation therein. Subsequently, each position will be analyzed by the account of their discourse and their relation to the field. Out of the twenty posts that were picked in each case, a couple of posts will be analyzed in depth per fitness blogger, as illustrations of the positions' characteristic features. In conclusion, I will compare each position by addressing key themes and draw conclusions.

5.1. Fitness Blogging & Description of Cases

Fitnesses blogging is a competitive niche which is highly dependent on the cultural capital of the proprietor of the personal brand. Fitness bloggers advise the audience on how to be healthy, lose weight, and develop an athletic body. To that extent, visual representations of results are very important for the audience to set expectations of what may be achieved. Therefore it is important for the bloggers themselves to physically represent the ideas they communicate, as a way of legitimizing their credibility to a potential audience. Another aspect of blogging—in general—is the promotion and maintenance of the blogs, which usually requires time and financial resources. To cover such expenses, bloggers are also dependent on earning economic capital, which often comes in the form of advertising and/or sponsorships.

The following subchapters will briefly present each case by describing the main points of interest in their Instagram profiles.

5.1.1. Case 1: Eb Samuel (ebenezersamuel23)



Eb Samuel is a male fitness blogger on Instagram who enjoys roughly 80 thousand followers and has (at the date of data collection) generated 957 content related posts and is following 1,737 other accounts. In the frame of the case, ebenezersamuel23 is positioned as a lower level brand. His content is centered around pictures and videos of himself performing various weight-related exercises in the gym. Accompanying the visuals of every post is written text (or caption) There exists a clear consistency in his content where he, arguably, appears in the same gym in every post. It becomes apparent that his expertise, knowledge, and justification in the field, are communicated through aesthetic visuals of his fit body. As seen in his profile description, he is a former New York Daily News columnist and is currently a Fitness Director at Men's Health Magazine. Moreover, he is also a certified trainer, with education in strength and conditioning specialty.

Out of the 20 collected posts, 19 posts are related to demonstrations of exercise routines. Eb Samuel's posts are largely multiple instructional videos on various exercises which are accompanied by captions which explain the process of the exercise. In the videos, the caption is being narrated in combination with a visual representation of the exercise, in the captions he writes, "moves below, details in audio." Within those multi-image Instagram posts, Eb Samuel also consistently promotes his own exercise instruction product called "New Rules of Muscle: The 28-day plan for explosive muscle growth!" Thus, we can tell that Eb Samuel's posts are, in this sense, homogenous and communicate consistent a message, mainly, he

wants to communicate competence and discipline, and the opportunity to market his own product. Finally, in his profile picture, we can see Eb Samuel in an attire resembling a blue racing tracksuit, with a helmet.

5.1.2. Case 2: Bradley Simmonds (*bradleysimmonds*)

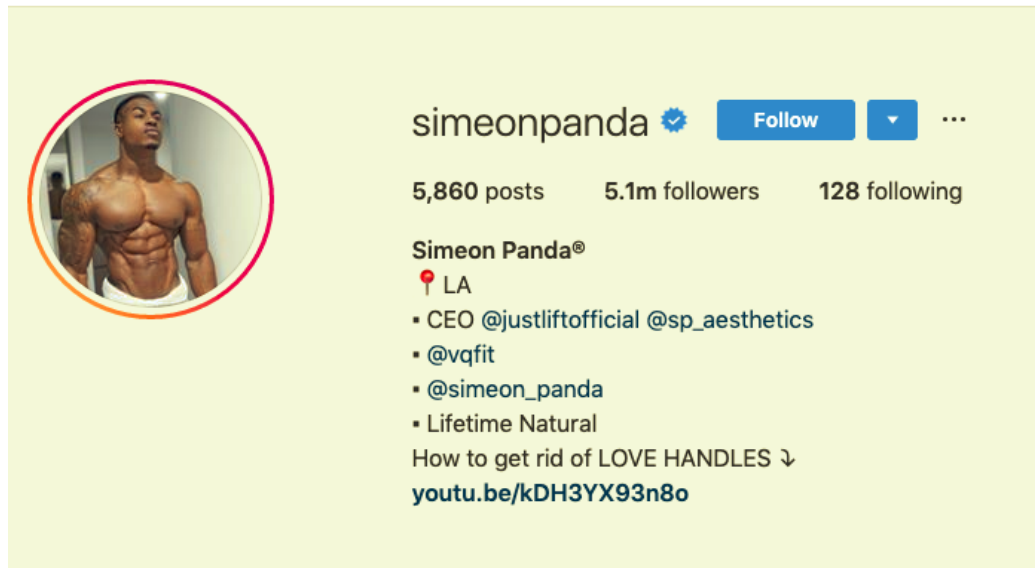


Bradley Simmonds is a male fitness blogger on Instagram who enjoys 306 thousand followers and has (at the date of data collection) 2,476 content related posts and is following 1252 other accounts. In the frame of the case, bradleysimmonds is positioned as a mid-level brand. His content shows a mix of material ranging from exercise routines in a gym, body-shots, boxing, him shirtless in various locations, and non-fitness related posts such as a picture of him with his dog, and a newborn daughter. In his description, Bradley Simmonds describes his supplementary professions as a columnist at Glamour UK, and an online trainer/columnist at British GQ, both of which are online magazines.

Out of the 20 collected posts, 12 posts are directly related to fitness workout demonstrations. Some of the posts are videos showcasing an exercise routine with no verbal descriptions to accompany them, only background music. And only some of the video exercise posts have written instructions in the captions. Other posts consist of him, with his newborn child, with his dog, box sparring with another man, posing shirtless in various locations and venues, posing shirtless while promoting an app in the caption. These posts do not have any direct relevance to fitness, but rather, 5 of these posts fill the function of unlocking the audience a look

into his personal life, and 3 posts promote some form of product or venue. Furthermore, in 5 out of 20 posts Bradley Simmonds appears with someone or something which detracts some of the focus away from him. Bradley Simmonds' profile picture shows him performing an athletic movement with an exposed upper body.

5.1.3. Case 3: Simeon Panda (*simeonpanda*)



Simeon Panda is a male fitness blogger on Instagram who enjoys roughly 5 million followers and has (at the time of data collection) 5,860 content related posts and is following 128 other accounts. In the frame of the case, simeonpanda is positioned as an upper-level brand. His content shows a very wide variety of content ranging from exercise routines in the gym, and many non-fitness related posts such as pictures edited with photoshop, promotional material, shirtless poses, and so forth. In his description we can see that he presents himself externally as a Chief Executive Officer of two businesses, Just Lift and SP Aesthetics, and proclaiming that he is a natural athlete, meaning that he is an athlete who does not take any steroids.

Out of the 20 collected posts, 8 posts are directly relevant to fitness. Most of the posts which are fitness based consist of video clips where an exercise is being showcased, with no verbal instructions accompanying them, only background music. The written captions for the exercises only name the type of exercise he is doing without providing any further context. The remaining 12 posts are a various

mix of categories, most of which contain some form of 3rd party product advertisements, to which, some of the promoted products are not directly fitness related. For instance, one post shows a photoshopped picture of Simeon Panda wearing the infinity gauntlet from the Avengers movie, where he promotes the movie by exclaiming that he is watching it. Lastly, the profile picture of Simeon Panda shows him with a completely exposed upper body, which subsequently places full attention to the muscular structure of his torso and arms.

5.2. Fitness Blogging as a Field and as a Discourse

In order to understand the field and the various positions within it, it is necessary to address the contingencies and factors which are defining how the field is broadly structured and influenced. Departing from the epistemological framework for this thesis, both Bourdieu and Foucault adhere to the post-structuralist tradition, which determines several conditions for understanding objects in the social world. The field of Instagram fitness blogging is one that is, in essence, consisting of several separate fields: the field of health, sports field, and the social media field. The interplay between various relations of power between fields influences the respective field(s) internal logic.

By this account, we can address the following fields and how they, potentially, are determined, and subsequently how those fields come to structure the combined object that is the Instagram fitness blogging field. Firstly, the field of social media. Placing all forms of social media under one category of field is slightly problematic due to the inherent differences present in all of them, those are, for example, the type of content that is prevalent on the platform, proprietors of the platform, and so forth. They are highly niched by the type of information they facilitate; however, they fall under a larger logic in which their operational logic is determined by the proprietor, the public, and other relevant stakeholders. By all accounts, the inner works and interactions that happen between users in social media are largely subject to the policies which are established by the companies that created and maintain them. Policies that include censorship, privacy, behavioural guidelines, etc. are major determinants of what type of behaviour will become the particular 'objectified' knowledge in that field.

The field of fitness blogging is an emerging field resulting from an interaction between several fields of cultural production, such as modern health culture, sports culture, and social media culture. The field's relation to the larger cultural fields is grounded in the doxa of fitness and health. Contemporary, understanding of fitness and health presumes that health is not only contingent on the absence of illnesses, but also on the amount of personal energy possessed by individuals that can be used for the acquisition of any kind social, economic, and cultural capital. Furthermore, the field's relation to sport and social media is linked through pop culture. Which subsequently implies that health leads to greater opportunities in life, by demonstrating discourses of successful individuals that engage in physical activities (football players, bodybuilders, gymnasts, etc.). On social media, these discourses are enacted by bloggers that have a large number followers (social capital), and thus, also enact the role of influencers, as their social capital may reach up to millions of individuals. In that sense, their social capital may be roughly translated to economic capital since actors operating outside the field depend on these bloggers for access to the field related audience in exchange for a financial trade-off. Accordingly, these bloggers are, in fact, also included in the greater field of power as a result of their ability to influence and condition the doxa of fitness.

Fitness, by all accounts, is a multifaceted term that includes a broad spectrum of physical activities. Fitness bloggers in the field have different cultural capital, and therefore structure their profiles and navigate the field in accordance with their habitus, that is, the particular discourses communicate. For instance, a fitness blogger may focus on particular sets of physical activity such as bodybuilding, yoga, crossfit, strength, conditioning, or weight loss. Thereby, fitness bloggers may generate a particular following that is grounded in their cultural capital. As such, fitness blogging as a field is primarily defined through social media content generated by public male fitness figures. On that account, it is important to determine what contributes to the building of authenticity in the field of fitness blogging.

The doxa in the field states that individuals who want to get more fit—starting from weight loss, improving health and conditioning, getting more personal energy, and

even building muscle—should be physically active and employ any system of physical exercise. Incidentally, the encompassing discourse of the field is based around the need for useful information on how to achieve fitness results in more productive and effective ways. Accordingly, fitness bloggers who more closely adhere to the discourse of the field, through their cultural capital and habitus, will place more emphasis on the strategies and processes necessary for an accurate and realistic depiction of getting fitness results.

As a consequence of their combined capital, each fitness blogger is placed on a different position within the field. Firstly, since the objects of study are fitness bloggers, they are subject to the doxa of social media, where social/economic capital is determined by the number of followers they have. Consequently, the amount of followers a fitness blog has, translates, by virtue of potential influence, to social and economic capital. Secondly, a user who enters the field can judge a fitness blogger on account of their content and post quantity. The number of posts, and content of posts, becomes an extension of the knowledge and expertise the fitness bloggers possess. Embodied cultural capital translates to the type of content they create, whereas objectified cultural capital becomes the amount of posts they have. Thereby, their total amount of posts translates to higher cultural. On the sum of these capitals, fitness bloggers are positioned as lower level, mid-level, or upper-level personal brands in the field.

We can see how most of the channels' content are similar. In a general sense, a majority of posts in each channel present content which show them performing various fitness related tasks, and also representing a healthy male body. However, the structure of their posts has different details when it comes to the type of fitness exercises that are shown. It is clear by the composition of their posts that all three brands have an explicit relation to the fitness field but pursue different fitness ambitions. We can also make the assumption that a larger quantity of posts corresponds to channel age. The same assumption can be made regarding followers. Followers are acquired with time and may thus be an indicator of the age of the channel. Ultimately, when comparing those two statistics, we can see that they outline a linear pattern which indicates that the number of posts these channels have corresponds to the number of followers they have. Thus, we can

categorize these personal fitness brands as being representations of different positions inside the same field.

As the methodology has established by now, Instagram is a social media channel that heavily relies on visual representations. Incidentally, the gathered empirical material suggests that fitness bloggers use their body as a visual measurement, and communication, of embodied cultural capital. The field, as such, consists of positions with homogenous fitness compositions. That means that a large majority of the empirical material showcases visual representations of the same fitness blogger exercising in various context(s). By this account, their body (or appearance) and their exercising techniques are the closest measurement to what can be defined as cultural capital. That case holds true to all of the representative positions that have been established within the field, in light of the problematization that has been established for this study. However, their respective habitus points to peculiar differences between them, which may be linked to the amount of followers they have.

5.3. Case Analyses

By this point, all three cases have been determined as agents who exist in the field of male fitness blogging, on Instagram. Here we will delve deeper into the profiles of the fitness bloggers and their relation with the field as a whole, and the prevalent discourses which they preserve. To illustrate this, two posts per position have been chosen for in-depth analysis. One post to show the quintessence of their discourse in relation to the field, and another post to demonstrate how far they diverge from the field's discourse.

5.3.1. Eb Samuel

Post 1



In this post, which is characteristic of the majority of his posts, by Eb Samuel we can see him in a near squat position holding a barbell inside a gym. We can also tell what type of workout it is based on the #legworkout. The post is a multi-video content post, which means that it consists of several video clips in one post. In the videos, he provides visual guidelines for how the workout is carried out; this visual representation is also accompanied by a voice-over where he provides verbal instructions and explanations of the exercise process. This process is carried out in every video included in the whole post. To that extent, the visual and verbal instructions are also complemented by written instructions in the caption of the post. Here he provides a highly descriptive text which gives the reader a clear systematic picture of how to carry out those exercises. This post shows the extent of Eb Samuel's embodied cultural capital. By concentrating on instructional content, he is showing his audience the degree of fitness competence he holds. To which, we may contend that his cultural capital supports the influence of his knowledge, whereby the hashtag #fullworkout is present in the post. In this sense, the embodied cultural capital lends legitimacy to the prospect of him demonstrating entire workout sessions.

Furthermore, It may be clearly deduced that mentioning his previous and current profession outside the field is communicating an institutionalized cultural capital that is external to the fitness blogging field. In the sense that Bourdieu proposes the probability of capital exchange, Eb Samuel uses remarks about his professional status in order to create a higher cultural capital, and achieve a higher social capital. As mentioned in the description of his profile, Eb Samuel labels himself as fitness director at Men's Health Magazine and a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (c.s.c.s.) certified trainer. By that account, the proper audience for his content are individuals who seek original workout strategies. In other words, those who exercise regularly and seek out exercising channels which provide meticulous representations of workouts.

The discourse attending this particular post is consistently present in the 19 out of 20 posts that have been collected. Furthermore, the promotion of his own fitness instruction course, which comes at the end of nearly every post, is enabled and made more credible on account of his communicated cultural capital. Furthermore, since none of his posts contain any 3rd party product promotions, it may conclude that Eb Samuel's economic capital is inextricably tied to his cultural capital, and in turn largely connected to the field as such. Also, the composition of his posts that have been collected shows a consistent setting whereby he, allegedly, appears in the same gym/location. Moreover, he appears with different types of gym equipment such as barbells, dumbbells, gymnastic balls, ropes, machines, etc. That may be a strategy which induces his audience the idea that he spends a considerable amount of time training with different fitness equipment, thus communicating the idea that he is an expert in many different forms of exercise which includes the use of various types of gym equipment. To that extent, in all except one post where he appears with a female training partner, Eb Samuel and his gym expertise appear in the center.

Post 2



The second chosen post of Eb Samuel shows him in, allegedly, the same gym. In contrast to the majority of his posts, the information provided here is very trivial. Eb Samuel appears shirtless with full focus on his exposed upper body. The caption for the post reads “When the Friday Night Lighting is just right...”, the degree of relevance to fitness, in relation to the majority of his posts, might be trivial. By this, the post does not fill the criteria established by the other 19 posts; it does not promote any fitness exercise, there are no descriptive fitness elements, or the promotion of his fitness instruction product. However, it may also be argued that this post serves the purpose of strengthening the discourse that is present throughout Eb Samuel’s posts. The crux of the post is that he, in fact, poses in the gym, and not in another less relevant area. On that account, placing full focus on the muscular structure of his upper body may be a way to further credit his cultural capital.

Since Eb Samuel places fitness functionality in high regard, it is also understandable that his competence, communicated through fitness directives, must be juxtaposed with the supposed results he aims to establish.

5.3.2. Bradley Simmonds

Post 1



This fitness post by Bradley Simmonds is a singular post which shows him in a video performing various exercises related to fat loss and cardiovascular improvement. The caption for the post outlines the types of exercises he performs in the same order as they are visually presented in the video. The type of workout that is being shown may easily be deduced by the hashtag #coreworkout. The text accompanying the video is quite descriptive and provides a structured outline of how one should approach the workout. The audio in the post, however, does not provide the audience with any descriptive elements of the workout that is being demonstrated. The audio consists only of an edited sound which features music. The audience is therefore limited to visual and textual interpretations of the workout process.

Furthermore, Bradley Simmonds provides information on the sequence of the workout but without any detailed information or explanations on how to accurately perform the exercises. As such, it is implied that Bradley Simmonds expects his audience to be acquainted with that, and similar, fitness routine(s). This post is highly characteristic of all the 12 fitness related posts on Bradley Simmonds Instagram

profile. On that account, the emphasis throughout his related fitness posts is mainly placed on himself performing workouts, with the audience being an observer who can choose to mimic his behaviour.

Post 2



The second chosen post is characteristic of Bradley Simmonds' non-fitness related content in his profile. Here, Simmonds is placed out of the fitness context. He is neither performing any exercises nor is he in an environment which closely resembles a gym, etc. In this particular post, Bradley Simmonds appears in a picture with his own dog in a grassy terrain. The post is irrelevant to the fitness context, and only places emphasis on the blogger himself. This post, in light of the relative non-fitness related composition of Bradley Simmonds' posts we may understand that he is not only being a fitness blogger but slowly begins to show behaviours that are reminiscent of a micro-celebrity, whereby he begins to show other content which is more akin to reality show elements. As such, he shows himself in a varying degree of context(s) outside of fitness environments, i.e. with a newborn child, or in different geographic locations. The non-fitness posts in which Bradley Simmonds appears in the center makes it more prominent that he places more emphasis on himself even in his fitness related blog posts.

In all of the collected, posts he does not promote any proprietary of 3rd party products. On that account, we may assume that his economic capital is not strictly tied to the fitness blogging field. Rather, he shows a tendency to expand on his social capital in the form of potential followers by reason of promoting himself as a personality. His cultural capital outside the fitness blogging field, as mentioned in his description, portrays him as a columnist at Glamour UK and a personal trainer at British GQ. Both brands are lifestyle magazines where social capital is highly valued, as a merit of popularity. Fundamentally, Bradley Simmonds may be understood as a fitness enthusiast which combines fitness and lifestyle and thus uses accumulated social capital within the fitness blogging field as a form of capital exchange to the field of lifestyle journalism. Furthermore, his content places a larger emphasis on a toned body type and various aerobic exercises. Thereby we may contend that the ideal subject for Bradley Simmonds' content is the individual who likes to exercise but places more emphasis on the visual aspects of exercise, such as, a lean body, curves, distinguished muscles. In other words, not actual athletic performance.

In conclusion, the composition of Bradley Simmonds Instagram profile, as a position in the field blogging field, enables a discourse in which lifestyle and fitness inevitably become tied to each other.

5.3.3. Simeon Panda

Post 1



The post is a singular video post which shows Simeon Panda performing one single exercise from start to finish. The only information provided about this exercise is found in the caption where it is categorized as a “high rep Dumbbell Press Variation.” Beyond that and the visual, no descriptive elements exist or are provided, about the type of exercise that is being performed, i.e. what muscle groups that are being targeted. To that extent, the audio accompanying the video is purely background sounds from the recorded video. Consequently, we may assume that Simeon Panda only aims to demonstrate himself performing a particular physical exercise. Therefore, there is no measurement of his cultural capital beyond the image of his muscular body and the exercise he visually demonstrates. The description of this particular post is relevant and characteristic of all his fitness related blog posts, which, by all accounts, also are a minority of the 20 posts collected from Simeon Panda. Therefore, Simeon Panda’s overall fitness discourse, in relation to the field, is seemingly simplified.

In light of the overall composition of Simeon Panda’s posts, his non-fitness related posts may be categorized as of having highly sensational and/or promotional

content. For example, in one particular post, Simeon Panda appears with a female fitness person and has done a ‘face-swap’, with the caption saying “You cannot unsee this lmao.” Posts such as these, arguably, have no direct relevance to fitness beyond him posing shirtless and exposing his muscles and serve only to be content for entertainment, and indirect promotion as content marketing. We can see that Simeon Panda, as the upper position in the field of online fitness blogging, is showing a shortage of fitness related content relative to the other positions in the field. We can begin to see that at the upper position, Simeon Panda is transitioning more toward an online media personality who does fitness, but also fitness related entertainment.

Post 2



Looking at the non-fitness related posts for Simeon Panda, we come across several denominators which are typical for such posts. The second exemplified post may immediately be recognized as an advertisement, where the caption mentions that the post is a ‘Paid partnership with justliftofficial’. Simeon Panda appears at the center of the picture standing in a parking lot, and displaying an attire. The attire in question resembles something that is akin to fitness clothing. A large portion of the image is covered by larger text which says, ‘spring sale’, ‘10% of’, and ‘plus a free signed card’. Additionally, the caption mentions that the discount is only applicable to clothing. We may argue, by the logic of Simeon Panda, that there is not only one benefit included in this post, but two. His audience is not only motivated to

purchase his products by discount only but also because they would receive a free signed card as a symbolic gift. A signed card is not actually a practical tangible asset. By this, we may deduce that Simeon Panda derives economic capital from his social capital.

The non-fitness relational posts of Simeon Panda are in fact different and are defined by different content, such as photoshopped images, advertisements, casual images with full clothing, etc. By definition, their unifying feature is how far they are from the fitness discourse of the field. On that account, the quintessence of Simeon Panda's profile composition reveals that he uses the image of his body as a form of symbolic power to attain social and economic capital and to convert the former to the latter. Incidentally, in his profile, he does not mention any external cultural capital that is relevant to fitness. Meaning, he does not label himself as a personal trainer or a fitness coach, but rather, as a CEO of two commercial enterprises.

5.3.4. Structure of Relations

All of the bloggers, having been positioned within the same field, do not show any explicit structure of relations between each other or other bloggers. Since most content that is present on each channel only contain a few posts where the blogger appears/collaborates with other people, mostly all of their posts are self-centered. The bloggers primarily focus on showing their own body, their own progress, their own types of exercises, and so forth.

But when we compare the posts of the bloggers, we can see that Eb Samuel stands closer to the status of a professional fitness blogger. First off, his external institutionalized cultural capital influences how he structures his content, and to what degree it needs to be explained. He covers every possible aspect of performing an exercise, much similar to how a personal trainer would do in a physical scenario. For example, Eb Samuel has his own particular habitus that is more in line with the field doxa, where he mainly focuses on his particular exercise techniques and his instructional fitness videos which he compliments with his own exercising guide product. As such, Eb Samuel does not share any aspect of his personal life, or entertain his audience, but has a strictly professional approach to the type of

message he wants the audience to receive—that he is very disciplined, pedagogical, and competent in fitness. As such, as previously mentioned, we may make the assumption that his audience primarily consists of fitness enthusiasts. In this way, the case could be made that Eb Samuel maintains a niche personal brand which has its focus on an authentic representation of fitness, which suits the need of his audience.

In contrast to Eb Samuel, Bradley Simmonds begins to show a different type of habitus. He still gives instructional content in his fitness content. However, it does not reach the same level as Eb Samuel. He maintains his fitness status by regularly posting content which denotes some form of physical activity, and provides some educational elements to his audience. But he also begins to outline a slightly different narrative which places more emphasis on the visual and lifestyle aspects of fitness. Bradley Simmonds, just like Eb Samuel, appears shirtless in a variety of posts, but unlike Eb Samuel, Bradley Simmonds has more shirtless pictures which are stationary and in which he does not perform any exercises.

The main difference that may be pointed out between them is the applied cultural capital in the blog posts. Where Eb Samuel supplies the audience with clear verbal explanations to supplement other information, Bradley Simmonds plays edited music over the video, which demonstrates the exercise. As such, he strictly refers to the descriptive elements of exercise. The absence of this one element throughout Bradley Simmonds posts is enough to make his content more centered around him, as a micro-celebrity, doing exercises.

By that account, Bradley Simmonds potentially places a higher value on demonstrating his body as opposed to purely demonstrating exercise routines. In addition, whereas Eb Samuel reveals his cultural capital as a Fitness Director at Men's Health Magazine and a certified trainer (strictly fitness related), Bradley Simmonds is a trainer at British GQ and a columnist at Glamour UK, both of which are mostly bear the stamp of style, fashion, lifestyle, and so forth. To that extent, the habitus Bradley Simmonds projects is one that combines fitness and lifestyle. Therefore, Bradley Simmonds wants to include his personal life as an addition to the fitness routines he provides.

Finally, Simeon Panda employs a radically different communication strategy than the other two positions. As was demonstrated previously, his posts combine fitness with entertainment and an array of product placements. Compared to the other two positions in the field, Simeon Panda only communicates one particular fitness related credential in his profile description. He notes that he is a ‘lifetime natural’, making a clear statement that he has not supplemented his fitness progress with any form of anabolic steroids, by which he wants to communicate that he is not a person that has made progress by ‘cheating’ or being ‘fake’. Furthermore, his declaration of being a CEO of two companies is shown throughout his content where several posts are promoting products, i.e. fitness clothes, that are related to his corporate brand. Thereby, Simeon Panda communicates that, along with being a fitness professional, he is also a businessman. By promoting fitness products, such as sportswear, he may imply that his products are important to wear in order to achieve good results when exercising. In addition, Simeon Panda has more promotional posts that are made with paid partnerships—in other words, sponsored content. The case can be made that, his higher status does indeed provide him with higher social learning (the ability to better understand what popular content is contingent upon), monetary rewards, etc.

In the search for how closely the bloggers’ positions are placed to the main discourse of the field, we separated each blogger’s fitness discourse related posts and the posts that are not directly related to the fitness field discourse. It should show the main tendency that each blogger has in their fitness related posts and how far their personal brand discourses may deviate from the general discourse of the field. In fact, Eb Samuel does not have any non-fitness related posts. The only post that stands out against the background of his other chosen posts is an image of him standing still, not promoting any fitness exercise and where there are no descriptive fitness elements. It differs from other only by those points. All other posts are descriptive instructional videos. Thus, we see that Eb Samuel’s personal discourse as a blogger practically does not deviate from the discourse of the field. The instructions, the composition, the caption, the overall message is closely tied to what the doxa of the field implies, which is you need to perform effective physical

exercises to be physically well and have a great body. Which lead to a conclusion that Eb Samuel as a blogger and a brand is highly authentic in relation to the field.

On account of Foucault (1982), the general audience in the fitness field are consumers of fitness culture because they are subject to a discourse—established by academia, media, and dominant organizations—which contends that we, as humans that live in a social sphere, have to exercise on a regular basis to be healthy and secure, get better perspectives in life, have greater opportunities, live longer, and so forth. Since people believe in those discourses they become objectified toward the disciplines they establish. But to that extent, this objectified knowledge leads to a separation of ideas into smaller categories which dictate, for instance, how you should exercise and how you combine exercise to greater aspects of social life. As such, this leads to a distribution within the field where the audience chooses a particular position (blogger) which it may identify itself with to on a larger scale. Thus, we can see the logic in the distribution of followers in all of the three cases, whereby Eb Samuel who provides the most original and personal representation of fitness has the lowest amount of followers, due to how his content is very niched toward those who only look for serious fitness content.

Contrasting this to the mid-level position, Bradley Simmonds, may potentially hint at a pattern in regards to advancements in the field. By looking at this profile composition we have established that he begins to show a slight tilt away from strictly communicating fitness content. Fitness related posts of Bradley Simmonds differ from the similar posts of Eb Samuel in the way that they are less descriptive, i.e. provide less practical information and advice that could be used for effective training. They are also less in numbers. Only 12 of his posts are directly related to fitness workout demonstrations. The remaining 8 posts are mostly about Bradley Simmonds' lifestyle, mostly about his life beyond the gym or his exercise routine, which does not have much in common with the discourse of the fitness blogging field itself. In that extent, we see that some blogging content generated by Bradley Simmonds deviates from the values of the doxa of the field; therefore, his discourse as a fitness blogger starts to deviate from the discourse of the field. Providing less valuable training information, but at the same time giving more insight into his personal life, makes Bradley Simmonds less connected to the governing discourses

of the field compared to Eb Samuel, who has all of his posts closely tied to the fitness discourse. This shows us that on that level of advancement in the field, it is more beneficial for Bradley Simmonds to build his personal brand authenticity based on incorporating more social and lifestyle elements in his blogging discourse.

Bradley Simmonds adds his personal life to his fitness posts and as such attracts an audience which maybe does not necessarily want to spend a lot of time in the gym in order to achieve greater results. That audience instead looks to find a way to connect fitness to lifestyle and gain a better understanding of how fitness can lead to i.e. a more beautiful body, opportunity to travel, greater social capital, etc. As such, we can see that Bradley Simmonds enjoys a broader audience which excels that of Eb Samuel. In stark contrast, Simeon Panda, beyond his fitness related content, has a lot of product placements and entertainment related content. Based on his content and his 5.1 million followers, Simeon Panda shows a strong inclination toward entertainment and consumer culture relative to fitness.

In turn, the fitness related posts of Simeon Panda are in the minority among his posts. Only 8 out of 20 of his posts are training related. The quality of the information provided on a training process is lower than provided both by Eb Samuel and Bradley Simmonds. No description apart from the exercise name is given that should not be considered a proper description since the public in the fitness field should rather be familiar with how those exercises are called. This alone moves Simeon Panda away from the essential values of the field than Bradley Simmonds. In the remaining 12 posts, Panda demonstrates a lot of his well-trained body mostly outside of the gym, photoshopped, using humorous or selling tactics, with links that lead to other channels or websites. He is promoting ebooks, clothing, his other social media channels, nutrition, and even movies. He repeats those promotional posts again as his later posts, outside those 20 that were taken into the analysis so it can be argued that he also has more posts than the other two bloggers because he systematically repeats his content.

All of this shows that Simeon Panda uses the symbolic power of his body to convert its image into economic capital in several ways. He clearly belongs to the field, but his discourse as a fitness blogger gravitates more towards promotions of various goods and consumerism than to the initial field discourse, which is related to

exercises and training regimens, and that leads us to a conclusion that despite having the biggest number of followers among those 3 taken bloggers, Simeon Panda's discourse is less centered around the general discourses of the fitness field. Thus, his audience, which far exceeds the audience of the previous two positions in the field, aims to seek entertainment in the fitness field. As such, Simeon Panda provides a content structure which combines fitness, entertainment, and product promotion, which subsequently shows that there is a broader audience for that particular type of text in the form of mass consumerism.

There is also a clear distinction between what type of cultural capital all three bloggers rely upon, and thus, the type of habitus that they employ. Their focus is largely upon themselves and the journey they take to reach their own particular goals. Yet, their positions are also relative to how much they choose to appeal to the interests of a larger audience, whereby adhering more to the field discourses leads to potentially lower digital capital. There is also a case to be made about the digital capital in each case. The numbers show us that with increased digital capital (popularity) the more self-centered the personal brands become, such as following fewer people when having an increased amount of followers themselves. We may assume that the social capital is determined by the amount of channels they follow, and that it is relative to how many followers they have themselves. Following this logic, we may also assume that their social capital will be proportionate to their potential economic capital. Having a greater number of followers brings a greater possibility to promote or directly sell any product, whether it is their own fitness instruction courses or 3rd party products.

That comparison may be understood further in terms of the capital exchange they make. Eb Samuel is largely dependent on his cultural capital in order to acquire economic capital since he must demonstrate impressive knowledge of fitness to his audience in order to legitimize his own product—in other words, subject the audience to the prevalent discourse in his channel. Bradley Simmonds, however, points toward fitness and lifestyle. On this account, his Instagram channel, and position in the field, are largely tools which are meant for building social capital around his life. Thereby, being on a mid-level position, the content becomes more

about bringing general attention to him, as opposed to the actual exercise routines he performs.

In contrast, Simeon Panda has almost none of the previously mentioned elements. The posts in which he exercises barely provide any detailed information on what physical exercise he is engaged in. Whereas both positions under him, to a larger or lesser extent, inform the audience, Simeon Panda only gives the audience visual cues.

In such a way, physical activity is still a central element of each post, yet the emphasis is almost solely placed on Simeon Panda himself. A large portion of the content, fitness or non-fitness, always places his body as the central point of interest, as such, his ‘overly’ trained body—contrasted to the other fitness bloggers—appears consistently throughout his profile. It is placed in focus so frequently that it almost begins to take the form of a kind of fetish. Ergo, perpetually exposing detailed images of his muscular structure to his audience becomes a form of symbolic power.

5.4. Hidden Relations of Power in The Instagram Fitness Field

The content prevalent the fitness bloggers channels is one that establishes a discourse which states that a toned and muscular body is a representation of health, and arguably, success. Therefore, they also ‘borrow’ the universal common sense, which is accepted through a multitude of other social factors. Followers of fitness bloggers may be subjected to a discourse which establishes a manufactured truth. As an example, Eb Samuel shows—on the basis of the analysis of his posts—a realistic representation of the necessary efforts which need to made to build a body like his. A large majority of Eb Samuel’s content is strictly instructional and consist almost solely of exercises and their verbal and written descriptions. In contrast, the content of Simeon Panda places greater emphasis on entertainment and advertising. Thereby, he may, on the basis of his influence, project a manufactured truth which suggests that the individual can reach similar results with low effort and that the demonstrated body is, in fact, a true representation of health.

In accordance, with Foucault (1982), the existing power relationship is not characterized as an oppressive element but rather one that manufactures individuals which are both self-aware and are subjected by other ‘objective’ knowledge that is prevalent in society. As such, users (followers) of social media also influence the platforms they are using by exposing them to disciplines and concepts they gain from other fields they are subjected to, and serving their own self-interest. Furthermore, it may be contended that social media platforms are also largely dependent on advertisers which grant the social media platform economic capital. Accordingly, all these factors—social media policies, user behaviour and preferences, and advertisers—also determine how fitness bloggers navigate Instagram since their digital capital is dependent on how they are subjected to such power relations.

Secondly, the fitness field may be categorized by the sum of fitness professionals, individuals that exercise on a regular basis, media that make journalistic reportages on fitness, scientific institutions which conduct corresponding research, companies that manufacture, i.e. sportswear and nutrition, but also individuals who only play the role of consumers in the field. In other words, the fitness field is constitutive of other fields such as academia and media. The combined actions employed by these particular entities form temporal universal consensuses on what ultimately becomes the social ‘common sense’ of fitness. One particular aspect of such is the notion that a healthy body lends the individual better opportunities in life due to, among other things, longevity. That particular fitness discourse is beneficial for a multitude of actors operating in distinct but relative fields. For example, many contemporary businesses offer their employees free access to gym memberships or personal gyms owned by the companies. The particular longevity aspect of fitness is highly advantageous to companies because healthy employees are less likely to often be ill or retire at an earlier age due to medical complications. Since this is a major factor which can determine the financial performance of many companies, the discourse which states that exercising is good for the individual employee’s health, is in actuality framed as such because it first and foremost lends more benefit to the company’s economic capital. Ergo, companies invest in their employees’ health and are responsible for the immediate dominant fitness discourse.

Following this vein, a presumption can be made that when companies offer employees economic benefits, they become normatively influenced to exploit such complementary resources even if, as mentioned, they do not have any interest in fitness. A discourse of this character is an example of how individuals may potentially enter the fitness field and become followers of fitness bloggers on Instagram. That being said, we can expect those individuals to have vast differences in their habitus in comparison to those who are self-aware and pursue fitness authentically. Looking back at the fitness bloggers in the field, we see a substantial difference in their respective digital capital. Judging by his Instagram channel composition, Eb Samuel, allegedly, communicates the most authentic fitness message in the field. Whereas his followers are marginally fewer, they represent an audience that consumes more instructional content, which directly benefits them in the field of fitness.

Looking at the other end of the spectrum, Simeon Panda's profile composition, tells us that a considerable part of his followers is more interested in the actual personal brand—Simeon Panda himself and his behaviour. His combined posts hint more toward a fitness blogger that entertains his audience, by the use of photoshopped images, humour, elements of personal life (reality show), and content marketing, some of which are directly related to fitness, and others not. By this account, we may conclude that Simeon Panda covers a broader range of content which exceeds the field of fitness and begins to establish a mass-produced consumer culture. Recalling Baudrillard (1981) and Eco (1973), it is feasible to establish that a personal brand like Simeon Panda must employ a much wider content strategy in order to maintain the digital capital he has acquired over time in the field. In stark contrast, Eb Samuel, who is much more niched and authentic in regards to the field, only tailors to a certain group of people who do not make up for the majority consumers.

Bradley Simmonds, in comparison to Simeon Panda, provides more instructional fitness content, but he also includes aspects of his personal life to compliment it as he finds himself having a broader audience than Eb Samuel. Bradley Simmonds' content begins to include elements of other fields as a result of this increased

popularity. However, as Foucault points out, power is ‘universal’ and thus not exercised from only one direction. By this, we could imply that the particular cultural capital each position brings to the field, will, in its own right, also affect that position’s digital capital by subjecting a potential audience to certain sets of ideas. Thereby, it is not necessarily the case that these personal fitness bloggers tailor their content to the audience. In this vein, the field presents itself as an incredibly complex system that governs many factors for positions and relations of power in the field.

6. Discussion

In this chapter, the analytical findings will be juxtaposed with the previous literature. The chapter will consist of a discussion on the topic of the authenticity of fitness bloggers while contrasting the different conceptualizations of authenticity present in previous literature. In conclusion of the chapter, I will provide a brief summary of how this study has contributed to the research.

6.1. Authenticity of Fitness Bloggers

The analysis showed that authenticity is created differently on the basis of many factors. For example, the positioning of the fitness blogger will determine how authenticity is created, but that determination will also be influenced by i.e. what type of cultural capital the blogger has. In the previous literature chapter, I discussed the shortcomings of essentialistic and constructionist conceptualizations of authenticity in strategic communication. The essentialist concept falls short on the fact that it is restricted to a simple and often normative dichotomy between the authentic vs. inauthentic, and thus often form reflexive and tautological conceptualizations, whereas constructionists fall short on the fact that they define it as a freely floating concept with no attachment to the object, and thereby do not ground authenticity in anything but contextual conditions.

The cases that have been studied in this thesis have facilitated additional understanding of how authenticity is shaped by various relations of power by applying a combined Bourdieusian and Foucauldian framework. However, the particular framework for understanding authenticity in this study has been limited to the logic of the field in which it was studied. In contrast to Harris & Rae (2011), authenticity in the fitness blogging field is not dependent on how much purposeful, practical, and valuable information they provide their audience in relevance to the field and its doxa. In that vein, it would be very paradoxical for a higher position on the field, with millions of followers, to be regarded as less authentic than any other position lower than him. Thereby, the essentialist notion does not justify authentic behaviour enough, since it ignores too many contextual factors.

Faleatua (2018) suggested that authenticity is a tangible tool which may be strategically exploited by personal brands in order to create an illusion of authenticity. As explored throughout this study, that particular notion of authenticity does not come into fruition. Dealing with a field of online blogging which has the body as a visual measurement of truth, it would be exceedingly difficult to stage authenticity as a fitness blogger if you do not visually represent the core value(s) of the field. If a fitness blogger were to express his knowledge of physical exercise techniques without the proper visual elements to strengthen them, he would, inevitably, be less believable. In that vein, authenticity may be understood as something which is determined by doxa in multiple or specific fields.

Similarly, Nuenen (2015) focused on the discrepancy of projected reality versus actual reality of the blogger as a measurement of authenticity. Certainly, travel bloggers may engage in discourses which deliver false impressions to their audience. For instance, as Nuenen (2015:193) notes, “Their video demonstrates a paradox in travel blogging: on the one hand, the dissatisfaction with conventional middle-class trajectories and the desire to escape them. On the other hand, the salability of an exceptional lifestyle, the impression management involved in selling it, and the need to secure an income to keep traveling.” In a similar vein, the fitness blogger that places more emphasis on the visual image of his body and less information on how much effort is required to reach such a level of fitness creates a projected reality. By this, the audience is not subjected to the real discipline of the field, i.e. how much time is needed to spend on physical exercise. But then again, authenticity in this study is not essentialistic in its nature. By this logic, one would only be authentic if they were to represent an actual reality, rather than a manufactured one.

By analyzing the posts of three fitness bloggers on distinct positions on Instagram, I came up with some specific points about how authenticity is created. It is, first and foremost, strictly tied to the position (maturity) of the blogger. Secondly, cultural capital and other external capital influence the habitus of the bloggers. Thirdly, the bloggers’ primary method for acquisition of economic capital, such as capital exchange, will further influence their habitus, since it is a necessity in order to maintain a blog. And finally, authenticity is also influenced by the dominant

paradigm, which sets the doxa of the field. The doxa is determined by the field of power, and the bloggers themselves are part of the power field. As such, it is also the relation between them and their authenticity, which comes to influence the overall doxa.

In accordance with these factors, different positions in the field (or different levels of maturity/popularity) will have particular ways of constituting and maintaining authenticity.

6.2. Contribution to Research

The contribution of this study is thus that it—through a foucauldian/bourdieuian analysis—has pointed to some general features that constitute authenticity in the fitness blogging field. On that note, it is not a feature of the actual blog or the blogger, but rather factors such as position in the field, relations to other fields, application of capital, navigation through habitus, etc. It is not a simple process defined through individual factors but rather seen as a whole when they work together and create a coherent pattern of behaviour.

7. Conclusion and Further Research

In this final chapter of the study, I will address all of the research questions, beginning with the sub-questions. I will go through each of the questions step-by-step and explicitly refer to where in the study they have been addressed. The combined result of these sub-questions will then lead to the answering of the general research question of the study. In conclusion of the entire study, I will briefly discuss how the findings of this study may facilitate further inquiries on the same discipline of research.

The central conceptual problem observed in this thesis is the formation of authenticity by personal brands, and its contingency on various relations of power, such as, the different fields, capital, habitus, discursive practices, and so forth. The ambition of the study was to analyze how authenticity is created and maintained on different levels of positions in the field/popularity. This aim was operationalized into the following research question:

How is authenticity constituted and maintained in the online fitness blogging field, and how does it change with increased levels of personal brand popularity?

To answer the main research question, an additional three questions were created to serve the general purpose of the study. *Subquestion 1* looked at *how men's online fitness blogging on Instagram is comprised as a field* and the question was addressed in 5.2. Fitness Blogging as a Field and as a Discourse. The answer to the question is: online fitness blogging is an emerging field which is formed by borrowing disciplines from other fields, such as health, sports, and social media. It is defined as a field by the account of it being a social space where agents of various positions engage in practices of capital acquisition and power.

Subquestion 2 addressed *what the governing discourses of men's online fitness blogging practices on Instagram were and how these were connected to bloggers' habitus*, and the question was answered in section 5.2. Fitness Blogging as a Field and as a Discourse. The answer to the question is: the central discourses of the field are based on the disciplines which state that,

1. health and success, beyond the absence of illness, is contingent on physical well-being through physical activities. And;
2. The communication of practical and rich information regarding how to achieve fitness results in more productive and effective ways.

Through their habitus, the fitness bloggers consistently emphasize the importance of physical activity through a visual representation of their body and engage in informative practices by providing instructions on how to exercise properly.

Subquestion 3 was more specific in *addressing the particular discourse(s) present in the text of fitness bloggers on different levels of popularity*, and the question was answered in the section which analyzed the fitness bloggers' posts and profile composition and in 5.3.4. Structure of Relations. The answer to the question is: the discourse in different positions in the field is not static, but rather, depending on other factors such as the habitus of fitness bloggers. In turn, their habitus is heavily influenced by the external cultural capital that they bring into the field. For example, Eb Samuel's discourse is centered around his professional knowledge as a fitness expert with varying institutionalized cultural capital. Bradley Simmonds' discourse is based on his engagement with external fields of fashion and lifestyle, by which he incorporates elements of his personal life in addition to his personal fitness routine. Simeon Panda's discourse is, by its nature, one which combines fitness and consumerism by his standing as a businessman, in addition to being a fitness influencer.

So, the overall answer to the research question is: authenticity in the field is contingent on bloggers' relation to the central discourses and doxa of the field and it is maintained through the consistent visual representation of healthy and fit bodies, along with varying degrees of instructive content. Authenticity is constituted differently on different levels of field positioning on the basis of many different factors. In addition to their quantity of followers, authenticity changes on the basis of the bloggers' cultural capital and habitus. Their authenticity is thus also the overall composition of their 'being' on Instagram, that is, how they combine

fitness with the particular knowledge (non-fitness related posts) they possess outside the field of fitness blogging.

7.1. Further Research

In this study, I have combined a Foucauldian discourse analysis and Bourdieusian field analysis, to complement Heidegger's notion and definition of the nature of authenticity. The combination of the theories proved to be fruitful and, when applied practically to a field of interest, gave us an insight on how authenticity is built and maintained in the field of male fitness blogging on Instagram.

In this study, I chose three cases on different levels of development in the field in terms of their "maturity", as it would show the differences on how authenticity could be developed with the increasing popularity of the channel. In essence, the findings are likely only to be applicable to the studied field. In this vein, authenticity may be subjected to different circumstances in other fields. This calls for additional insight into how authenticity is developed in personal brands which adhere to other fields. It may be further sophisticated by increasing the threshold of empirical material. Meaning, collecting data from several personal brands from different online fields and draw comparisons on the relations of power which constitute authenticity between the fields, and investigate the relations between them. Furthermore, it would be interesting to follow bloggers over time and see what potential changes happen in their online behaviour, for instance, whether or not increased popularity has any larger impact on how they structure their authenticity. Potentially, that may lead to greater knowledge and understanding of how authenticity is to be regarded as an online phenomenon adhering to personal branding.

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Appendix

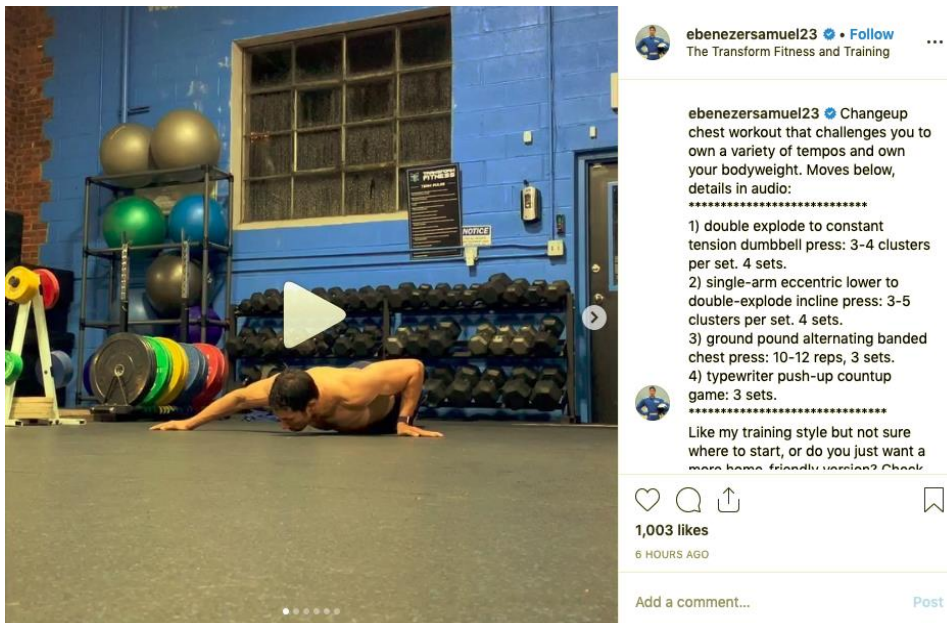
Eb Samuel (ebenezersamuel23)

#0 - <https://www.instagram.com/ebenezersamuel23/>



Profile card for **ebenezersamuel23** (verified). The profile picture shows a man in a blue tracksuit. The bio identifies him as Eb Samuel, Fitness Director at @menshealthmag, a C.S.C.S.-certified trainer, and a former @nydailynews columnist. He includes a link to his workout program: amzn.to/2CixDW4. The card shows 957 posts, 80.1k followers, and 1,737 following.

#1 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwuDmPfhtuo/>



Instagram post by **ebenezersamuel23** (verified) titled "Changeup chest workout that challenges you to own a variety of tempos and own your bodyweight. Moves below, details in audio:". The post includes a video of a man performing a push-up in a gym. The workout details are:

- 1) double explode to constant tension dumbbell press: 3-4 clusters per set. 4 sets.
- 2) single-arm eccentric lower to double-explode incline press: 3-5 clusters per set. 4 sets.
- 3) ground pound alternating banded chest press: 10-12 reps, 3 sets.
- 4) typewriter push-up countup game: 3 sets.

The post has 1,003 likes and was posted 6 hours ago. The caption ends with "Like my training style but not sure where to start, or do you just want a more home friendly version? Check".


#2 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwp21GpBYs6/>



 **ebenezersamuel23** • Follow

ebenezersamuel23 • Half-hour basic biceps workout. Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) tall kneeling biceps curls: 10-12 reps, 4 sets.
- 2) hammer curl dropset: 8-10 reps heavy alternating hammers, then 4-6 reps disciplined half-full reps. 4 sets.
- 3) one-minute constant-tension random preacher curl game: 3 sets

 Like my training style but not sure where to start, or do you just want a more home-friendly version? Check out my workout video program, The New Rules of Muscle. It's 5 30-minute workouts you can do with only dumbbells and an adjustable

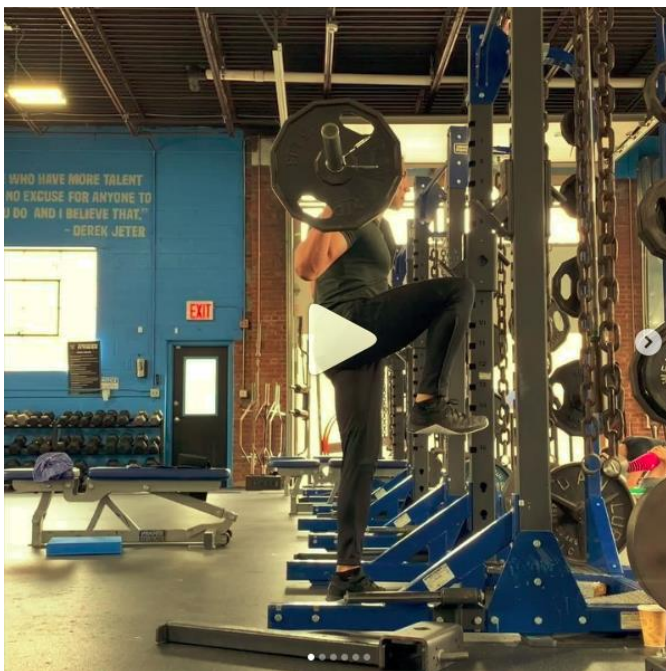
3,067 likes

1 DAY AGO

Add a comment...

Post


#3 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwj0TxnhUmv/>



 **ebenezersamuel23** • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 • Leg workout with some super-fun stuff on the last two moves. Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) eccentric-focused box squat rest pause work: 3 reps, rack bar for 20 seconds, then 2 more reps. 4 sets.
- 2) trap bar deadlift superset: staggered stance 8 reps, then conventional stance, 8 reps. 3 sets per side.
- 3) front rack Cossack to rotational Cossack to lunge hold series: 4-5 clusters per set. 3 sets per side
- 4) controlled barbell reverse lunge to high knee: 8 reps. 3 sets per side.

 Like my training style but not sure where to start, or do you just want a

1,249 likes

4 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

#4 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwdUWkuBIal/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
Star Fitness USA

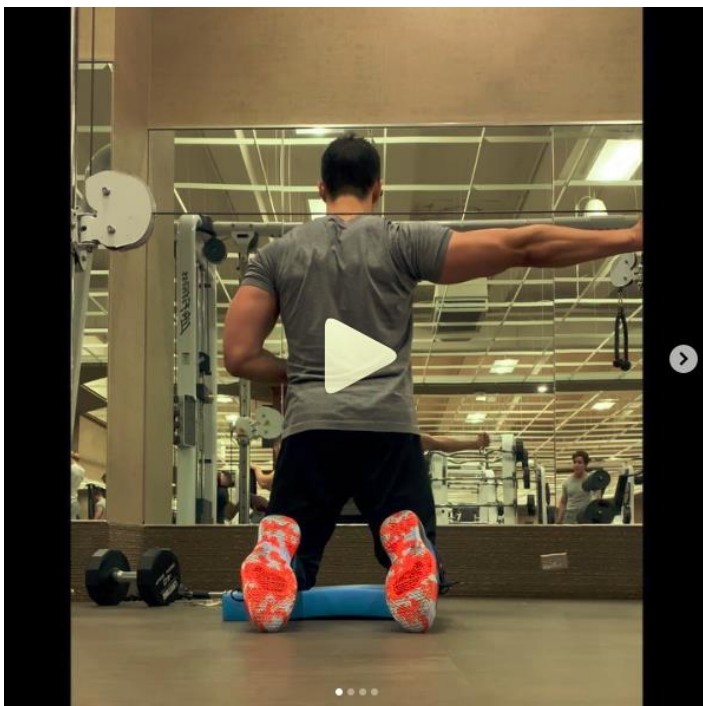
ebenezersamuel23 Iso-hold-focused back workout that's all about dominating your pull and has you spending plenty of time in the "finishing" positions of chin-ups and rows. Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) countdown cable row work: 4 countdown iso hold reps, then 8-10 standard reps. 4 sets
- 2) bodyweight chin-up hold to reps work: 2 3-second hold reps, then 8-10 chin-up reps standard. 4 sets.
- 3) dumbbell rows: 8-10 reps per side. 4 sets.
- 4) countdown incline row work: 5-second hold, then 2 reps, then 4-second hold, then 2 reps, etc. 3 sets.
- 5) chin-up iso hold (read this as it's

1,403 likes
6 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#5 - https://www.instagram.com/p/BwahVrzBb_i/



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
Life Time Athletic - Westchester

ebenezersamuel23 Cables campout triceps workout. Moves below, details in audio:

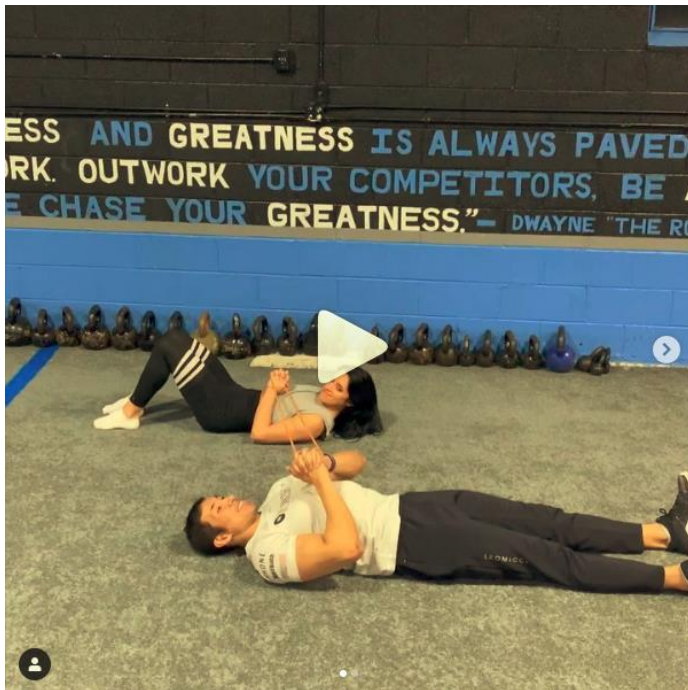
- 1) skullcrusher superset: 8-10 skullcrushers, then 6-8 arms-angled-forward skullcrushers. 4 sets
- 2) incline pressdown superset: 10-12 pressdown reps, then 6-8 skullcrusher squeezes. 3 sets.
- 3) frontal plane stabilization triceps extensions: 10-12 reps per arm. 3 sets. (Shift between arms, no rest between sets)

Like my training style but not sure where to start, or do you just want a more home-friendly version? Check out my workout video program, The New Rules of Muscle. It's 5.20

4,188 likes
7 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#6 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwYeWgdBLxq/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 Bored with ab training? Find a partner and a resistance band and try out the core game that @liannacarlucchi and I are playing. It looks easy, but trust us...it's not. Rules of the game in the audio, basics below, deeper explanation on the @menshealthmag website, too.

- Line up shoulder-to-shoulder, far enough apart to have tension in the band, and get in hollow body position.
- Extend arms over midline. Fight to maintain hollow body position for 3 seconds, then do 3 flutter kicks.
- Lower arms...this is your "breather"
- Repeat rhythm for a minute... or until your partner "sings out" of their



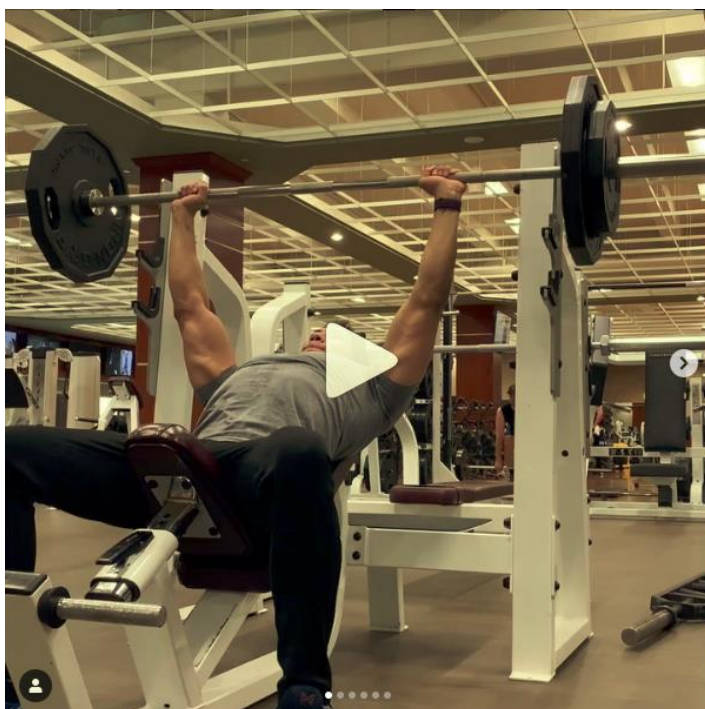
1,407 likes

APRIL 18

Add a comment...

Post

#7 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwV1B7NBegr/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
Life Time Athletic - Westchester

ebenezersamuel23 Vicious chest workout here that's pretty aggressive but a ton of fun. Game plan: pile up plenty of heavy work with some tough dropsets, then good squeezes near the end. Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) dumbbell press dropset: standard presses 4-6 reps, then dead stop presses, 6-8 reps. 4 sets.
- 2) incline barbell press dropset: standard presses, 6-8 reps, then half-full presses, 6-8 reps. 4 sets.
- 3) back-supported cable fly half-iso mixed style work: 3 reps per side high, then 3 reps per side low. 2 clusters like that per set. 3 sets.
- 4) single arm hollow body hold-and-press countdown walk 2 sets



2,220 likes

APRIL 17

Add a comment...

Post

#8 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwS2guOhmkF/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 Leg workout that focuses on time under tension. Moves below, details in audio: *****

- 1) controlled box squats: 4-6 reps, 4 sets.
 - 2) trap bar deadlift superset: 8-10 reps offset stance. Then 8-10 reps standard stance. 4 sets.
 - 3) half rack half overhead pendulum pulse lunge: 10-12 total reps per set. 4 sets
 - 4) goblet squat hold to reps countdown game: 3 sets (and thanks to @kettlebellkings for the sick camo bell too)
- #newrulesofmuscle #fitness #training #legday #legworkout #fullworkout

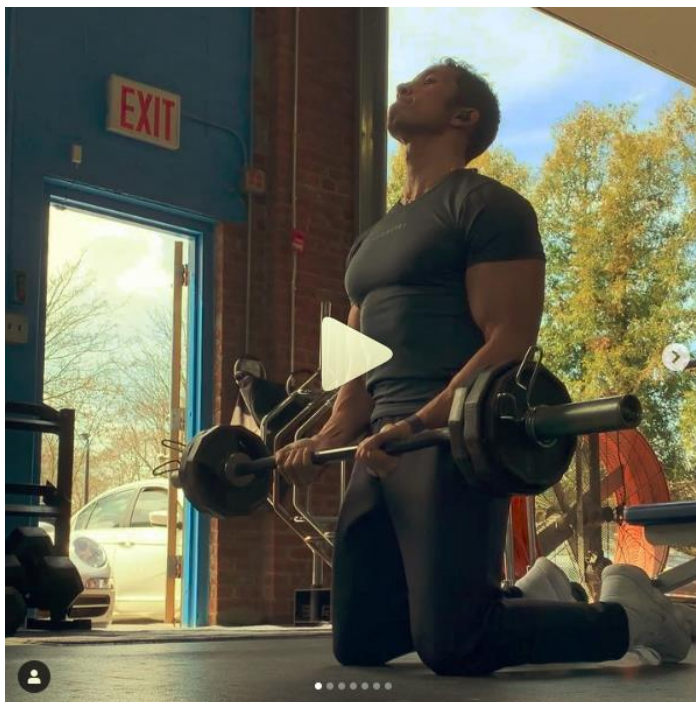
1,560 likes

APRIL 16

Add a comment...

Post

#9 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwOPbRsB9fe/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 Arm blast that's all about dropset sand supersets. Move some heavy weights on this early, drop into precision pumps late. Moves below, details in audio: *****

- 1) kneeling ez bar curl work: 8-10 reps shoulder-width grip, then 4-6 reps closer grip. 4 sets.
- 2) decline ez bar skullcrusher work: 8-10 heavy reps, dropset to 4-6 paused reps. 4 sets
- 3) kneeling hammer curl work: 8-10 reps heavy weight, dropset to 6-8 reps half-iso-squeeze and slow lower. 4 sets.
- 4) kneeling band pressdown: half-iso countup into 3, then 15 seconds of constant tension work. 4 sets.

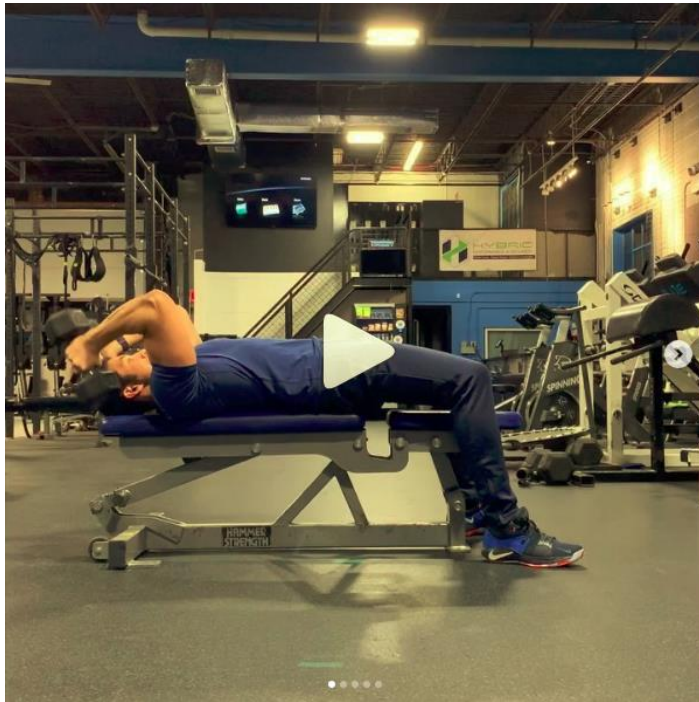
1,684 likes

APRIL 14

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Post

#10 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwLs-SJBaYc/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 All-dumbbells and flat bench 25-minute triceps workout that's all about maximizing light weight. Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) pause double skullcrusher to double JM press: 3-4 clusters per set. 4 sets
- 2) pause half-full close-grip dumbbell press: 8-10 reps. 3 sets.
- 3) straight arm hold lying triceps extension: 8-10 reps. 3 sets

Like my training style but not sure where to start, or do you just want a more home-friendly version? Check out my workout video program, The New Rules of Muscle. It's 5 30-minute workouts you can do with

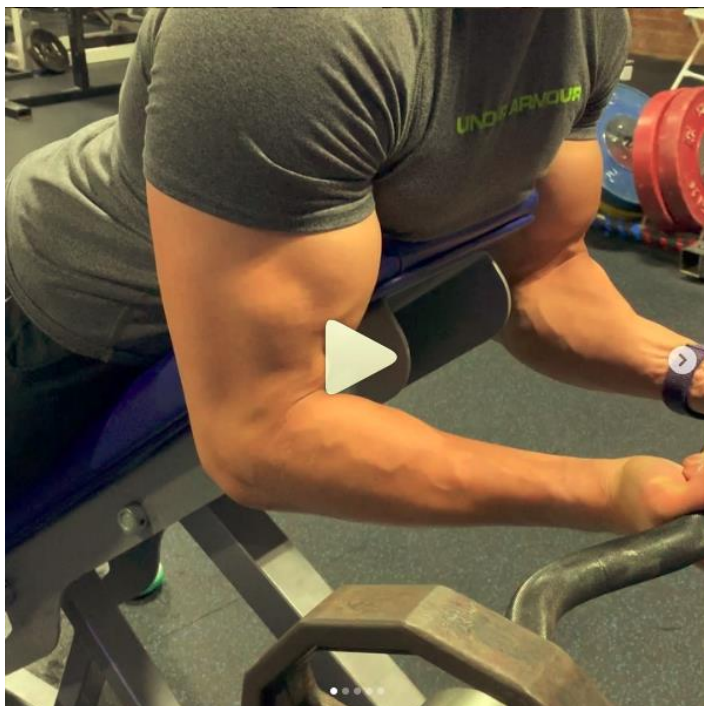
1,178 likes

APRIL 13

Add a comment...

Post

#11 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwGcr9Kho7X/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 Lightspeed biceps workout that's over in 30 minutes but leaves you with a nasty pump (and ends with a humbling finisher). Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) kneeling single arm curl superset: 10-15-second long bar parallel hold, then 10-12 single-arm biceps curls. Work one arm, then the other, no rest between sets. 4 sets.
- 2) kneeling single-arm disciplined half-full hammer curls: 8-10 reps per arm, work one arm then the other, no rest between sets. 3 sets.
- 3) ez bar spider curl parallel pause to top-half curl countup game: work into the round of 5 every set, 3 sets.

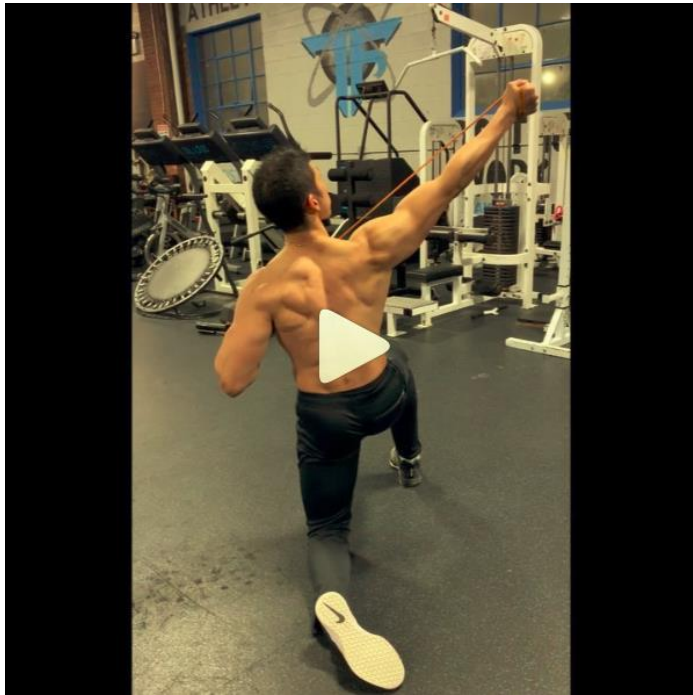
3,921 likes

APRIL 11

Add a comment...

Post

#12 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwDaVGGBeNz/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 • Get a lot of questions about how I warm up. Here's one of my go-to moves before upper body workouts, the archer row.

Think 3 sets of 12-15 reps per arm, taking your time and firing up your midback...and make sure to contract your abs as you're doing this to really own your rib cage position. #fitness #training #warmups #rows

2w

stayfitnyc #stoic 🙄

2w 2 likes Reply

View replies (1)



14,933 views

APRIL 10

Add a comment...

Post

#13 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwBPnEuhex0/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 • Mixed-cadence that challenges you to be explosive, then be in complete control of that explosion. Moves below, details in audio:

1) explosive-to-paused uneven grip inverted row: 5-6 pairs of reps per set, 4 sets.

2) halfway pause uneven-grip pull-up: 8-10 reps, 4 sets.

3) explosive to paused dumbbell row: 5-6 pairs of reps per set, 4 sets per arm.

4) double explode to pause incline row: 3-4 clusters of reps per set, 3 sets.

Dig my training style but not sure where to start with it? Or do you just want a leg home, and time friendly.



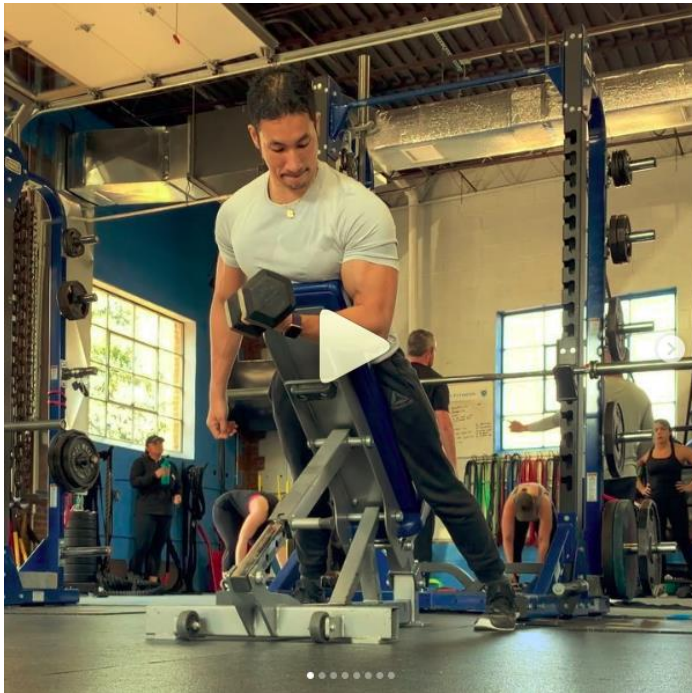
3,515 likes

APRIL 9

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Post

#14 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv95PKXBpvh/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 • Arm blast workout that isn't for the faint of heart and requires not just strength but mental engagement. Rules first, then moves, then details in audio:

Rules:

- goal is to hit the total amount of reps required on each move
- do as many reps as you can until technical failure. Then rest for as many seconds as you have reps left. So if you have 2 reps until you're at 50 you're only resting 2 seconds. 24 reps? Rest 24 seconds
- new wrinkle: on the unilateral moves, don't rest. Do reps on one arm, then do the same amount on the other arm...work back and forth till you hit your number



3,650 likes

APRIL 7

Add a comment...

Post

#15 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv61UhgB2u8/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow

ebenezersamuel23 • When the Friday Night Lighting is just right...

2w

swaroopnprasad Can you please suggest me good workout for bigger shoulder traps and delts

2w 3 likes Reply

View replies (3)

tedstaffordstyle Inspiration 🙌

2w 1 like Reply

View replies (1)



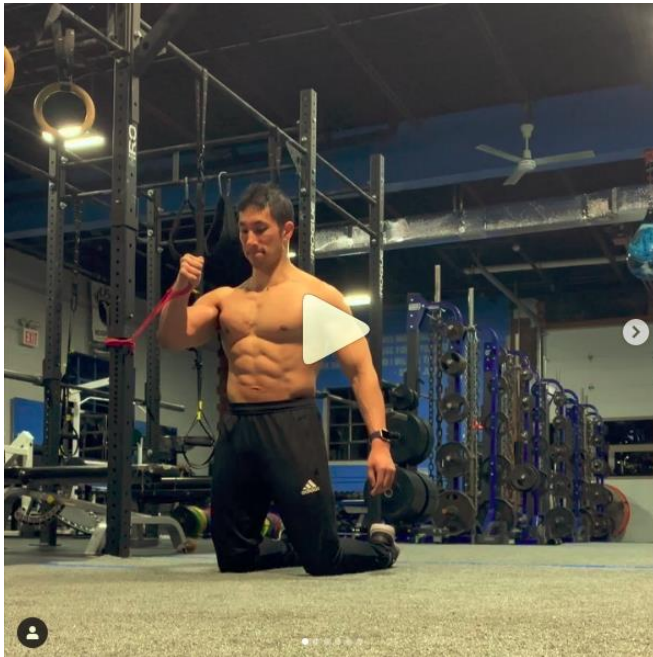
1,829 likes

APRIL 6

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Post

#16 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv55j2uBwJn/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 Chest workout that lets you move weight early, shreds your core late. Moves below, details in the audio: *****

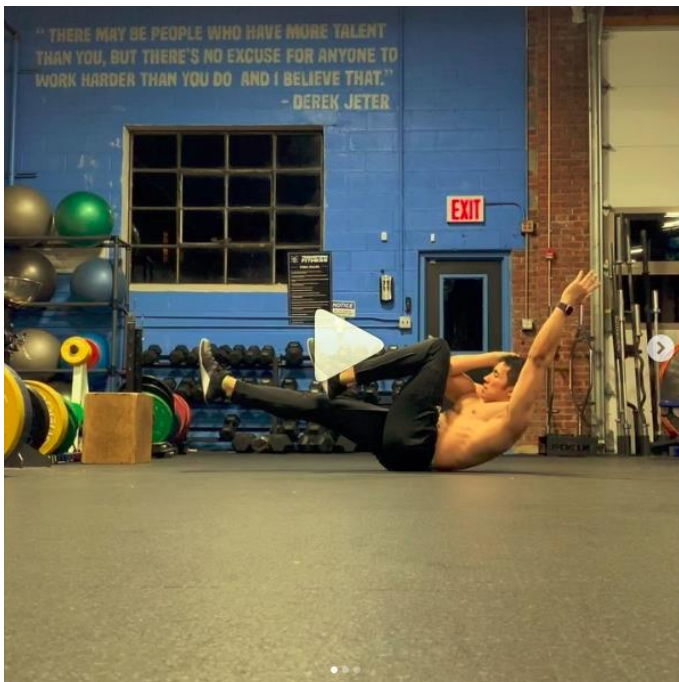
- 1) dumbbell bench press: 8-10 reps. 4 sets.
- 2) dumbbell incline press: 8-10 reps. 4 sets.
- 3) double-explode half-bench single-arm press: 5-6 pairs of reps per side, 3 sets.
- 4) countup single-arm kneeling banded fly: work into the round of 7 or 8 every set. 3 sets per side. *****

ebenezersamuel23 Dig my training style but not sure where to start with it? Check out my workout video program, The New Rules of Muscle. It's 5:20 minute

1,619 likes

APRIL 6
Add a comment... Post

#17 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv29yaEhZ7S/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 Super-fun, super-go-anywhere bodyweight edition of hollow rock abs hell that's over in six minutes (and that you don't wanna underestimate). Game plan below, details in the audio: *****

- find and own hollow body for a beat
- 10 corkscrew hollow rocks one way (you'll need to squeeze your abs hard to hold elbow to knee)
- 10 corkscrew hollow rocks the other way
- reset briefly in hollow body - 10 standard hollow rocks
- Superman plank til failure (aim for at least 10 ticks)
- rest about 30 seconds, repeat 3 times

1,103 likes

APRIL 5
Add a comment... Post

#18 - https://www.instagram.com/p/Bvx6w_UFW1r/



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 • Back workout that blends a variety of tempos and contractions to fire up every part of your lats and rhomboids. Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) dead stop dumbbell row: 8-10 reps per arm, 4 sets.
- 2) incline half-full pause pull down: 6-8 reps per set, 4 sets
- 3) incline double-to-single countup work: work into the round of 3 or 4. 3 sets.
- 4) plank anti-rotation bench-elevated row: 10-12 reps per arm. 3 sets (first obligation in this move: own the plank and beat the anti-rotation component).

Dig my training but not sure where



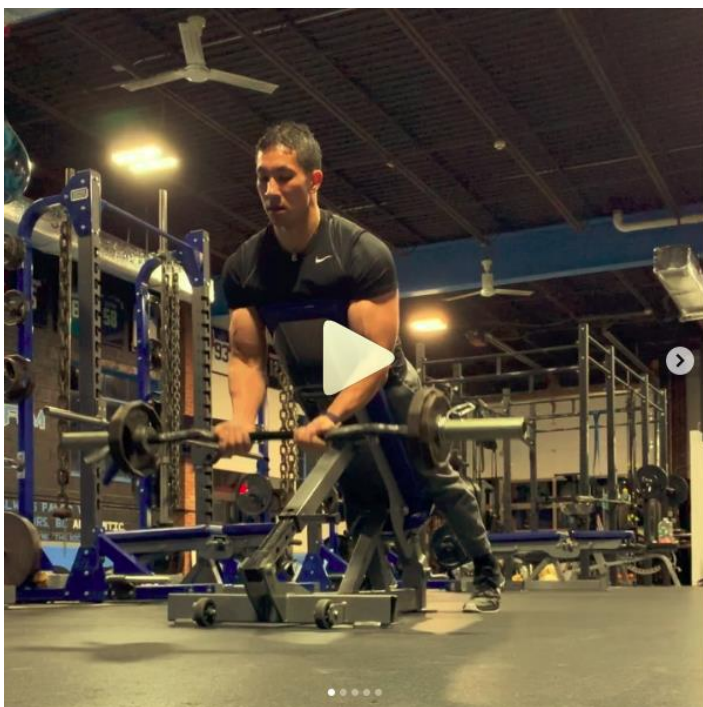
2,717 likes

APRIL 3

Add a comment...

Post

#19 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BvwM1GZBV-e/>



ebenezersamuel23 • Follow
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23 • Biceps blast that uses that forearms-parallel-to-the-ground position to attack biceps, brachialis, and forearms. Moves below, details in audio:

- 1) full-range curls superset: kneeling alternating curls, 10-12 reps, superset w/ towel hammer curls, 8-10 reps. 4 sets.
- 2) kneeling parallel pause-and-rotate hammer curls: 8-10 reps, 4 sets.
- 3) spider curl ez-bar parallel hold countup to curl: work into the round of 5 or 6 every set. 3 sets.

Dig my training but not sure where to start, or do you just need a more home friendly version? Try my



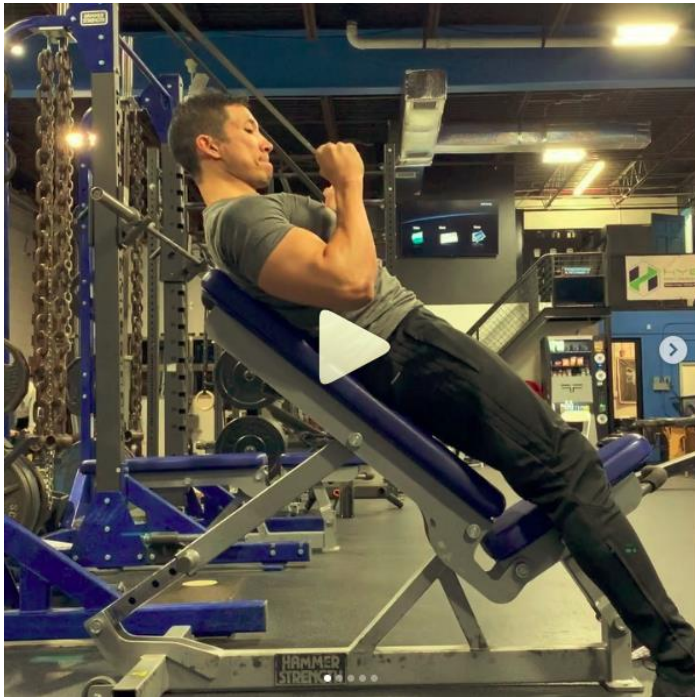
3,367 likes

APRIL 2

Add a comment...

Post


#20 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bvrd7qsh9vg/>




 **ebenezersamuel23**  • Follow 
The Transform Fitness and Training

ebenezersamuel23  Triceps workout that's all about being explosive in a variety of situations. Moves below, details in audio: *****^

- 1) Close grip bench work: 4 reps dead stop, then 4-6 standard pace reps. 4 sets.
- 2) double-explode dumbbell skull crushers: 4-6 pairs of reps per set. 4 sets.
- 3) incline bench 2-step pressdowns: 12-15 reps. 3 sets.

 Dig my training style but not sure where to start with it, or do you just want a more time-friendly version? Check out my workout video program, The New Rules of Muscle. It's 5 20 minute workouts that you

1,782 likes

MARCH 31

Add a comment...

Post

Bradley Simmonds (bradleysimmonds)

#0 - <https://www.instagram.com/bradleysimmonds/>



bradleysimmonds  [Follow](#)  

2,476 posts 306k followers 1,252 following

bradleysimmonds
GET IT DONE 🏆
@britishgq Trainer online/Mag 🇬🇧
@glamouruk columnist
GID APP 📱 coming soon
Issy@insanitygroup.com
GQ 12 Week transformation 💪 
www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/12-week-workout-plan

#1 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwuZJ5VF76h/>



bradleysimmonds  [Follow](#) 

bradleysimmonds  Welcome to the world Macie Rae Moore 🥰❤️
You're the most beautiful little girl who looks just like her mum @conniesimmonds 💖
Congrats to both Connie and @rickyruislip I'm so proud of you both.. thank you for creating such a beautiful precious little girl. Can't wait for my uncle duties to start 💙

3h

lucybeecoconut   

2h 8 likes [Reply](#)

6,664 likes
3 HOURS AGO

[Add a comment...](#) [Post](#)

#2 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwtj3VZFLEV/>



 **bradleysimmonds** • Follow

bradleysimmonds Having trouble building your Glutes?? 🍑 Give this workout a go ideal when the gym is packed 🙌

1. Single leg bridges - 20reps x3 both sides
2. Inclined bridges with resistance - 20reps x4
3. Bulgarian splits squats - 12reps x4 both sides
4. Barbell hip thrusters - 12reps x4
5. Barbell step ups - 10reps x4 both sides
6. Reverse lunge, step up and knee raise - 10reps x4 both sides.


A great workout that will have your 🔥 on 🔥🔥
Save and GET IT DONE!
#bumworkout #glutes #legday
#squats #lunges #triceps

35,398 views
10 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... Post


#3 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwsPSgPFA5q/>




 **bradleysimmonds** • Follow

bradleysimmonds GID 📱 App coming soon. What ever you goal my programmes and workouts will be your go to 🙌 100's of workouts for weightloss - muscle gain - strength - endurance - nutrition guidance and more. Instagram has been great but I'm ready to take it to a new level to help you reach your goals 🙌
#GETITDONE

23h

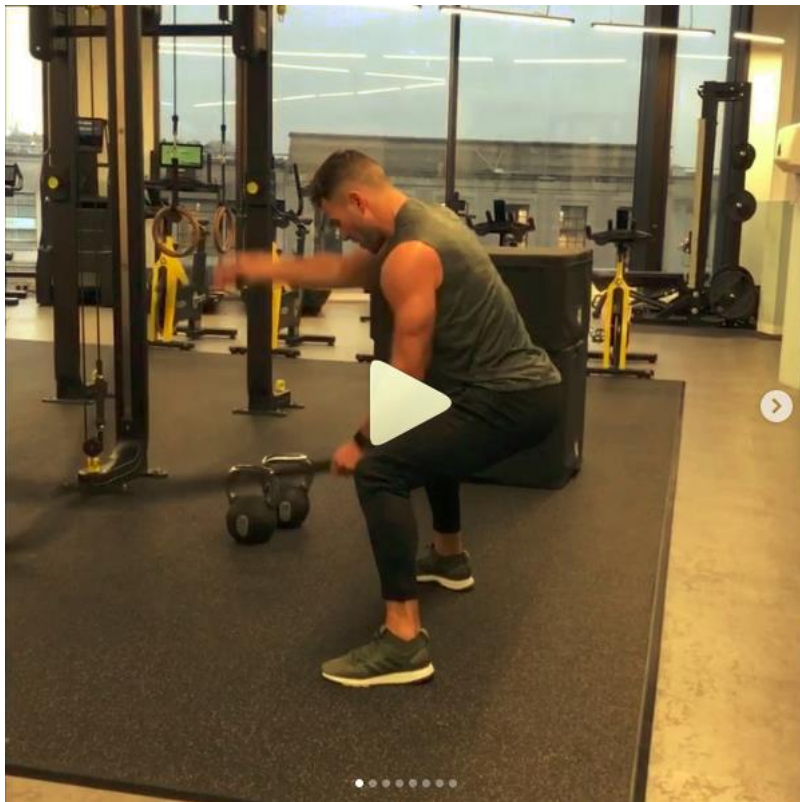
 **rubennooben** PLEASE BE FREE
19h 2 likes Reply


 **mouniaatrouz** 🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥
22h 1 like Reply

5,588 likes
23 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#4 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwq0eVHIZV-/>



 **bradleysimmonds** • Follow

bradleysimmonds CIRCUIT TRAINING! 🔥
One of the most effective ways to shred fat whilst building a strong physique. Heart rate increased to burn serious calories ✅ Working all muscle groups ✅ Working for 20 seconds maximum effort with 10 second recovery competing each exercise 4 times before moving onto the next. (TABATA)
The workout ⚡
1. Battle rope waves
2. Front rack squat/kettle bell rows
2. Battle rope slams
3. Box jumps
4. Spider climbers
5. Dumbbell chest to floor stand ups
6. Trx climbers
7. Narrow push ups

5,240 likes
1 DAY AGO

Add a comment... Post

#5 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwoefGTlemN/>



 **bradleysimmonds** • Follow

bradleysimmonds Good hour on the pads @johnterry.26 LEGEND! 🍷

2d

 **funesmori7** When someone fucks his friend's wife he can't be a legend
2d 2 likes Reply
View replies (1)

 **t.hughes79** Keep your misses away from him!
1d 1 like Reply

 **officialbootbible** Love it

5,677 likes
2 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#6 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwmAhJdFe6t/>



bradleysimmonds • Follow

bradleysimmonds TRICEPS 🍑🔥
I often get asked - "How do I lose fat on my arms and tone my triceps at the same time"? Now straight to the point - If you dislike your arms unfortunately all the exercises shown in this video will not burn unwanted fat unless you're looking after your diet. For best results you should focus and work towards burning your overall body fat % to be able to see results which can only be done by meeting a calorie deficit on a daily basis 🙌
The workout demonstrated will certainly build muscle and improve muscle definition in the tricep area. So performing these exercises is still a good idea 🙌 So... All you need to do is look after diet to meet that all



6,022 likes

3 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

#7 - https://www.instagram.com/p/BwjLptwFB_i/



bradleysimmonds • Follow

bradleysimmonds SWEATING-HELL 🏃💦
Ideal for fatloss and to improve cardiovascular fitness levels 🙌
THE WORKOUT ↴
1. 1km Run (under 5mins)
2. 1minute Plank
3. 20 push ups
4. 10 chest to floor burpees
5. Rest 1minute
6. Complete 3-5rounds
SAVE IT GET IT DONE 🙌
#cardio #weightloss #running
#treadmillworkout #fatloss
#fatburner #personaltrainer
#coreworkout #core #adidas

4d

conniesimmonds This will be



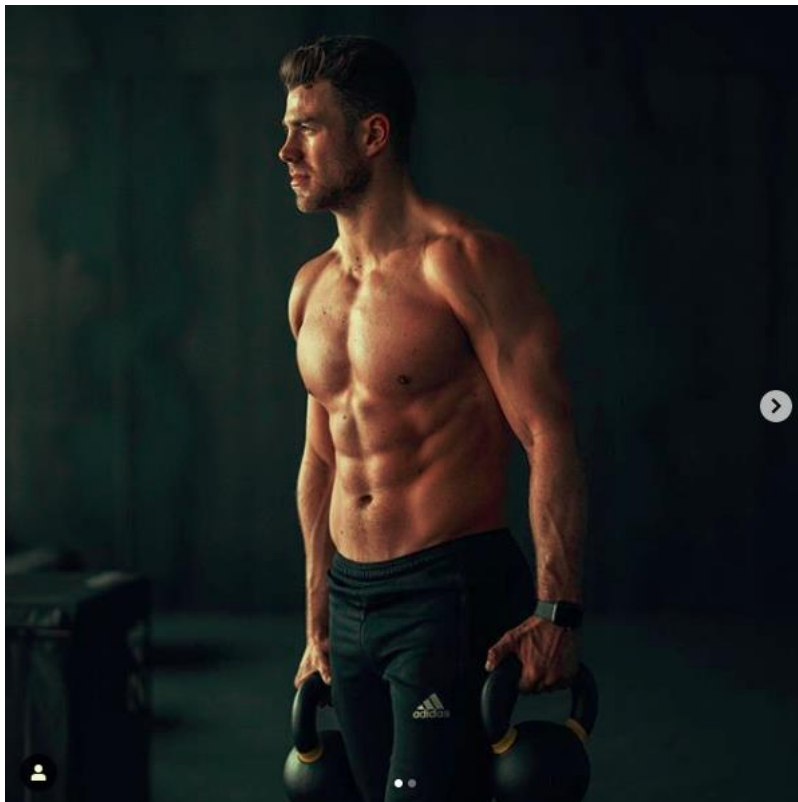
79,194 views



4 DAYS AGO



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#8 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwh8mT8FdG0/>




 **bradleysimmonds**  • Follow 

 **bradleysimmonds**  📸 - @jordan.bareham



4d

 **misskarriep80** 😍😍 



4d 1 like Reply




 **ramon.athletics** Really nice shots!! 📸 

2d Reply

 **ellz3** 🍌🍌🍌 

3d Reply

 **paulo_pahulu** Look mint dude. 

5,039 likes

4 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#9 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwg1eCLFSU8/>



 **bradleysimmonds**  • Follow 

bradleysimmonds  **BICEPS** 🍌🔥
Never been my focal point but always add these exercises into my weekly program.
Mostly working eccentrically (slow and controlled on the downward movement) to build extra strength and achieve greater muscle growth
👉 THE WORKOUT ↙ (Go heavy)
1. Barbell curls - 10reps x5
2. Cable squat bicep curl - 10reps x5
3. Eccentric chip ups - 10reps x5
4. Cable rope curls - until failure (Rest 1-2minutes) x3
SAVE and GET IT DONE 👉
Gym - @fswimbleton
#bicepworkout #biceps
#workoutmotivation #gymmotivation
#gym #personaltrainer #adidas
#workout #fitness

49,573 views

5 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#10 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BweJB5oFiWf/>



 **bradleysimmonds** • Follow

bradleysimmonds INTERVALS 🏃

🔥👊
No doubtably the most effective way to burn serious amounts of calories in such a short amount of time. Running for 30seconds at your maximum speed (or as fast as the treadmill can go) with a 30second recovery period completing 10sprints.

An ideal finisher 🏃👊 (ideal for weightloss) along with improvement in overall athletic capacity which is why I always recommend long distance runners to incorporate interval training into their training.

If shredding weight or improving overall fitness is your goal id recommend interval training v2.0

5,246 likes

6 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

#11 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwbU4qFFVN0/>



 **bradleysimmonds** • Follow
Walpole Park

bradleysimmonds Catching up with my best mate 🐕

@man.like.roots thank you
@phileas_dogg_daycare for taking care of roots whilst I was away 🙌
#mansbestfriend

1w



chelsealovesdogslife Best Pals till the end ❤️

3d Reply



obtentuaufacil Que lindo 🐶

3d Reply



paulo_pahulu Cute! Dope shot

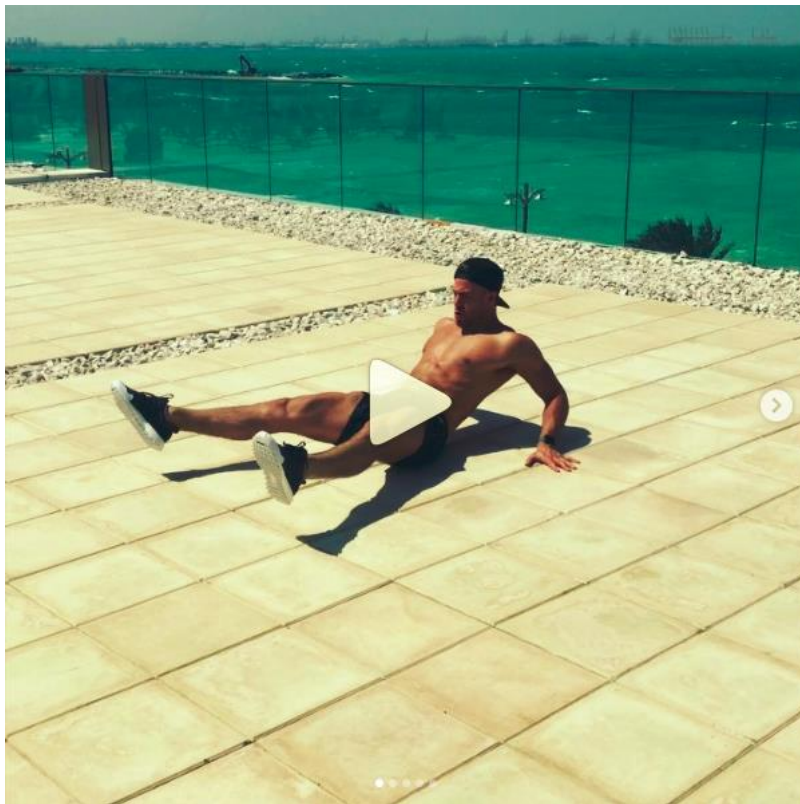
5,475 likes

7 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

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#12 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwbRd8ylOmD/>



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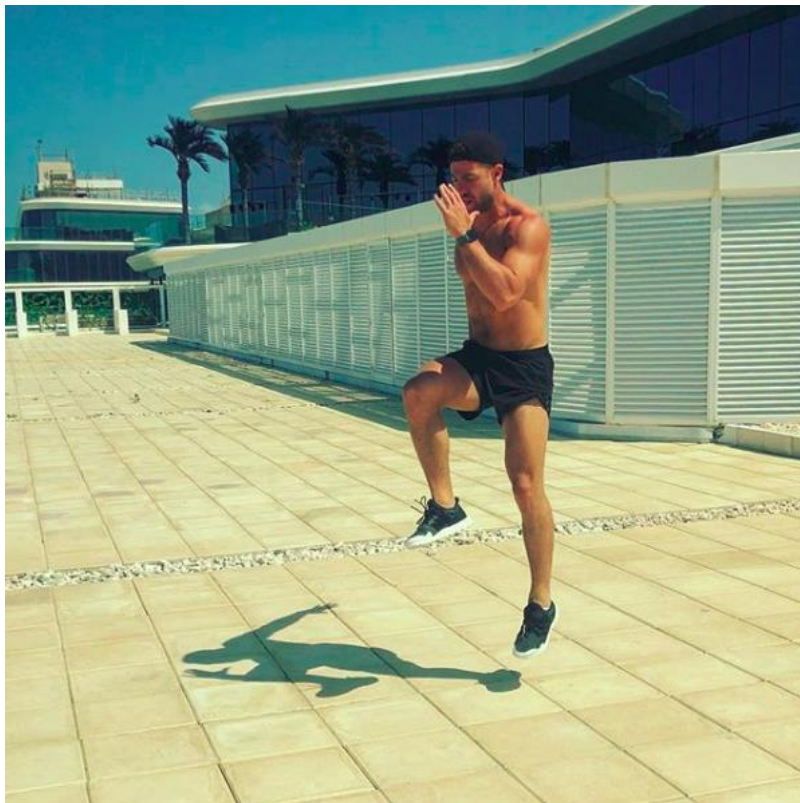
bradleysimmonds • FAT BURNING CORE 🔥
Another class I taught at fuel weekend focusing on increasing heart whilst performing core exercises 🔥
Working two exercises 20secs each for 40 seconds with a 20 second rest period x5
A great 25minute workout for you to do at home or outdoors 👍
THE WORKOUT ↙
1a. Table top toe touches
1b. Straight legged ins/outs
2a. Push ups
2b. Squat and push kick
3a. Sit up/side touches
3b. Cross climbers
4a. Half Burpee/burpee
4b. One leg jack knives

👍 🗨️ ↗️ 📌

5,966 likes
7 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#13 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwaH651Fn1p/>



 **bradleysimmonds** • Follow ...

bradleysimmonds • Landed Back home in London 🇬🇧 after a very much needed trip away for both work and pleasure 🙌 Thank you Dubai I'll be back 🇦🇪 Head to my previous post for your next Hiit workout 🔥

1w

 **nadiakayt** Welcome back 📍
1w Reply

 **niccolo_battaglini** Keep going!!! 📍
1w Reply

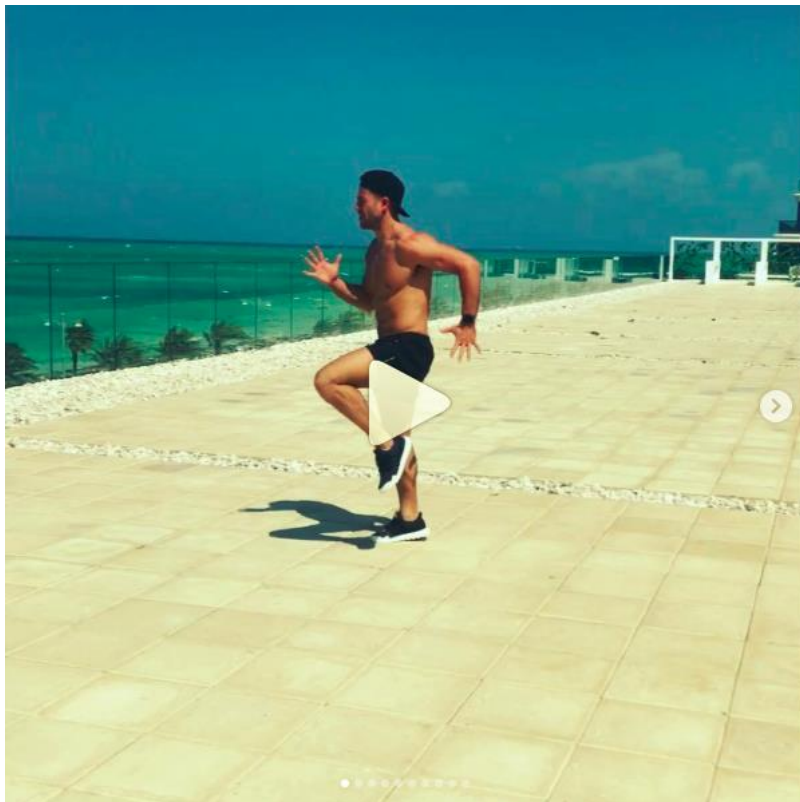
 **fabbianef20** 🙌 📍

👍 🗨️ ↗️ 📌

2,562 likes
APRIL 18

Add a comment... Post

#14 - https://www.instagram.com/p/BwY1g4ZIH0_/



bradleysimmonds • Follow

bradleysimmonds SERIOUS HIIT

Working for 20 seconds max effort with only a 10 second rest completing each exercise 4times (TABATA)

Exercises I did with my recent class at fuel festival here in Dubai.

THE WORKOUT

1. Spot Sprints
2. Star jumps
3. Side lunge runners jumper
4. Jumping lunges
5. Squat and kick
6. Punches
7. Toe touches
8. Cross climbers
9. Half burpee burpees
10. Plank shuffles



6,345 likes

APRIL 18

Add a comment...

Post

#15 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwWhoXkl-ta/>



bradleysimmonds • Follow

GymNation

bradleysimmonds Buzzing to get back on the pads with @boxiq unreal facilities down at his gym @gymnation_uae. If you're into your boxing make sure you give @boxiq a follow #boxing

1w

hotspurdzn Yiddo

1w Reply

johnsepitome Focus on not dropping your hands when you throw your punches. Also turn your hips when you throw your lead hook

1w Reply



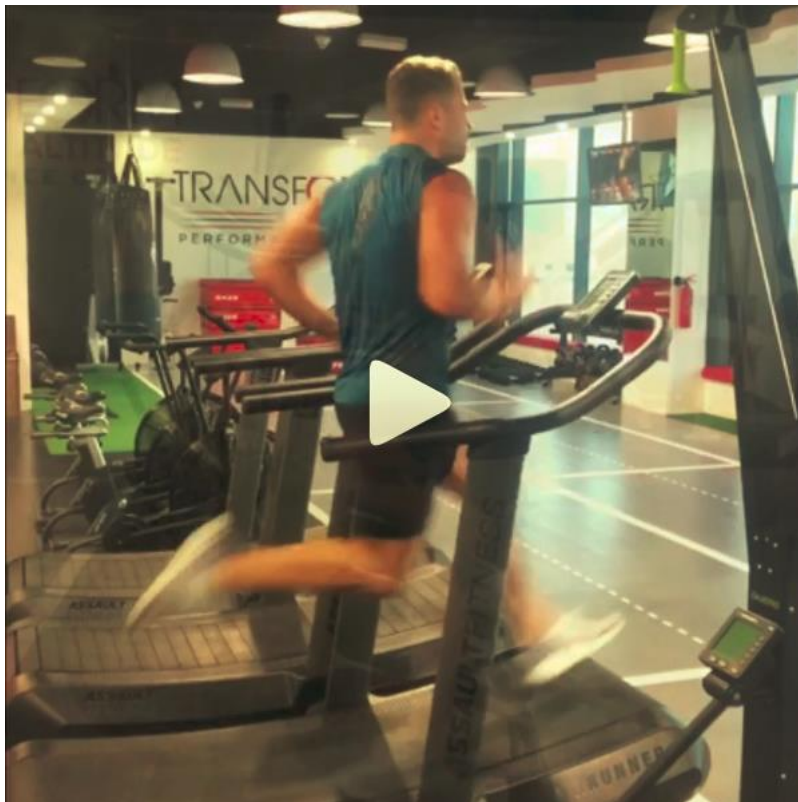
16,791 views

APRIL 17

Add a comment...

Post

#16 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwTkyw8FPS-/>



bradleysimmonds • Follow
Transform Altitude

bradleysimmonds Was a pleasure to meet @saifpr the man behind @transformaltitude here in Dubai. They've worked with top players and athletes so was keen to check it out. I'll be working with @saifpr in the future for sure 🙌 #mydubai #fitness #cardio #hiit #core #coreworkout #gym #gymmotivation

1w

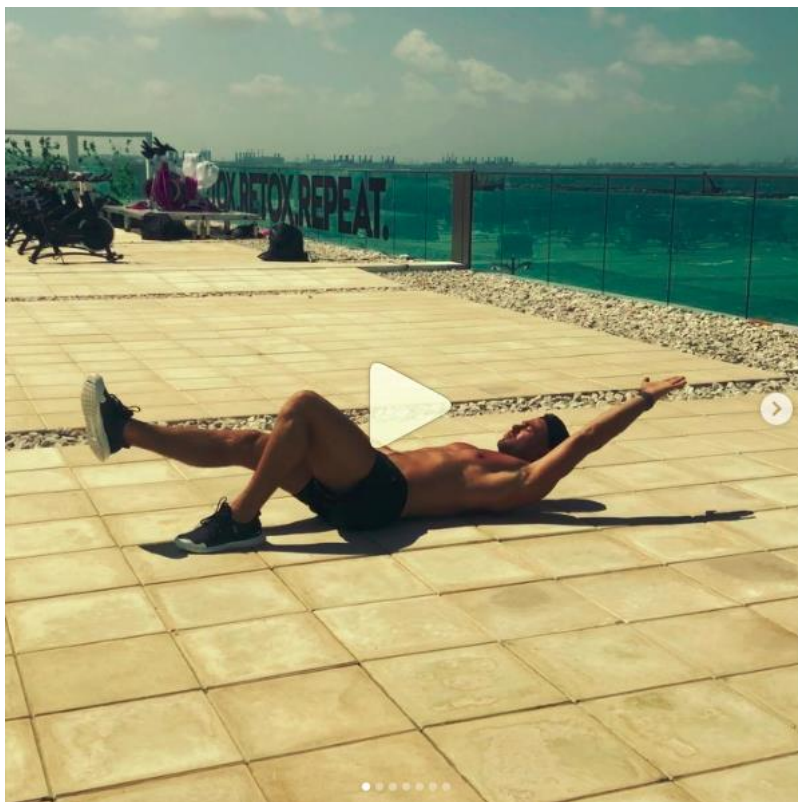
solovely_8b Woah look at you go!!!! 🙌
1w 1 like Reply

erron_stone 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔
1w 1 like Reply

33,031 views
APRIL 16

Add a comment... Post

#17 - https://www.instagram.com/p/BwQ_auKFAkb/



bradleysimmonds • Follow
W Dubai - The Palm

bradleysimmonds ABS 🔥🔥 Warning this workout will extremely kill your abs. This workout will not burn fat but will certainly improve your abdominal definition. THE WORKOUT ⚡
Smash 20reps per exercise (both sides) complete 3 challenging rounds 🔥
Save and Get it done 🙌
#absworkout #abs #coreworkout #core #personaltrainer #homeworkout #outdoorworkout #sixpack #gymmotivation #mondaymotivation #fitspo #fitnessgirl #mydubai

1w

lillveahri Yaaaaa Brad 🙌🙌

7,698 likes
APRIL 15

Add a comment... Post

#18 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwPTxp711px/>



bradleysimmonds • Follow
Paid partnership with **wdubaipalm**
W Dubai - The Palm

bradleysimmonds What an incredible few days at @wdubaipalm headlining the Fuel weekend where we trained 🏋️ detoxed 🌿 and retoxed 🍷 (enjoyed ourselves) the perfect balance for a weekend away in Dubai 🇦🇪 #detoxretoxrepeat #mydubai

1w

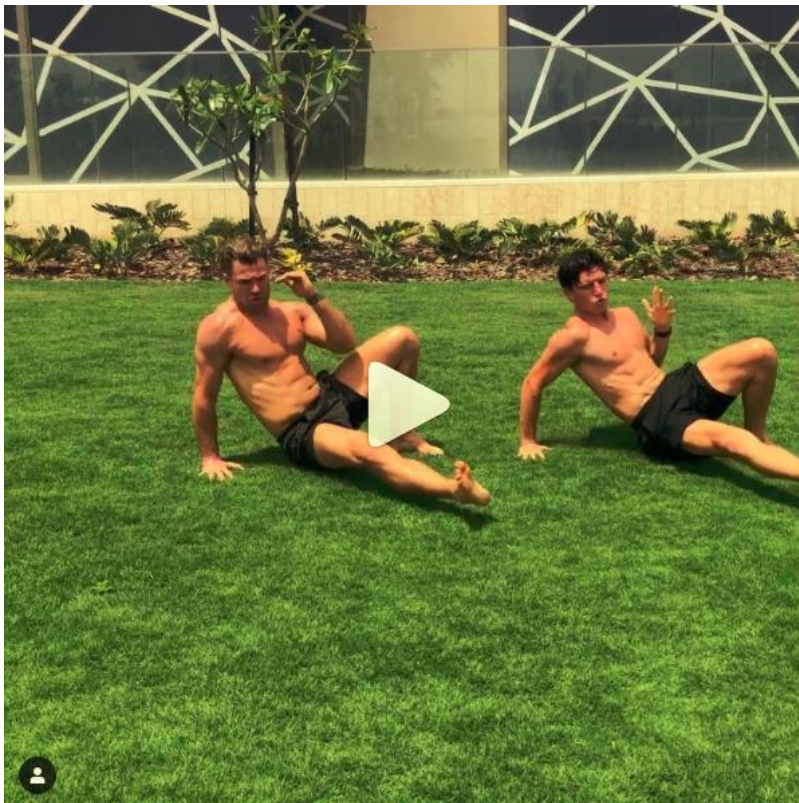
lauracoleman457 Sick pic 🤩 ...
1w Reply
View replies (1)

islandofluke Tan coming along nicely mate! 🍷🔥

4,627 likes
APRIL 14

Add a comment... Post

#19 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwOhLsWlyQP/>



bradleysimmonds • Follow
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

bradleysimmonds Zoo flow 🦒 with the lej @seanclancy_ko8 owner/creator of @ko8_fitness. Very Advanced but brilliant exercises to increase your heart rate, shredd fat and get Shredded. Not easy in 35 degree heat 🔥 but always enjoyable when training alongside someone 🌟

10 reps per exercise moving onto the next (minimal rest) completing 5 sets for a tough challenging workout 🙌 Save it GET IT DONE 🙌

#hiitworkout #hiit #core #coreworkout #absworkout #fitness #personaltrainer #fatburner #homeworkout #outdoorworkout #fatburn #mydubai

1w

69,148 views
APRIL 14

Add a comment... Post

#20 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwMdn0wFigv/>



bradleysimmonds • Follow
W Dubai - The Palm



bradleysimmonds • Could get use to this place 🇦🇪 @wdubaipalm #detoxretorepeat #mydubai

1w



andyshaw24 I imagine it's a great place unless you're a journalist opposing the regime, gay or a foreign manual labourer. 🇦🇪 but who cares as long as it's shiny new and sunny eh?

1w 1 like Reply



ramighanem82 You posted a wring uae flag .. fyi :) the correct one 🇦🇪



4,473 likes


APRIL 13




Add a comment...

Post

Simeon Panda (simeonpanda)

#0 - <https://www.instagram.com/simeonpanda/>



simeonpanda  [Follow](#)  

5,860 posts 5.1m followers 128 following

Simeon Panda®
📍 LA

- CEO @justliftofficial @sp_aesthetics
- @vqfit
- @simeon_panda
- Lifetime Natural

How to get rid of LOVE HANDLES ↴
youtu.be/kDH3YX93n8o

#1 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwuWGRWB23c/>



simeonpanda  [Follow](#)
Los Angeles/Marina del Ray

simeonpanda  What do you eat for breakfast? ↴
I've started my @youtube nutrition series right at the beginning, with a video about all the factors we should consider when choosing what to have for breakfast.
Be sure to SUBSCRIBE so you don't miss it!

 [YouTube.com/simeonpanda](https://www.youtube.com/simeonpanda)
 [YouTube.com/simeonpanda](https://www.youtube.com/simeonpanda)
 [YouTube.com/simeonpanda](https://www.youtube.com/simeonpanda)

 by @jakecotreau

3h

zenoamir thank you!!!
personally i like the way you put 

60,708 likes
3 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... [Post](#)

#2 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwtZEvYhcO7/>



SPRING SALE
10% OFF

PLUS A FREE SIGNED CARD

CODE: SPRING

simeonpanda • Follow
Paid partnership with justliftofficial

simeonpanda @justliftofficial Spring SALE at JUSTLIFT.COM don't miss out!* Use code: SPRING

*Discount code is valid at justlift.com for clothing only.

12h

jeremy_hernandez1 Quads for days 🍌🔥

12h 6 likes Reply

amirhoseinshami007 Wow ❤️🍌🍌🍌

11h 4 likes Reply

18,405 likes
12 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#3 - https://www.instagram.com/p/Bws6KTnh_f7/



AVENGE THE FALLEN

APRIL 26

simeonpanda • Follow
Avengers Tower

simeonpanda At the movies, about to watch #avengersendgame and I managed to not see any spoilers 🙊 (won't be checking comments until after so... 🙊🙊)

You can download my training programs at SIMEONPANDA.COM

by @tjaysfitdesign

16h

jacob_abade Super man beats thanos

15h 32 likes Reply

georgekhoury_ Power Rangers also Thanos

41,269 likes
16 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#4 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwsBk4fhyXC/>



simeonpanda • Follow

simeonpanda • Photoshop or nah?
😄 Read below ↴ All my training programs are at SIMEONPANDA.COM

[Firstly, if you have any Questions about my journey ask in the comments, I will try and answer a few 🍌]

I keep this shape 365 days a year, you can make all the excuses in the book, or doubt my methods, but the truth is in what I share on all my social platforms, consistent training and healthy eating, day by day, year by year (currently around 19yrs training now).

You don't even have to buy my...

604,371 views
1 DAY AGO

Add a comment... Post

#5 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwr3OLwBvtp/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Avengers Tower

simeonpanda • All BLK everything!
• @justliftofficial BLK Collection Available at SIMEONPANDA.COM

1d

markbrandly You should be in ...
Black Panther 2
1d 12 likes Reply
View replies (1)

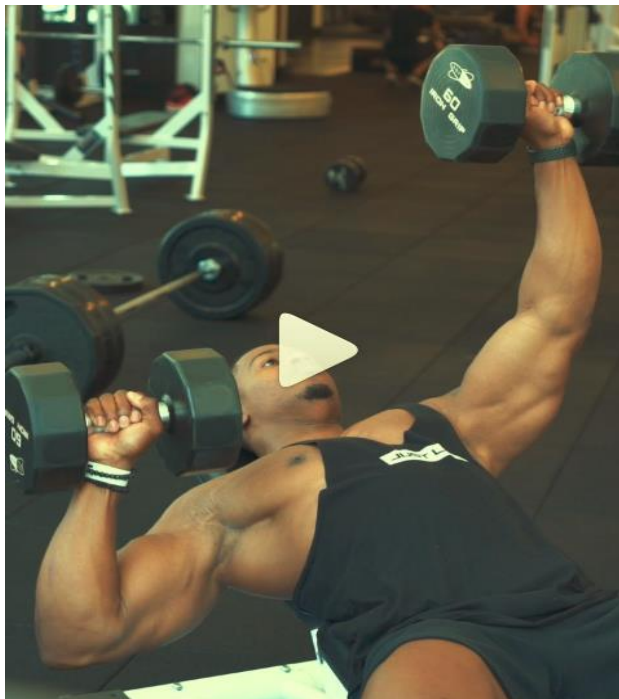
nisarg_tip7007 U really look like a hot version of Michael b Jordan n much stronger luv u man ❤️❤️❤️❤️👊👊👊

1d 5 likes Reply

38,314 likes
1 DAY AGO

Add a comment... Post

#6 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwq8nKphVP1/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Equinox Marina Del Rey

simeonpanda Try this high rep Dumbbell Press Variation 🔥 Tag friends & Save for later. Exercise info ↓ Be sure to download my MASS GAIN EXTREME ebook at SIMEONPANDA.COM

#simeonpanda #spidercurls #diamondpushups #superset

1d

becomethefittest U are my biggest motivation! 🔥 Awesome chest workout! 💪 Keep it up!

1d 13 likes Reply

— View replies (1)

268,660 views
1 DAY AGO

Add a comment... Post

#7 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwp8jttBU-V/>



simeonpanda • Follow

simeonpanda Chaneon & Simel 😂 You cannot unsee this lmao 😂

@chanelcocobrown

1d

chuckedup_fit Ummm...imma go with NO on this one bro. I know no one asked a question, but the answer is still NO lol

1d 199 likes Reply

— View replies (13)

ant.fit_ Yooo, this has to be a crime or at least a violation of instagram's terms of service 😂

176,086 likes
1 DAY AGO

Add a comment... Post

#8 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwpL17oBOr0/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Self Made Training Facility

simeonpanda • What do you need help with? ↓
I tailor my YouTube videos to the requests I get from you guys, so let me know what you want to see. I filmed a full back routine with just the equipment I'm holding, vid will be on my channel soon.

Build a balanced physique with my Mass Gain Extreme Training Program, download at SIMEONPANDA.COM

by @jakecotreau

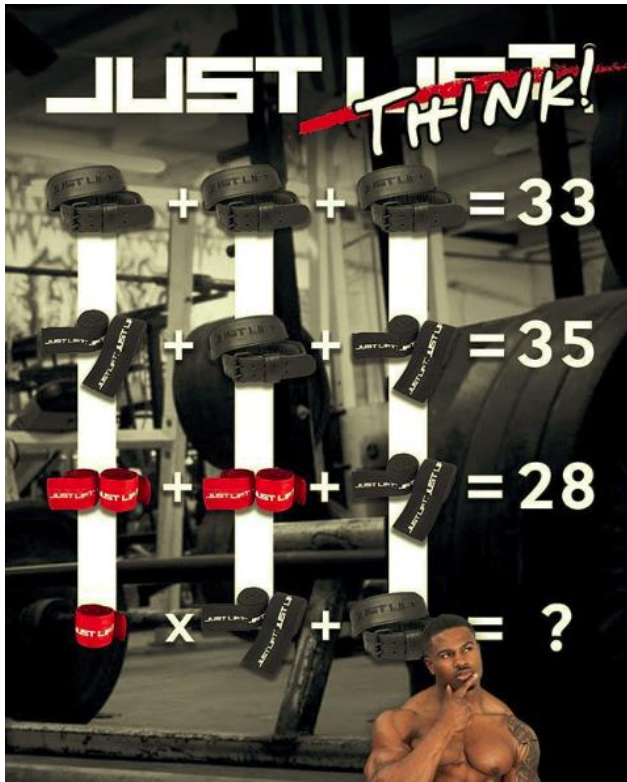
#simeonpanda #youtube

2d

69,979 likes
2 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#9 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwn6hw3BhsX/>



simeonpanda • Follow

simeonpanda • A little brain stimulation 🤔 Answers below ↓ Tag a friend to see what they say 😊

Just Lift. Training Accessories available exclusively at SIMEONPANDA.COM

2d

hichambaghou 107 🤔
2d 294 likes Reply
View replies (17)

simeonpanda • For those of you that think your answer is right, Tag your friends and see what they say 🤔🤔🤔

72,076 likes
2 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#10 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwm8-tbBcki/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Equinox Marina Del Rey

simeonpanda Arms Superset 🔥
Tag friends & Save for later. Exercise info ↓ Be sure to download my MASS GAIN EXTREME ebook at SIMEONPANDA.COM

Exercise 1: TRX Curls
Exercise 2: Reverse Grip Tricep Pushdown

#simeonpanda #spidercurls #diamondpushups #superset

3d

michael8ba RIP nip 🙏
3d 13 likes Reply

in anthony Daps superset

192,613 views
3 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#11 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwmm0jqhpAd/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Paid partnership with **justliftofficial**
Los Angeles, California

simeonpanda Always ready.
@justliftofficial Muscle Tank & Box Logo Shorts 🔥 JUSTLIFT.COM

#teamjustlift #justlift #simeonpanda

3d

joe_velazquez_ How many meals a day do you eat?
3d 2 likes Reply
View replies (1)

tim.ehret_9 Shoes name? 🔥
3d 4 likes Reply
View replies (1)

50,986 likes
3 DAYS AGO


Add a comment... Post

#12 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwlORMwBxZZ/>



 **simeonpanda** • Follow
Equinox Marina Del Rey

simeonpanda • Have you tried Pause Reps? Tag a friend to try this with. 🏋️ When you lengthen a muscle, it generates elastic energy that boosts a concentric movement immediately after lengthening. Pause Reps negate the elastic energy, which means you can only rely on your muscles ability, to generate the force required to move the weights.

 @justliftofficial Elbow wraps are available at SIMEONPANDA.COM

📄 You can download my full training routines at SIMEONPANDA.COM

🤍 💬 📤 📌

304,461 views

3 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

#13 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwlRDI8hvFm/>



 **simeonpanda** • Follow

simeonpanda • How to get rid of LOVE HANDLES 😊 [Link in bio] MUST WATCH! Tag your friends! Tag someone who needs to see this, go see why it has over 100k views in less than 24hrs 📈

 @jakecotreau

#lovehandles #remove lovehandles #liposuction #fatremoval #bodysculpting #bodycontour #waisttrainer #sweatgel

3d

 100yardbatman Were is the link 📌
3d 4 likes Reply

🤍 💬 📤 📌

517,213 views

3 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

#14 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwkkqXABsi5/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Paid partnership with vqfit

simeonpanda The @vqfit Blackout LT Tracksuit has been RESTOCKED! 🔥 *Limited numbers* get it while you can!

Link 📌 @vqfit bio or visit WWW.VQFIT.COM/SIMEON
#vqfit #vq

3d

hottestinstamen They look amazing. I can see why they sell out quickly 🔥👍

3d 3 likes Reply

— View replies (1)

arm7_karlene 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔

28,771 likes
3 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#15 - https://www.instagram.com/p/BwkJ_U_BWVJ/



simeonpanda • Follow
Equinox Marina Del Rey

simeonpanda Arms Superset 🔥
Tag friends & Save for later. Exercise info ↴ Be sure to download my MASS GAIN EXTREME ebook at SIMEONPANDA.COM

Exercise 1: Spider Curls
Exercise 2: Incline Diamond Push Ups

#simeonpanda #spidercurls
#diamondpushups #superset

4d

kylemchughh Me OK- Jeezy, solid song choice 🙌

4d 41 likes Reply

471,651 views
4 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#16 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwjGeDuhabe/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Equinox Marina Del Rey

simeonpanda RDL's. Strong Hammys for powerful deep squats 🏋️‍♂️ Bring on Wednesdays squat session 😊

📄 Download my full training routines at simeonpanda.com

#simeonpanda #bodybuilding #TeamJustLift #legday #hamstrings #stiffleggeddeadlift #rdl

4d

ehrenmannandi Do you see RDLs primarily as accessory for your squats or as a hamstring mass builder? ❤️

4d 1 like Reply

224,108 views
4 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#17 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bwh8FzBhxsE/>



simeonpanda • Follow

simeonpanda Happy Easter! 🐰

4d

fidelly Lookin like a OG crip in LA 😊 ❤️

4d 6 likes Reply

— View replies (1)

jorge_jorgefuentes Happy Easter 🐰 to you mate ❤️

4d 1 like Reply

— View replies (1)

omega42089 I like the outfit simeon!! Nice! 🙌 Kind of dressy ❤️

43,557 likes
4 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post

#18 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwhlWv4h2WR/>



simeonpanda • Follow
Equinox Marina Del Rey

simeonpanda Have you tried Close Grip Bench Press? Tag a friend 🍷 to give this exercise a try to target Triceps.

The closer you grip, the more you focus on the Triceps.

You can get the @justliftofficial Elbow Wraps I'm using, and download my full training programs at SIMEONPANDA.COM

#simeonpanda
#closegripbenchpress #triceps

5d

islam_amir Tips for bigger chest with no equipment



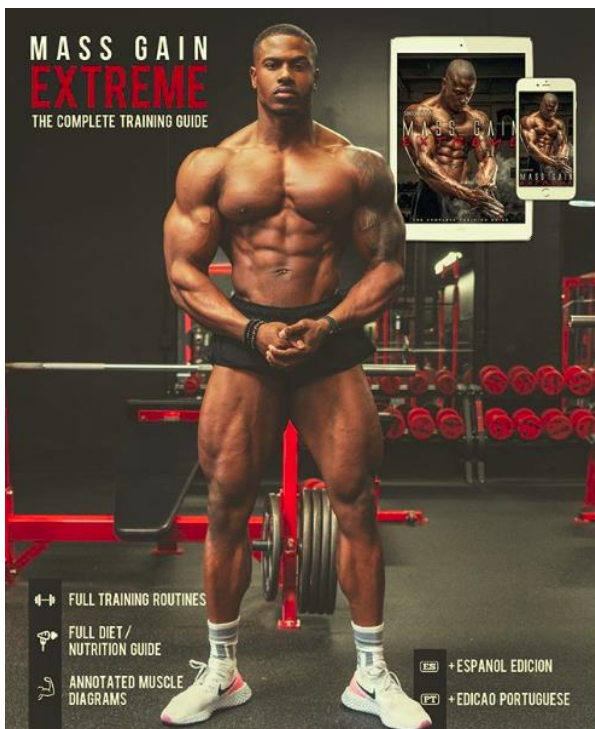
325,759 views

5 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

#19 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwghDAZhY8t/>



simeonpanda • Follow

simeonpanda Build lean mass with my 'MASS GAIN EXTREME' Training Guide 82 page eBook in English, Español & Portuguese from SIMEONPANDA.COM

My intense, mass building training routines.

A whopping 82 PAGE ebook to train exactly how I do, and the diet that keeps me lean all year while still building mass!

🔑 Key exercises, rep range, number of sets, rest period 📄 Annotated diagrams of the exact muscles used with key exercises

🍷 Training tips and golden rules

🍽️ My daily meals (incl portion size)
🌿 Essential nutrition guidelines!



30,105 likes

5 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

#20 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwfZ-mRBhTB/>



 **simeonpanda** • Follow
Sydney, Australia

simeonpanda Caption this 🙄
@kwameduah I was channeling you energy! 😂

5d

loki_steel When your spotter is spotting you with moral support rather than his hands

5d 49 likes Reply
View replies (2)

miguelbaiaz Two "lifetime naturals" 😂

5d 42 likes Reply
View replies (9)

👍 💬 ↗️ 📌

50,808 likes
5 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post