

Fitness Options at CRCE

In order to lose weight and improve health, many people like to go to the gym or a fitness center. At Illinois, a popular place to do such things is CRCE (Campus Recreation Center East). At CRCE, there is a circular track that is 1/8 of a mile long as well as many treadmills, elliptical machines, and other cardiovascular equipment. The subcultures I plan to study are ones that in my first have conflicting views. Those subcultures are the ones that use the machines in CRCE vs. the ones that use the track. My goal while observing these subcultures is to find out the preference in technology and the difference in opinion that each side has to offer.

Since I rarely use either option of exercise when I go to CRCE, I do not know much about the advantages and disadvantages of either the machines or the track. The logical reasoning that I have heard in defense of equipment use is that there is less pressure on the joints of the body when used. The newly designed machines have luxurious features such as a heart rate monitor, distance measurer, a calorie counter, and more. It would make sense that a machine designed in such a way would have been tested to help reduce the negative effects that exercise might have on the body.

The other option at CRCE is the track, which is made of synthetic material. There must be a reason for the specifically designed track, otherwise the gym could have used

cement or tile for the runners. This implies that there is some technological design and reason for using the material made for the track. Another form of technology that CRCE offers its track users is a large display, digital clock, in which the runners can pass by on each lap and check their time.

Being an athlete and enjoying physical competition, I feel that I share some similarities with the subcultures at CRCE. When I go to CRCE, I play basketball on the courts below the fitness area. I feel that there has to be a purpose to exert such physical energy and that basketball as well as many other sports are worthy of using that energy. I understand to some degree that machines can be used to improve body conditioning and strength, but that they are only a stepping-stone to make sports contests more competitive. I do not share the joy and even more the understanding of why people would choose to run. Maintaining health and fitness are of course very important to me, but it would make more sense to have fun while doing so, and that is what sports competition provides.

In the days before my observations begin, I do not anticipate any problems in understanding the reasoning or learning about the technology. I hope to find the right people and ask the right questions about why they exercise in the manner that they do and what technological advances influence those their opinions on exercise. I will expand the observations to two subcultures in search of a better explanation in terms of technology preference. Hopefully, the comparing and contrasting will bring out answers that could only be found by studying both subcultures.

Through all this observation and interrogation, I hope to learn in more detail about the technology provided by the gym and other available options that I didn't know about before. My main goal is to come to an understanding of why people exercise in the manner they do, specifically and strictly on the options of the track and cardiovascular machines. The main issue in relating the two subcultures is the use of technology in the everyday actions by the people in them. I will attempt to compare the subcultures through their uses of technology and hopefully learn what I need to in order to understand them.