

Introduction to Biomechanics

Or; Introduction to Dr. Jensen's Despise For McDougall

This lecture effectively reiterated the importance of specificity of adaptation in regard to the biomechanics of walking with minimal support. Two main literary pieces were introduced; a perspective from a Harvard anthropologist, Lieberman, and an influencer spewing uncorrelated gibberish, McDougall (according to C. Jensen, PhD). Lieberman defends minimalist, minimal alteration of gait, from a historical perspective where persistence hunting encouraged selective pressure to genetic adaptation. Meanwhile, McDougall defends minimalist from an extreme perspective accusing all shoes spawned from the devil to result in injury or decompensated performance.

Although I agree shoes in modern society value fashion over function, I personally prefer to wear a variety of shoes during all activities of life. More specifically, I have three main styles of athletic shoes that I wear for trail running, road running and weight training. My trail running shoes are extremely light, fitting like a sock and have spikes underneath for maximal grip. My road running shoes are wider and offer support to combat pronation (inward rotation), while my weight training shoes are minimalist.

I must admit, when I ran my first half marathon I was excited to test Fleet Feet's new foot iD, where they generated a 3-D scan of my foot for personal analysis. However, my results were anticlimactic and I felt like Britney Spears in 2007, lost. Initially my mind began to spin and question why the simulator recommended a style of shoe that felt like a bag of potatoes on my feet. Perhaps Katy Bowman would argue it was because the repeating mechanical stress in my favorite shoes altered my gait. Training in a specific shoe for six months places specific mechanical stress on my feet and my body makes specific adaptation to that stress. Specific, specific, specific... although I prefer specific adaptation over bacterial infection in my feet.