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Tales From 'Mademoiselle': 'Self-Starvation Was a Competitive Sport'

9/29/08 at 6:05 PM

Valerie Frankel, former editor of now-defunct Condé Nast title *Mademoiselle*, just released a book about the pressure to stay slim in the world of magazine publishing. In *Thin Is the New Happy*, Frankel writes she snorted "hillocks of cocaine" to help fit into a size 8 — sometimes at the workplace — and that she did "more blow in my first two years at *Mademoiselle* than in college, when I lived with a coke dealer." She adds human resources told new hires to "represent the magazine in [their] personal appearance," and the office motto of sorts was "get thin or die trying."

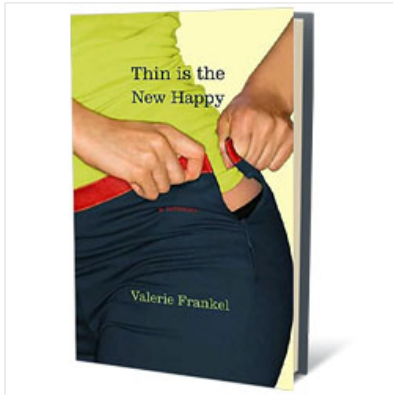


Photo: Courtesy of St. Martin's Press

To live up to those standards, "Self-starvation was a competitive sport. At staff lunches, the girl who ate the least won," Frankel writes. "During downtime, we'd sit in our offices smoking cigarette after cigarette (to quell hunger) and talking about who ate what, the calorie counts of our lunches, the latest dieting trends, who on the staff looked heavy."

She adds pretty much everyone in the office exhibited disordered eating; one girl carried a scale to weigh everything she ate, and another ate only a bunch of green grapes and six jelly beans a day. Well, those sound like miserable working conditions! Perhaps it's no wonder the magazine folded if the staff was too busy dieting to work. Or, you know, *high*.

Mag Staffer Doped To Get Thin [NYP]

By: Alexandra Phanor-Faury

FILED UNDER: BODY ISSUES, DIETS, EATING DISORDERS, MADEMOISELLE, VALERIE FRANKEL

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