The discourse of the 'fit' body: how fat is *still* a feminist media issue

Diana Silver[1]

Abstract

How are current attitudes to women's body shape expressed and promoted in the language of popular on-line newspapers? What, if anything, has changed in the last 40 years in these attitudes, and why? In attempting a reply, I begin from my own standpoint as a former compulsive eater, looking at the history of body image in the optimistic period of second-wave feminism, including the publication in 1978 of Susie Orbach's influential *Fat is a Feminist Issue.* I contrast this with current paradigms, critically analyzing the discourse of an article in a British online newspaper. Returning to recent history, I mention relevant developments since 1978, such as changes in media and society and the globalisation of the 'ideal' body, and including moves to reclaim fatness for feminism.

Keywords women's body image; ideal body; fat shaming; second-wave feminism; media and fitness

Sumário

As atitudes atuais sobre as imagens do corpo das mulheres: como se exprimem e se promovem na linguagem dos jornais populares on-line? O que mudou nesses paradigmas nos últimos 40 anos, e porquê? Numa tentativa de dar uma resposta, começo a partir do meu próprio ponto de vista como antiga *compulsive eater*, tendo em vista a história da imagem corporal no período otimista do feminismo da segunda vaga, incluindo a publicação, em 1978, do influente *Fat is a Feminist Issue* de Susie Orbach. Estabeleço um contraste com os paradigmas atuais, analisando criticamente o discurso dum artigo publicado num jornal on-line britânico. Voltando à história recente, analiso as mudancas sociais e mediáticas desde 1978, a globalização do corpo "ideal", e as tendências para conciliar o corpo gordo e o feminismo.

Palavras-chave: mulheres e imagem corporal; corpo ideal; *fat shaming*; feminismo de segunda vaga; *fitness* e mídia.

[1] Estudante do Programa de Doutoramento em Estudos Feministas oferecido pela Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra em colaboração com o Centro de Estudos Sociais.

The body is not only a text of culture. It is also […] a practical, direct locus of social control (Bordo, 2003: 165)

Personal experiences and history: bodies in second-wave feminism

I approach this topic as one formerly obsessed with eating and dieting: during the 1970s, my secret life revolved around dieting and its polar opposite, bingeing. The addiction seemed impossible to break, until I heard of a new self-help therapy group in my district of Manchester: FACE ('Feminists Against Compulsive Eating'). I found a small group of women, all weary of their food obsessions and eager to try the approaches and techniques advocated in FIFI (Orbach's book), then just published. We discovered and discussed: we even invited the author to come up from London and talk to us, which, generously, she did. We explored – the pressures from parents and society in general that we should look a certain way, the 'unacceptable' feelings we were trying to 'eat down'. If, as Butler asserts (1990: 195), the "'doer'" ["the feminist 'we'"] "is invariably constructed through the deed", we, the members of FACE, reconstructed our lives through our practice: our interrogations of ourselves, of each other and our society. But perhaps the reformed compulsive eater, like "the feminist 'we'", "constitutes itself only through the exclusion of some part of the constituency that it claims to represent" (Butler, 1990: 194). Certainly, I find that attitudes to the fat body are difficult to change: even now I have to admit to atavistic sensations of disgust and superiority when I see 'overweight' people.

Fat had become associated with sexual and social undesirability in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. According to Farrell (2011: 18), "Fat denigration was linked to overall processes of mapping political and social hierarchies onto bodies", with cartoon images of fat men as bloated plutocrats - 'fat cats' - and fat women as simultaneously idle and uncontrolled. Thinness became increasingly linked to wealth and social status, and beauty to activity and speed, for which hips and breasts would only be a hindrance: a flat-chested, 'streamlined' look was *de rigueur*.

With the rise of the second wave of feminism in the 1970s, women were becoming aware of such normative pressures on their bodies and behaviour, and of the relationship of this to eating and dieting. Putting into practice the slogan 'The Personal is Political' meant working on our own lives - and bodies - as a political act, against the hegemonic forces that we now recognized were policing us. In *Fat is a Feminist Issue* (1978), Orbach was one of the first to link commercial pressures on women to be thin with individual

women's feelings of guilt, self-hatred and blame (Noble, 1987: 115), and hence with eating disorders, and the first to suggest psychotherapeutic exercises for self-help groups to explore their feelings, histories and struggles. In common with other second-wave feminist texts, it provided "a systematic critique capable of rousing women to collective action" (Bordo, 2003: 31). Overall, feelings were optimistic and positive. Our bodies were sites of feminist struggle, of resistance to gender domination.

However, since then the backlash against feminism has accompanied a resurgence in promotional media involving body images of thin women, such as this notorious example, a large poster ad displayed in the London Underground (and legally challenged) in 2015, which I shall analyse briefly in the next section.

Source: Catherine Wylie/PA https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/apr/27/mass-demonstration-planned-over-beach-body-ready-tube-advert

Methodological and theoretical approaches

This paper follows the tradition of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (e.g. *Media Discourse,* 1995), particularly intertextual analysis of language, exposing the "role of discourse in the construction and maintenance of injustice, inequality and domination" (Litosseliti & Sunderland, 2002: 19). More precisely, I am writing from a perspective of feminist critical discourse analysis; this is an emerging programme within CDA in general, aiming, as Lazar introduces it,

> to show up the complex, subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, ways in which frequently taken-for-granted gendered assumptions and hegemonic power relations are discursively produced, sustained, negotiated, and challenged [...]. It suggests the usefulness of language and discourse studies for the investigation of feminist issues in gender and women's studies. (Lazar, 2007: 142)

I make use of Goffman's *framing* (1974) (what is in the picture, and what is excluded from it?). I also follow Butler (1990) in seeing our identities as being constructed and performed, and further, that "'the body' is itself a construction" (Butler, 1990: 12). Lazar advocates "a multimedia approach to the study of discourse" which "refuses to privilege language over other forms of semiosis" (2007: 156). I can give an example of this in the following brief analysis of the Protein World ad on the previous page. Here, in terms of language, the lexicalisation of the three-part adjectival compound serves to fix and normalise the thin (photoshopped) body as the only acceptable one for the beach (such compounds are often used in this way: see also Protein World's site (https://www.proteinworld.com/the-slender-collection.html, consulted 1/6/2018) where we find the nominalisation "Get your *pre-baby body* back"). The question "Are you ready?" creates anxiety and a sense of urgency, and suggests that this body is achievable by diet and by money spent on an upmarket-sounding 'collection' of what are known in the trade as 'meal replacement' goods. Iconographically, the model's pose presents a divisive challenge to women, and perhaps a sexual challenge to heterosexual men: "You may not be ready, but I am".

However, my approach in the main part of this paper focuses on the language of a written text. Lazar, in introducing her research into beauty product advertisements, has this to say on the choice of texts:

> such banal texts are [...] important for critical scrutiny precisely because they do not invite serious attention, are fleeting, and yet are everywhere in modern, urban, industrialized societies. [They offer] a productive site for the study of cultural politics. (Lazar, 2007: 156)

The same could be said for online tabloid news, which, while not as ubiquitous as advertising, is even more fleeting and unserious, and surely equally loaded with gendered assumptions ripe for critical analysis.

Looking at a communicative event (see Fairclough, 1995: 59) involves seeing the text within the setting of discourse practice (the production and consumption of the text), which itself works within the sociocultural practice of the relevant discourse community. The text studied below is set within the discourse practice of constant production of online media 'entertainment' articles (requiring constant surveillance of 'celebrities' and 'stars'), and the audience's consumption of online articles (focus on photos, following

links, etc.), and this is itself set within the sociocultural practices of media economics, of gendered power structures, and of constant monitoring of women's bodies.

An example of a media text dealing with women's body shape: *Mail Online,* TV/Showbiz section, 28/4/2016

I shall now examine this particular body-related text in detail, placing it in a framing matrix, then studying its lexical choices and seeing its ritual aspects within the framework of Fairclough's *communicative event*, before attempting to trace what has happened in the nearly 40 years between FIFI and The Weight Loss Collection.

The *Daily Mail* was the most read newspaper brand in the UK, according to figures released by the National Readership Survey, 2014, which estimated "that the Daily Mail and Mail Online has some 23.5m UK readers over the course of a month". From its foundation in 1898 it aimed, at least in part, at women, the first to provide features especially for them, and in 2013 had a 54.77% female readership, the only British newspaper with more than 50% women in its demographic. It is also probably the most execrated, earning epithets such as *Hate Mail*, *Daily Fail*, and *Daily Heil*, being seen by some as "a reactionary, neo-fascist tabloid rag masquerading as a 'traditional-values', middle-class newspaper" (RationalWiki, 2018). (See also the sticker below, one of hundreds posted in British trains in 2013-4[2])

[2]The origin of these stickers is still unknown, though the website http://www.markthomasinfo.co.uk/store/#!/Daily-Mail-sticker-montage-poster-approx-41cm-x-41cm-Profits-go-to-Trussell-Trust-food-bank/p/49584359 suggests that they may have had some connection to the following incident: "In April [2013] a Daily Mail journalist posing as unemployed and hungry approached a food bank run by the Trussell Trust, saying he was facing financial difficulties. The food bank gave the reporter a bag of groceries worth £40 and the Mail ran a major article criticising the Trust for not checking if people were really unemployed. It was an ugly and unjustified attack upon food banks and those that use them as a result of austerity. Fortunately as a result of the Mail's mauling the Trussell Trust received a significant boost in donations".

Source: https://www.dailyedge.ie/daily-mail-free-zone-1733151-Oct2014/

Gym addict Ashlee Simpson shows off slim figure in skintight black leggings after working up a sweat with her personal trainer[3] By Michelle Ganley

She's an exercise devotee and rarely misses a session.

So it's no surprise that 31-year-old Ashlee Simpson was seen hitting the gym once again in Los Angeles on Tuesday.

The actress was dressed in all black gym gear with a pair of over-sized sunglasses as she was seen walking towards her car after the class. *PHOTO, Ashlee leaving gym.*

The mother-of-two is reaping the rewards of her strict regime, looking slim and toned just eight months after giving birth to her second daughter, Jagger Snow.

The blonde singer must have worked up quite the sweat as she left the studio looking flushed and energised.

She is an avid fitness fanatic and has been seen on an intense exercise regime lately. *PHOTO, Ashlee leaving gym.*

Since the birth of her daughter last July, the actress has been consistent with her exercise making sure it is one of her top priorities.

The pretty blonde kept it simple as she tied her hair back and away from her face and parted it down the middle.

[3] http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3560454/Ashlee-Ashlee-shows-slim-figure-skintight-black-leggings-working-sweat-personal-trainer.html, consulted 15/5/2016

The Pieces of Me singer is often seen arriving and leaving the gym flushed-faced and make-up free, evidence that she works really hard to stay healthy. *PHOTO & Video, Ashlee leaving gym.*

Tracy Anderson in Studio City is where her trainer has been putting her through her paces.

Her personal trainer Ramona Braganza told People.com last month that the star worked even harder this time around compared to her post-baby workout sessions after she welcomed her first child, son Bronx, seven years ago.

'This time around, at 30, with slightly more weight to lose, what helped her drop a consistent two pounds a week was exercising five days a week and burning 800 or more calories per workout session', Ashlee's trainer said. *PHOTO, Ashlee & sister*

When she's not training hard, the mother-of-two is busy spending time with her family.

Ashlee's older sister is fellow singer and songwriter Jessica Simpson. Jessica was best known for her foray into the pop world.

She then married Nick Lachey and from that they had their own reality TV show called Newlyweds: Nick and Jessica.

Jessica then went on to star in a few feature films, including, The Dukes of Hazzard and Employee of the Month. *PHOTO, Ashlee, baby & husband. Video, Ashlee & husband.*

Ashlee has been married to actor Evan Ross since 2014.

They've stayed pretty private over the last few months but Ashlee has still posted her fair share of PDA snaps.

The couple have two children together, Jagger Snow Ross and seven-year-old Bronx Mowgli Wentz. *PHOTO, Ashlee & husband*

Text as ritual: lexical and semantic choices

I shall focus here on details of language, particularly the lexis of the article and what it can tell us about its role of transmitting and reinforcing a normative image of women's bodies. Perhaps the most obvious feature is the considerable overlexicalisation. The existence of a large number of near synonyms in a text points to topic areas of major interest or conflict, and here we find this in the semantic fields of gym use, physical effort, visibility and body size. In nominalisations concerning gym use, the labels *gym addict, exercise devotee* and *avid fitness fanatic* work to fix Ashlee's identity (apart from as 'the Pieces of Me singer' and the 'mother-of-two'); in terms of physical effort, discipline, control and artificiality are emphasised, especially by the use of modifiers in *strict*

regime; intense exercise regime; works really hard; worked even harder; exercising five days a week; training hard; post baby work out sessions; hitting the gym once again.

Concerning visibility, there are a large number of verbs, many of them in the passive voice, dealing with 'being on display', being, like so many women, the object of the gaze. Examples are: *shows off; was seen* [twice]*; has been seen; is often seen; looking (slim); looked like …; must have worked up a sweat* (here the reporter and/or viewer is deducing from her appearance). Celebrities in general and celebrity women in particular are obviously on near-permanent display, but in this case Ashlee was hardly 'showing off' – she seems to have been caught on camera while leaving her gym. In fact, she is only seen, never heard – the only quote is from her trainer. Her appearance is described by the standard adjectives (*pretty blonde*; *slim and toned*). It is interesting to note *make-up free*, a lexicalisation implying that the default setting (even when leaving the gym) is to wear make-up.

Body size and weight are areas where the reader is clearly expected to be interested in detailed evidence of the efficacy of Ashlee's efforts. We find *drop a consistent 2 pounds a week; burning 800 or more calories;* and *At 30, with slightly more weight to lose* (the assumption here is that age means excess weight, which obviously has to be lost). In *evidence that she works really hard to stay healthy* (by looking red-faced when coming from the gym), there is a clear equation of exercise, weight loss and health, part of a general confusion of aesthetics and health which is aided in the media by proscriptive public health announcements and contradictory diet information.

Some further points of lexico-semantic interest are as follows:

In collocations linking motherhood, exercise and weight loss, the nominalisation *post-baby work-out sessions* serves to normalise post-partum weight-loss routines, while *slim and toned just eight months after giving birth* implies that the physical effects of childbirth must be rapidly obliterated.[4] Orbach mentions the dangers of this pressure on new mothers:

[4] Another example of the stress on post-partum weight loss from the *Mail Online* (26/5/2016): "She's already lost the baby weight! Eddie Murphy's girlfriend Paige Butler looks sensational three weeks after welcoming daughter Izzy", by Michelle Ganney http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3609817/Eddie-Murphy-s-girlfriend-Paige-Butler-looks-sensational-three-weeks-welcoming-Izzy.html, consulted 29/5/2016)

> the push to return to a pre-pregnancy figure, and the premium on doing so speedily, brings eating anxieties right into the early feeding relationship", inducing […] "confusion and envy: how is a new mother to be? Is she to present herself for display or is she to take [...] time and discover the rhythms she will create with her baby? (Orbach, in Williams 2016)

Normalisation of excess is also notable. In other contexts, the terms 'addict' and 'fanatic', and 'avid' (greedy), are commonly used pejoratively: here they might therefore seem to carry an ambiguous message. It seems unlikely, however, that we are meant to disapprove of such excessive behaviour; indeed, the fact that Ashlee is said to be 'reaping the rewards' (slimness) by pushing herself beyond the 'normal', is surely meant to elicit our approval.

There are other possible ambiguities: at times the writer's attitude to Ashlee or to her appearance gives rise to flickers of doubt. Is her *all black exercise gear* simply a fashion note, or could it be a covert allusion to black's usefulness in hiding 'those unsightly bulges'? The juxtaposition *red-faced beauty* is unusual, and might just possibly be ironic. Similarly, *busy spending time with her family* is almost an oxymoron, since it is often used euphemistically elsewhere to describe enforced idleness, as in unemployment or dismissal from a post. Can we actually see traces of post-modern irony here?

Goffman (1979: 69) talks about "ritual-like displays" of body and gender, and such aspects are clearly seen in the text(s) and discourse frame of this and similar articles in the TV/Radio section of the *Mail Online*. The stages of the ritual are as follows:

> 1: The celebrity is photographed, or Instagrams herself. Within this display, she may be considered as Text 1.
> 2: This is then mediated - translated/transmitted with the addition of ads, links, etc. and commented on in a short article. This stage is Text 2 – the text we have been studying here.
> 3. Within the discourse frame, readers then fulfill their ritual function as consumers by giving comments, identifying (or not) with Text 1, connecting to

the links to ads in Text 2, buying similar clothes, etc. (Such articles are routinely used as marketing opportunities[5]).

Ritual-like, the display is repeated endlessly. For "Women are constantly reminded of 'appropriate' looks and styles, which are then expressed in self-evaluating behavior and self-control directed at diminishing size" (Giovanelli & Ostertag, 2009: 290). As Gill observes: "Surveillance of women's bodies constitutes perhaps the largest type of media content across all genres and media forms. Women's bodies are evaluated, scrutinized and dissected by women as well as by men, and are always at risk of 'failing'". (Gill, 2007: 255)

In its structure and lexis, therefore, and in its position firmly within the discourse frame of ritual display and consumption of approved body styles, this cultural product plays its part in the contemporary construction and reproduction of the slim (post-partum) body, the results of which are outlined by Orbach, 38 years after the publication of FIFI: "When I first started, not every woman had an eating issue; not everybody had a body dysmorphic problem. Now everybody does, but they don't bother to talk about it. It's beyond depressing. It's hateful, really, what the culture has done" *(apud* Williams 2016). Can we see any indications as to why this should have happened?

Fat as a post-modern preoccupation

Most feminist authors agree on the pervasiveness of the thin ideal, and on the harm it does to individuals and societies. For Orbach, the ideal is the result of globalization, led by "rapacious industries". It is "A uniform aesthetic that circles the globe, bringing a [...] limiting visual grammar causing immense hurt and anguish" (Orbach, 2016: vi).

According to Bordo, preoccupation with fat may be "one of the most powerful normalizing mechanisms of our century, ensuring the production of self-monitoring, self-disciplining 'docile bodies'" (Bordo, 2003: 186).

---

[5] Text as marketing opportunity, for example the following from the *Mail Online* (25/5/2016), where, after detailed description of the actress's dress and appearance, we are encouraged "Now get one like it for less" and given three slightly similar options:
"Sheer elegance! Jenna Coleman wows in seriously stunning translucent gown with deep thigh split at premiere of her new film Me Before You", by William Adams
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3609557/Jenna-Coleman-wows-sheer-gown-deep-thigh-split-London-premiere-You.html#ixzz4CkRLRThv, consulted 28/5/2016

Indeed, while women are busy dieting for the perfect body and shopping for the perfect look, they may have little energy to confront other, more vital concerns in their lives; they may even find pleasure in such aspects of personal control, however limited and loaded with stress. Fat obsession is therefore highly effective in fostering and perpetuating the seemingly indestructible culture of global consumption.

Women have long been subjected to culturally approved norms of appearance (see above, p. 2), but according to Radner (1995, *apud* Thornham, 2007: 102), as they have increasingly moved into the public sphere, so it has become legitimate to publicly examine and 'discipline' their physical appearance, mediatically and in other ways. It is expected that women will do this for themselves and each other, by consuming and commenting on media, by 'watching' their weight, by exercising, etc. Bodies, their size and shape and the clothes that cover them, are codes for class too: this has always been the case with clothes, but the supposed connection of fatness with lack of discipline, together with increasing blame accruing to poverty in the 21st century (Savage *et al*, 2013), can mean that those deemed overweight are triply stigmatized: in the eyes of others they are gross, lazy and lower class. It is small wonder that upward social mobility necessitates thinness. Nowadays, "bodies communicate more about status than they ever have and, as that conduit, are the site of more anxiety" (Williams, 2016).

Contemporary media culture is postfeminist. Although feminism is often mentioned, it is often either "taken for granted or repudiated", with an "entanglement of feminist and anti-feminist ideas". (Gill, 2007: 269). Terms such as "transgression" and "forbidden pleasures" make antifeminist behaviour and consumption into naughty, titillating treats for women, with feminist protests being seen as authoritarian and joyless. As Bordo says, "We find it increasingly difficult to distinguish between parodies and possibilities for the self" (2003: 174). The media has an increasing role in promoting discourses of weight-based prejudice, and while "Women do indeed resist and reject these discourses, yet their ubiquity and incessant nature creates an unyielding tide against which women must constantly swim" (Giovanelli & Ostertag, 2009: 291). In fact, frustratingly, being a sophisticated media consumer does not insulate us from the hegemonic message: "You can be as cynical as you want ... and still feel powerless to resist... They [20 year-olds] know ... that 'inner beauty' is a big laugh in this culture" (Bordo, 2003: xxvii).

With the rapid advances in body-modification techniques, such as cosmetic and other surgery (teenage nose jobs, gastric bands for weight loss) and organ replacements,

the potential for control over our appearance – given the financial resources, of course - is expanding all the time. The question is, who will have this control? We can hardly say that we are in control of our bodies at present, for as Shapiro writes: "Women are expected to use new technologies to produce normative bodies,[…] and these modified bodies in turn become the new norm to which individuals are held accountable" (Shapiro, 2015: 105).

So the cyborgs of Haraway's trope move from uneasy metaphor to disturbing present and ever more radical future – and is there any alternative?

> The 'old' feminist discourse has been insufficiently attentive to the multiplicities of meaning, the pleasures of shaping and decorating the body, or the role of female agency in reproducing patriarchal culture. What it did offer was a systematic critique capable of raising women to collective action – something we do not have today. (Bordo, 2003: 31)

Our present increased media sophistication - our postmodern knowingness – together with acknowledgement of bodily pleasures, as mentioned above, seem not to have got us very far: courses in 'media literacy' in schools seem to have done nothing more than stir a little cynicism into the media mix. They have certainly not compensated for the loss of the rallying cries of second-wave feminism. Media literacy needs to be used much more actively and incisively: the legal challenge to the Protein World ad was a small step in that direction.

Further, there needs to be "an aesthetics that doesn't structurally exclude the 'fat' woman" (Murray, 2016: 129). Recent movements towards 'size acceptance' can go some way towards this, though, as Murray points out, 'pride' is not enough.

> [It] is problematic in that they are simply reversing the dominant aesthetic ideal, rather than dismantling and subverting it. What is neglected in fat pride narratives […] is the role of the other. […] We are irrevocably constructed by the aesthetic ideals of others and the world. (Murray, 2016: 129)

There is a role here, then, for feminists of all colours, genders, shapes and sizes: as warriors in the shape wars, constantly watching out for, labelling and publicising examples of sexist discourse on the body, and beyond that, accepting, and loving, women's lovely bodily diversity. Only then will we liberate our media and ourselves

from our obsessive repulsion against the comfortably plump. (And perhaps we could begin by avoiding the word 'fat').

Bibliografia

Bordo, Susan (2003), *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body,* new ed. Berkeley: U. California Press.

Butler, Judith (1990), *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Fairclough, Norman (1995), *Media Discourse.* London: Arnold.

Farrell, Amy (2011), *Fat Shame: Stigma and the Fat Body in American Culture.* New York: New York UP.

Gill, Rosalind (2014), "Postfeminist sexual culture" in Carter, Cynthia et al. *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender.* Oxford, Routledge, 589-599.

Gill, Rosalind (2007), *Gender and the Media.* Cambridge: Polity.

Goffman, Erving (1979), *Gender Advertisements.* London: Macmillan.

Goffman, Erving (1974), *Frame Analysis: an Essay on the Organization of Experience.* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Giovanellli, Dina & Ostertag, Stephen (2009), "Controlling the Body: Media Representations, Body Size, and Self-Discipline" in Rothblum, Esther & Solovay, Sondra (eds.), *The Fat Studies Reader.* New York: NY University Press, 289-296.

Lazar, Michelle (2009), "Entitled to consume: post-feminist femininity and a culture of post-critique", *Discourse & Communication* 3 (4), 371-400.

Lazar, Michelle (2007), 'Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Articulating a Feminist Discourse Praxis', *Critical Discourse Studies*, 4: 2, 141 — 164. Consulted 20/6/2016 at http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17405900701464816 .

Litosseliti, Lia & Sunderland, Jane (2002) *Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis.* Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Murray, Samantha (2008), *The 'Fat' Female Body.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Noble, Katina (1987), "Self-help Groups: the Agony and the Ecstasy" in: Lawrence, Marilyn (ed.), *Fed Up and Hungry: Women, Oppression and Food.* London: Women's Press, 115 – 135.

Orbach, Susie (2016), *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, new ed. (originally published 1978). London: Arrow.

Radner, Hilary (1995), *Shopping Around: Feminine Culture and the Pursuit of Pleasure*. New York: Routledge.

RationalWiki (2018). "Daily Mail", page consulted 16/3/2018 at https://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Daily_Mail.

Savage, Mike *et al.* (2013), *Social Class in the 21st Century*. London: Pelican.

Shapiro, Eve (2015), *Gender Circuits*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Thornham, Sue (2007), *Women, Feminism and the Media*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh U.P.

Williams, Zoe (2016), 'Now everyone has an eating issue' (Interview with Susie Orbach), *Guardian*, 22 Feb. 2016, consulted 15/5/2016 at http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/feb/22/susie-orbach-fat-is-a-feminist-issue-body-dysmorphia-china