Three Square Meals a Day: Biopolitics and the (Re)Production of (Dis)Order
Following the mid-1970s, a major spike in eating disorders occurred in both the United States and the United Kingdom. This paper examines how corporate actors within the Western food production regime contributed to this rise, and examines how the social construction of femininity renders women more susceptible to the development of eating disorders. Corporate actors within the sugar and diet food industries continuously draw upon and manipulate this construction in an effort to create a favorable relationship between women and their products, and code women’s bodies in ways that promote this relationship. This process is undergirded by the ideology of neoliberalism, which exploits the constituted identity of the female subject as it reinforces the current capitalist economic system. Thus, this paper highlights how corporations within the sugar and diet food industries seek to manage women’s bodies and promote their role as consumers in a way that ensures that women will continue to be a primary source of capital. By engaging in this analysis, this paper explores the specific ways that the sugar and diet food industries reproduce stereotypes of physical normality that both draw upon, and reinforce, the medicalization of disordered patterns of eating when advertising their products.

Note: My sincere apologies for not submitting this by the deadline. I understand if this abstract cannot be considered due to that fact, but I wanted to submit it just in case submissions are still needed, as I am really interested in attending this conference. Thank you for your time!