

Angela Pickard

Ballet Body Narratives

Pain, Pleasure and Perfection in Embodied Identity

Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Wien, 2015. VI, 190 pp.

pb. ISBN 978-3-0343-1786-3

CHF 60.- / €^D 53.50 / €^A 55.- / € 50.- / £ 40.- / US-\$ 64.95

eBook ISBN 978-3-0353-0717-7

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Ballet Body Narratives is an ethnographic exploration of the social world of classical ballet and the embodiment of young ballet dancers as they engage in «becoming a dancer» in ballet school in England. In contrast to the largely disembodied sociological literature of the body, this book places the corporeal body as central to the examination and reveals significant relationships between body, society and identity. Drawing on academic scholarship as well as rich ballet body narratives from young dancers, this book investigates how young ballet dancers' bodies are lived, experienced and constructed through their desire to become performing ballet dancers as well as the seductive appeal of the ballet aesthetic. Pierre Bourdieu's critique of the perpetuating social order and his theoretical framework of field, habitus and capital are applied as a way of understanding the social world of ballet but also of relating the ballet habitus and belief in the body to broader social structures. This book examines the distinctiveness of ballet culture and aspects of young ballet dancers' embodied identity through a central focus on the ballet body.

CONTENTS: Ballet, Bodies and Becoming • Ballet, Body and Bourdieu • Thinking through the Body • Body, Capital and Habitus • Ballet Bodies in Pain • Gendered Experiences of Pain • Ballet Bodily Pleasures • Pleasure, Power and Perfection.

ANGELA PICKARD is Director of Teaching, Learning and School Experience in the School for Music and Performing Arts and Subject Lead for Dance at Canterbury Christ Church University. She has performed, created, taught and presented dance as a dancer, choreographer, teacher, advisor, consultant and academic. She has worked with a number of choreographers and artists in a range of projects across a multitude of venues in Kent, London and Europe and she is currently Artistic Director and choreographer of Canterbury Dance Company. Her research on ballet, the body, Bourdieu, identity, gender, talent and pedagogy has been widely disseminated. She is also Editor-in-Chief of the international journal *Research in Dance Education*.

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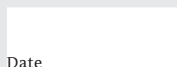
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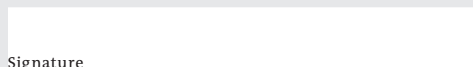
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