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Jenice Armstrong: Donkey dough: 'Real Housewives' ca\$h in when they can

December 19, 2012

THERE MAY BE SOMETHING unseemly about somebody trying to make money for something that may have more to do with genetics than anything else, but I'm not going to knock a "Housewife" on a hustle.

Besides, having a side gig - whether it's selling jewelry, wigs or whatever - is part of what makes acting the fool on Bravo's over-the-top "Real Housewives" series worth the sky-high heels and risk of breaking a nail in a catfight.

"Real Housewives of Atlanta" co-star Phaedra Parks last week released a new exercise video called "Phine Body," which purports to teach women how to get a backside like her trademark donkey booty.

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What exactly is a donk? Here's Parks' definition:

"When I talk about a donkey booty, that is a firm, peachy booty," Parks says in a promotional video on phinebody.com. "It's not shaking. It's not jiggling. It stands at attention."

Kind of the way hers did when the entertainment attorney strutted on-screen in a recent episode of the "Real Housewives of Atlanta" wearing a black thong bikini and a see-through coverup. Her cast mates may have thought she was trying to show up co-star Kenya Moore, who had flirted with Parks' hunky hubby Apollo Nida, but Parks could just as easily have been trying to promote her new video.

TV personality/entrepreneur Bethenny Frankel famously created an entire cottage industry of Skinnygirl products after she was one of the original cast members on the "Real Housewives of New York." Earlier this year, Forbes magazine estimated her net worth at \$12 million.

Her former castmate Ramona Singer came up with both jewelry and skin care lines; she also sells wine. "Real Housewives of New Jersey" co-star Teresa Giudice's face graces Fabellini wine, one of several of her entrepreneurial endeavors.

"Atlanta" co-star Kandi Burruss has a line of sex toys called Bedroom Kandi and also a new card game

app available on iTunes called "Kandi Koated Spades."

"Housewives and reality stars are all too aware that their fame is fleeting, and the minute they start getting a notable number of Twitter fans, they work hard to leverage that fame into cash," said April Masini, a former entertainment industry exec who now writes an online advice column at askapril.com.

"The Kardashian family is the best role model for getting rich off being ordinary. Not one living Kardashian is famous for having done anything but show up and look groomed to the nines. And that, sadly, is the new model for fame."

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