
SUMMARIES

► *Marjolein Van Bavel*

'Daddy, look, it's super female!'

Female bodybuilders, femininity and identity in the eighties

Within academic literature female bodybuilding has primarily been praised as a form of feminist resistance to traditional ideals of femininity. Women's bodybuilding can be seen as a way to create 'gender trouble', as the hyper-muscular female body expresses a subversion of dominant gender norms. Others have, however, wondered whether and to what extent one can speak of such feminist resistance. After all, female bodybuilders seem willing to mimic and almost exaggerate traditional requirements of feminine iconography. Previous research thus considered the practice of women's bodybuilding from normative forms of discourse. These interpretations render these women as passive rather than active agents within dynamic social processes, in which the individual and practical embodied experiences are often forgotten. Interviews lend themselves pre-eminently to accessing embodied agents. By interviewing seven women who participated in bodybuilding in the eighties, the article attempts to bridge the gap between academic discourse and materiality in the study of these female bodybuilding bodies. In the experience of embodied practice, the concept of 'feminist resistance' was renounced. These women constructed an identity of femininity, contrasted with masculinity, and testified that gender should be worked on through performance. And although many elements within literature on 'feminine recuperation' were confirmed through the interviews, greater complexity was uncovered in the

experienced reality. Through bodybuilding these women were provided with strength, confidence as well as being able to create an identity for themselves, incorporating traditional male characteristics. Female bodybuilding therefore contains a liberating potential on the level of personal experience, distinguished from the concept of 'feminist resistance' within literature.

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► *Nella van den Brandt*

The becoming of a feminist

An analysis of the narrative of a Muslim female activist in Antwerp

Flemish political and public debates about the headscarf, Islam and emancipation are often set up in terms of conflicting cultures. In this article, I discuss the gap between representations of Muslim women circulating in the debates and the life trajectory of an individual Muslim woman. I offer an analysis of the story of Layla, a Muslim feminist from Antwerp, about her social-political activism and becoming in relation to activism. Central to the article is the question of how Layla's feminist activism, negotiations and becoming take place within and against the context of the Flemish headscarf debates. I specifically look at the way in which Layla's agency emerges from her story.

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► *Agnes Elling*

Extraordinarily transgressive

Transgenders and their experiences in sport

Sport practices can be regarded as specifically confronting environments for transgenders, due the central position of the body and the gendered structures (changing room, competitions) and cultures in mainstream sports. In this article the results of a qualitative study about sport participation and gender negotiations of transgender prior to, during and after transition, are presented. The sports biographies show that sports were indeed experienced as rather 'dangerous' environments for many transgender people, especially for transwomen. However, sports were not only regarded as places where shame and/or control of the 'wrong' body occurred. Some sports environments were perceived as safe or even as places of resistance and physical awareness and pride of the 'right' body were also expressed through sports. Moreover, the results illustrate that binary gender categorisations were both challenged and reproduced through sports' participation and gender performativity.

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► *Sara de Jong*

"I am a strong proponent of using left-overs"

An interview with Stef Scagliola

In this article Stef Scagliola is interviewed about her experiences with the large scale Dutch Veteran Oral History project, which she coordinated from 2006-2011. While this oral history project did not have an explicit gender or feminist focus, there is still ample of material relevant for gender studies, such as the question of how gender was expressed

in the self-narrations of the veterans and how gender relations played a role in the interaction between interviewer and interviewee. The interview also explores the way in which themes such as empowerment and the hidden stories of marginalised people, that have been central to feminist oral history literature, played out in this specific project with veterans. As Stef Scagliola shares her considerations, insights, and reflections, she provides a glimpse of the way oral history works in practice and the dilemmas that have to be negotiated, in line with the feminist tradition to place one's own research methodologies under critically scrutiny.

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► *Astrid Runs*

Who is the researcher?

Intersectionality and location in oral history research

In this article, I used my PhD research entitled 'successful young mothers' as a case study to illustrate how notions of intersectionality and the politics of location (Rich, 1985; Eagleton, 1996) can enrich the oral history method. I describe how my intersectional research position influenced the gathering of life histories of young mothers. Using intersectionality and the politics of location proved to be advantageous for reflecting on my 'insider' position with some and 'outsider' position with other respondents. My insider as well as my outsider position had advantages and weaknesses when it came to connecting with young mothers of different life cycles and ethnic backgrounds. The use of a research diary was a useful tool to increase awareness about my intersectional research position.