Pseudomedical Psychedelia: examining the rhetoric of "nootropic" supplements

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Agenda

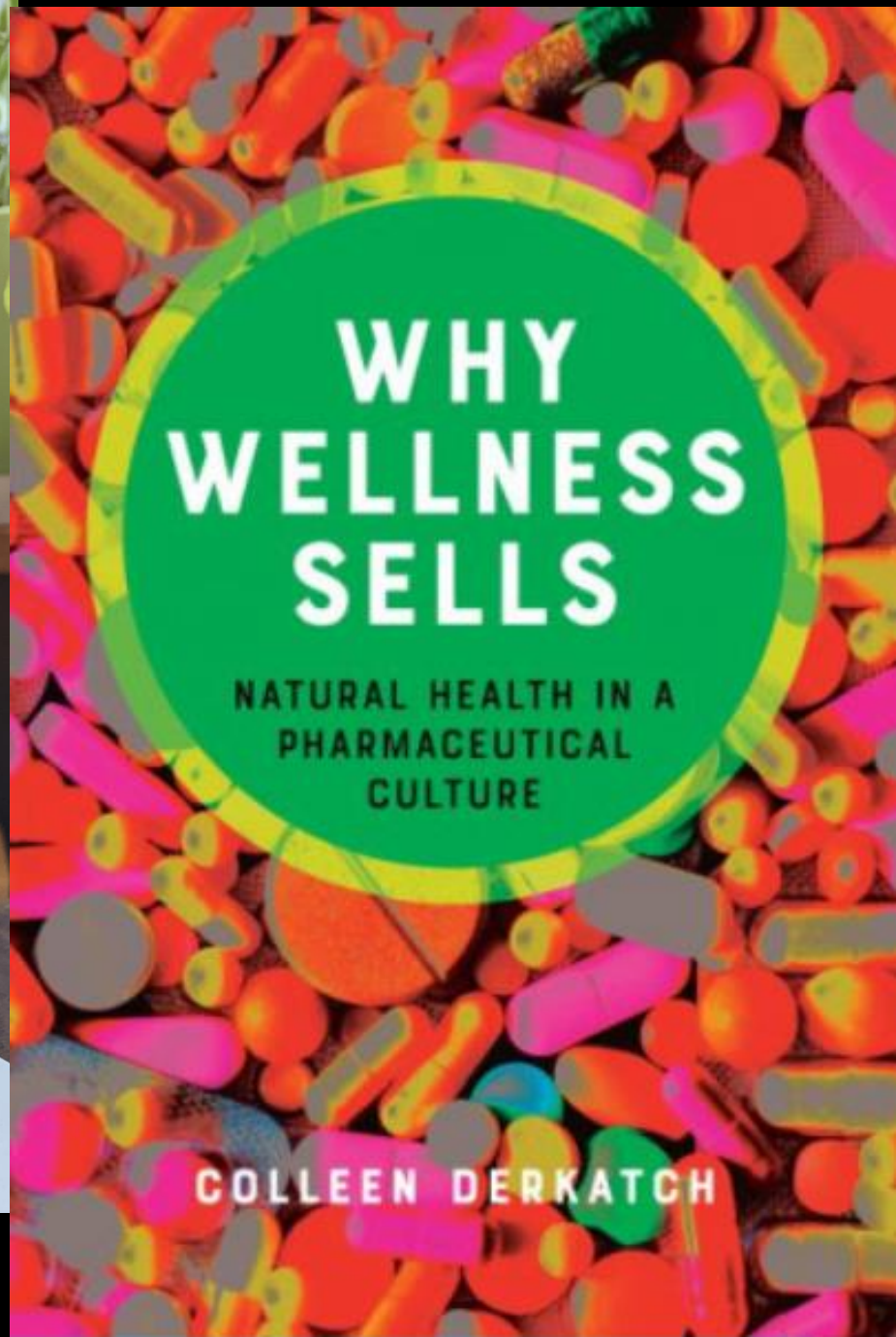
- The book: some context
- The history/meaning of “nootropics”
- Two “tropes” that nootropics discourse takes: gendered subjectivities
- Some implications (spoiler alert: it has to do with tonight’s news feed)

The book:

Disgustatory: A Gothic Rhetoric of Consumption

by Jeremy Tirrell and Kate Maddalena

GREEN UTOPIAS GARFORTH
polity
BOYLE RHETORIC AS A POSTHUMAN PRACTICE
OHIO STATE PRESS
MOL Eating in Theory
Duke
THE POLITICS OF PAIN MEDICINE S. SCOTT GRAHAM
CHICAGO
B-O-M-E-D-I-A THACKER
MINNESOTA
FRIEDRICH KITTLER | OPERATION Valhalla
DUKE
THE ACCOMPANIMENT
CHICAGO
Entertaining Futility McMurry
Blockchain Chicken Farm Xiaowei Wang
FSGO / LOGIC
HOW WE THINK N. KATHERINE HAYLES
CHICAGO
LORRAINE DASTON AGAINST NATURE
FACING GAIA | LATOUR
polity
Ambient Rhetoric
RICKERT
PITTSBURGH


WHY WELLNESS SELLS
NATURAL HEALTH IN A PHARMACEUTICAL CULTURE
COLLEEN DERKATCH

To regulate fecal transplants, FDA has to first answer a serious question: What is poop?

bright brain
Sleep Quality
Relaxation
Vitality
Dreams
Recovery
Neuroprotection
CRASH + REBOOT
Sleep Performance And
Cognitive Recovery Nootropic

Pervitin
Wachhaltemittel

Pervitin
Wachhaltemittel

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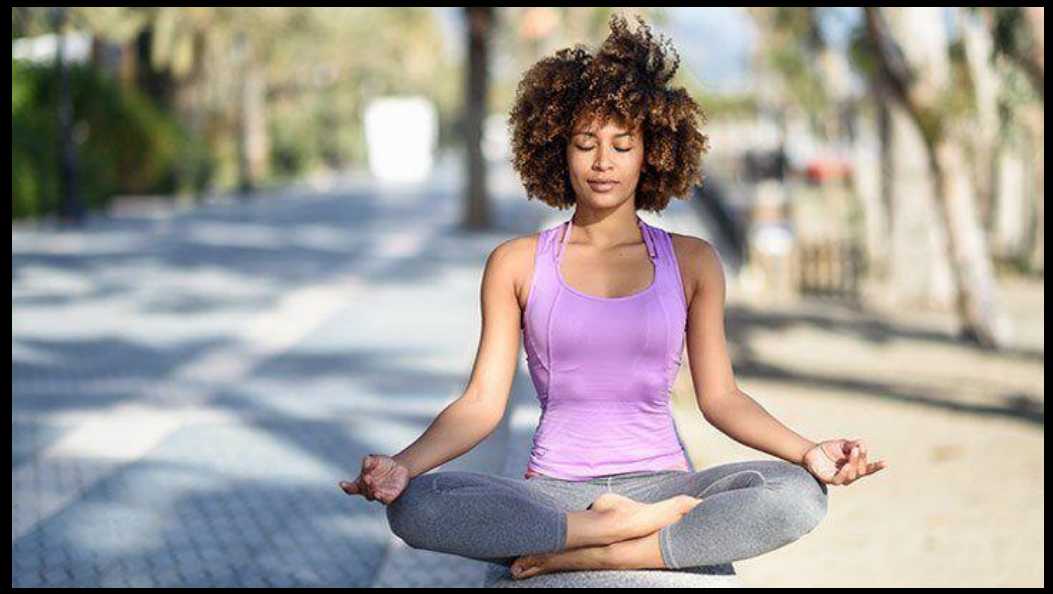
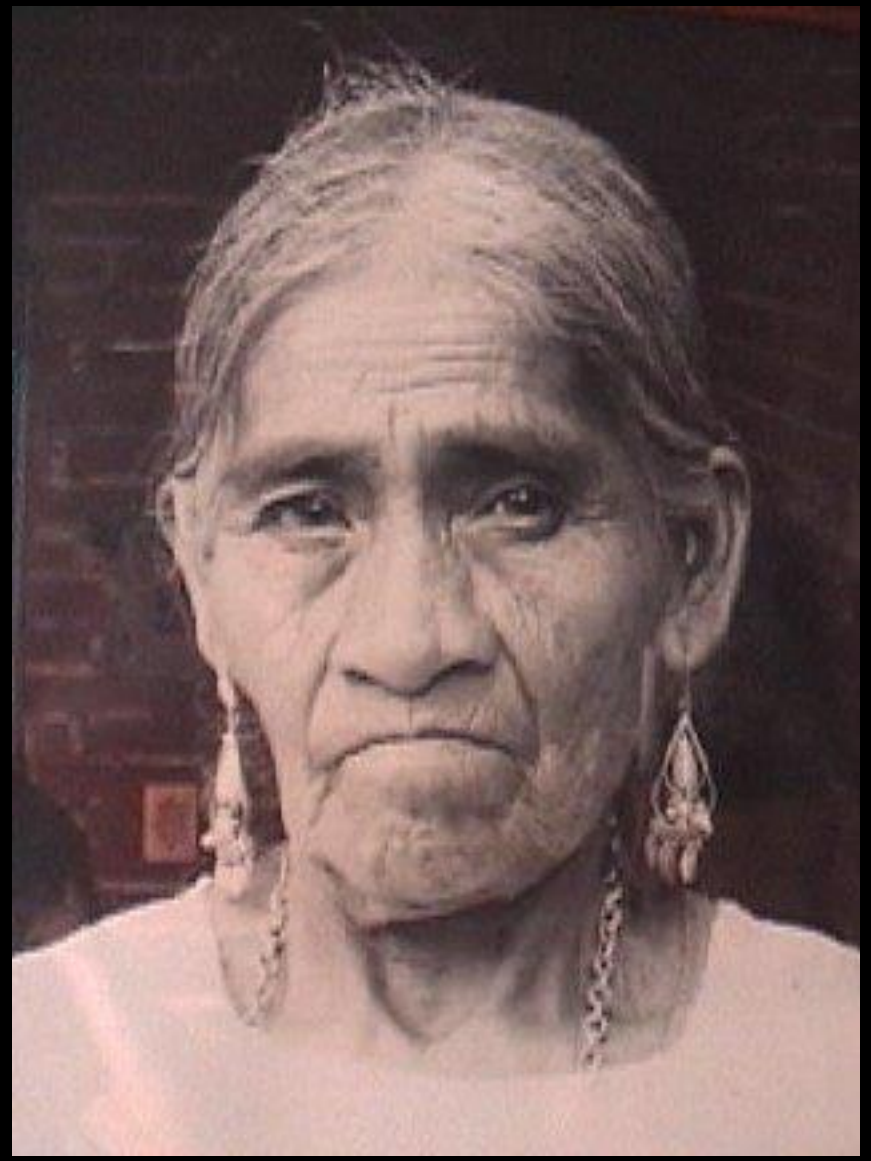
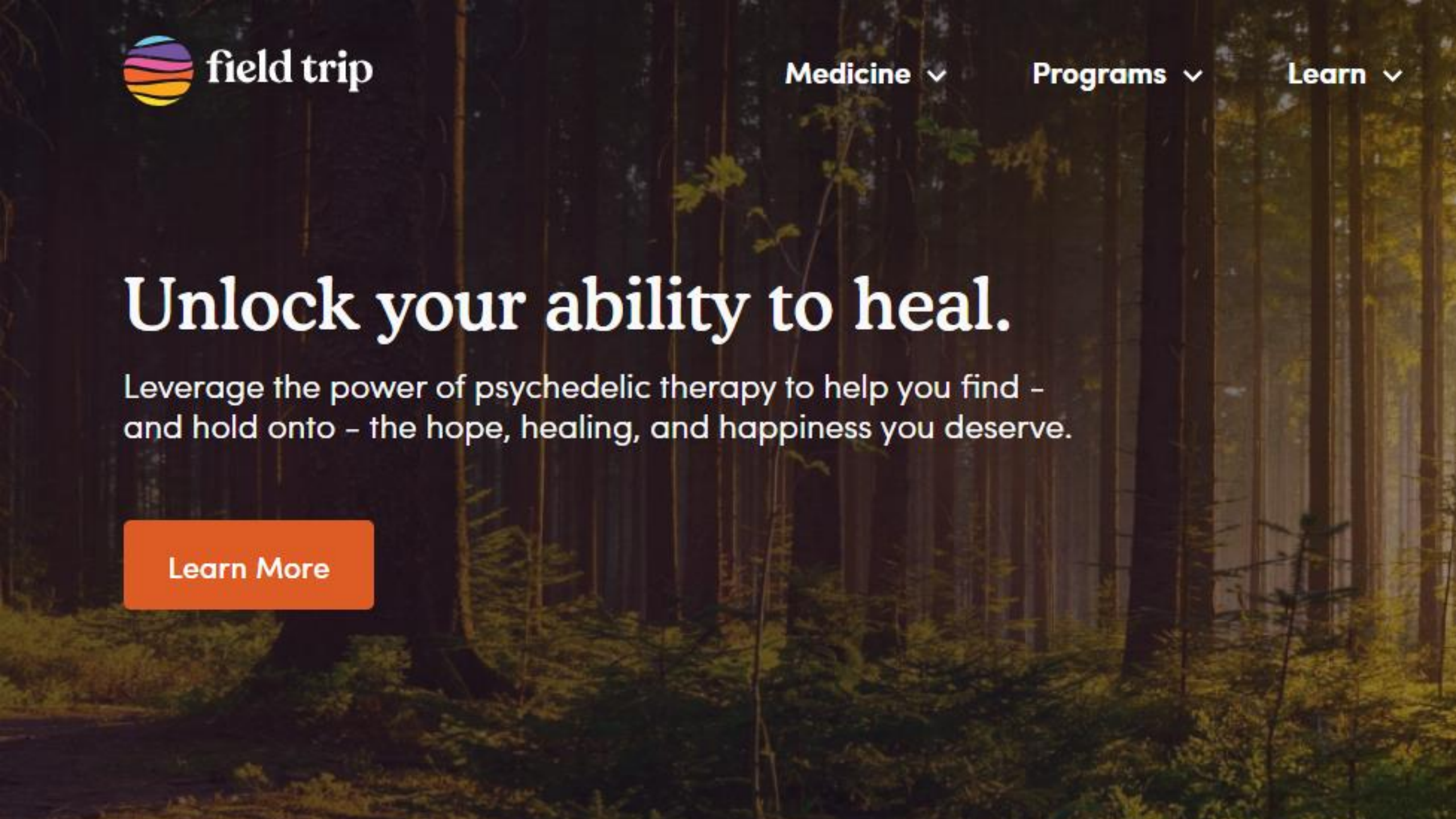


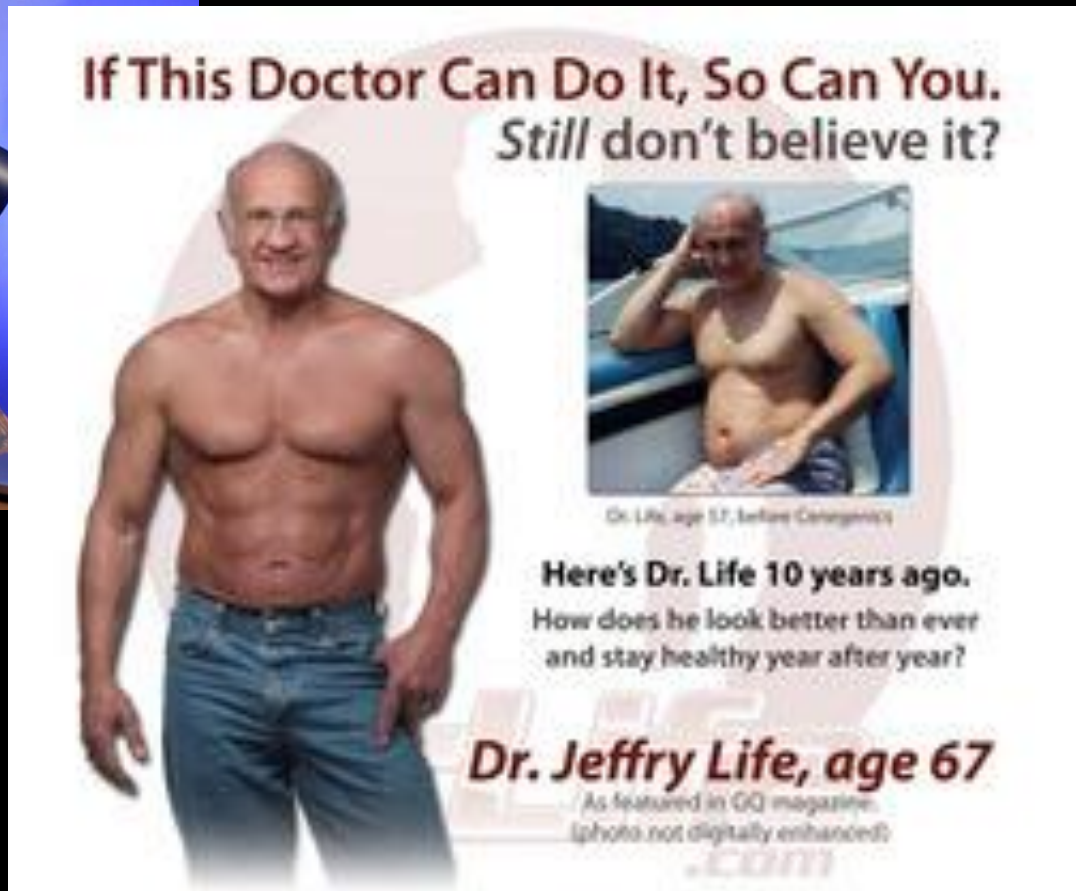


MUSHROOMS

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 109


field trip
Medicine
Programs
Learn
Unlock your ability to heal.
Leverage the power of psychedelic therapy to help you find – and hold onto – the hope, healing, and happiness you deserve.
Learn More

Nootropil
Piracetam
20% oral solution
125 ml


If This Doctor Can Do It, So Can You.
Still don't believe it?
Here's Dr. Life 10 years ago.
How does he look better than ever
and stay healthy year after year?
Dr. Jeffry Life, age 67
As featured in GQ magazine
(photo not digitally enhanced)

VICE
News

MOMS on MUSHROOMS

some implications

Rhetoric (academic stakes)

- equivocation and shared spaces: the inadequacy of “stance” and argumentation as a theoretical tool
- the production of identities as a production of bodies

Politics (larger, real-world stakes)

- the bodies being produced are bodies that reduce friction for capitalist production
- the bodies being produced are “exceptional” bodies with an exceptionalist ethos, and as such they are isolated from other bodies, and a (socialist) system isn’t responsible for them (see the bullet above)
- the constant co-production of a popular rhetorical space that validates all of the above

Thank you! I'd love to chat more.

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Disgustatory: A Gothic Rhetoric of Consumption

by Jeremy Tirrell and Kate Maddalena (forthcoming from University of Alabama Press)

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