



Bodies out of Bounds: Fatness and Transgression

Jana Evans Braziel (Editor)

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Since World War II, when the diet and fitness industries promoted mass obsession with weight and body shape, fat has been a dirty word. In the United States, fat is seen as repulsive, funny, ugly, unclean, obscene, and above all as something to lose. *Bodies Out of Bounds* challenges these dominant perceptions by examining social representations of the fat body. The contributors to this collection show that what counts as fat and how it is valued are far from universal; the variety of meanings attributed to body size in other times and places demonstrates that perceptions of corpulence are infused with cultural, historical, political, and economic biases. The exceptionally rich and engaging essays collected in this volume question discursive constructions of fatness while analyzing the politics and power of corpulence and addressing the absence of fat people in media representations of the body.

The essays are widely interdisciplinary; they explore their subject with insight, originality, and humor. The contributors examine the intersections of fat with ethnicity, race, queerness, class, and minority cultures, as well as with historical variations in the signification of fat. They also consider ways in which "objective" medical and psychological discourses about fat people and food hide larger agendas. By illustrating how fat is a malleable construct that can be used to serve dominant economic and cultural interests, *Bodies Out of Bounds* stakes new claims for those whose body size does not adhere to society's confining standards.

Bodies out of Bounds: Fatness and Transgression Details

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From Reader Review Bodies out of Bounds: Fatness and Transgression for online ebook

Tara Brabazon says

Edited collections are tricky to write, edit and read. Without some careful framing and attention that can become too fragmented, disconnected and varied. That is the tendency with *Bodies out of Bounds*. There are fine chapters by Antonia Losano and Brenda Risch ("Resisting Venus: negotiating corpulence in exercise videos) and Jerry Mosher's "Setting free the bears: refiguring fat men on television."

My concern is the entire book explores representation, yet lacks theoretical rigour or precision. Much unreconstructed 1970s' feminism is here. I enjoy unreconstructed 1970s' feminism as much as the next Generation Xer, but it is not surprising that the best chapters deal with masculinity. A greater attention - or even awareness - of postcolonialism, poststructuralism or critical modernity would have been not only useful, but appropriate.

The overwhelming worry I have with this book is that it is so completely focused on the United States. Further, attention to the uneven distribution of food on earth - some are fat while others die of starvation - would also be appropriate.

For teachers wishing some materials on bodies and corporeality, a good chapter can be found here for your purposes. As a whole though, the book required stronger framing and greater theoretical rigour.

Hazel says

One of the few/only fat studies texts I've read which so clearly map the lines of class and race and how they interact with modern day fat hatred.

Annette says

90s fat activists were really into Roseanne.

Stephanie Meunier says

I read this for a research paper on fat activism during my undergrad and I have to say it was very useful and I would read it more thoroughly now that a deadline isn't hanging above my head. I think it's a good introduction to fat studies and different branches of fat activism. Some of the essays are critical of some branches of fat activism (too reactionary, too liberal, etc.). Does an okay but incomplete job at being intersectional.
