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Body Work: Youth, Gender and Health (Youth, Young Adulthood and Society)

Julia Coffey

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The rise of the health, beauty and fitness industries in recent years has led to an increased focus on the body. Body image, gender and health are issues of long-standing concern in sociology and in youth studies, but a theoretical and empirical focus on the body has been largely missing from this field. This book explores young people's understandings of their bodies in the context of gender and health ideals, consumer culture, individualisation and image.

Body Work examines the body in youth studies. It explores paradoxical aspects of gendered body work practices, highlighting the contradiction in men's increased participation in these industries as consumers alongside the re-emphasis of their gendered difference. It explores the key ways in which the ideal body is currently achieved, via muscularising practices, slimming regimes and cosmetic procedures. Coffey investigates the concept of 'health' and how it is inextricably linked both to the bodily performance of gender ideals and an increased public emphasis on individual management and responsibility in the pursuit of a 'healthy' body.

This book's conceptual framework places it at the forefront of theoretical work concerning bodies, affect and images, particularly in its development of Deleuzian research. It will appeal to a wide range of scholars and students in fields of youth studies, education, sociology, gender studies, cultural studies, affect and body studies.

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