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Sociology of the Body - Research Practice in Poland

by

Dominika Byczkowska-Owczarek

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Editorial

Sociology of the Body—Research Practice in Poland

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I am delighted to introduce the special issue of *Qualitative Sociology Review*, devoted to research practice of sociology of the body in Poland. In the last years, we have observed a growing interest in sociological reflection on human body and influence of social processes on the body. The rising number of publications and thematic groups on conferences concerning this subject attracts interest of academics with sociological, as well as anthropological, philosophical, and pedagogical background. It is satisfactory that we engage to challenge, a well-domesticated in Western culture, Cartesian concept of human body-soul dualism.

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Evidently, sociological, anthropological reflection on the human body has not started with the appearance of the subdiscipline. Such contemporary philosophers, sociologists, and anthropologists as Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Marcel Mauss, Simone de Beauvoir, Norbert Elias, Erving Goffman, Anselm Strauss, Edward Hall, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Zygmunt Bauman, or Anthony Giddens, and others built foundations for contemporary sociological thought concerning human body. International sociology of the body had its milestones, such as Brian Turner's *The Body and Society* published in 1984, Drew Leder's *The Absent Body* (1990), Chris Schilling's (1993) *The Body and Social Theory* from the beginning of 1990's, or inception of *Body & Society* journal in 1995.

Similarly, as body studies in Poland have developed in the past twenty years, there is a number of publications devoted to the subdiscipline's identity. One of the widely known Polish sociologists was Zygmunt Bauman with a number of works on body in

postmodern culture (e.g., 1995), which have influenced body studies in social sciences among Polish academics. Other publications from this period include Zbyszko Melosik's (1996) *Tożsamość, ciało i władza* [*Identity, Body, and Power*] and edited by Dariusz Czaja (1999) *Metamorfozy ciała. Świadectwa i interpretacje* [*Metamorphoses of the Body*]. It was followed by a number of books on the subject, including Adam Buczkowski's *Społeczne tworzenie ciała. Płeć kulturowa i płeć biologiczna* [*Social Construction of the Body. Gender and Sex*] published in 2005; the works of Ewa Banaszak and Paweł Czajkowski (e.g., 2010), a book *Praktyki cielesne* [*Bodily Practices*] edited by Jacek Kurczewski (2006) and *Ucieleśnienia. Ciało w zwierciadle współczesnej humanistyki* [*Embodiments. Body in the Reflection of Contemporary Humanities*] edited by Anna Wieczorkiewicz and Joanna Bator from 2007. There has also been published a review of the most significant anthropological body studies (Szpakowska 2008). Anna Kacperczyk and I (2012) have as well contributed to the advance of the subdiscipline, among others by editing a special issue of *Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej* entitled *Body in Social Space*, where we presented articles concerning qualitative research on the human body. The milestone in the Polish development of the subdiscipline is a monograph of Honorata Jakubowska (2009) *Socjologia ciała* [*Sociology of the Body*], which introduced the subject profoundly to the Polish audience.

Since the appearance of the above mentioned publications, the body in Polish sociological studies has been increasingly present, giving examples of various research topics, ranging from disability to sport, transplantations to food and eating, dance, gender, yoga, climbing, prostitution, cosmetic surgeries, sexuality, body art, and many others. There are as well other researchers whose achievements are mentioned in this issue's articles, but who would rather identify with sociology of medicine, sport, culture, art, or gender. Please, forgive not mentioning of all their names, as the contributors of this issue have done it in an insightful manner, presenting the literature of their specific field of interest within the subdiscipline.

***

This special issue of *Qualitative Sociology Review* includes papers from participants of the *Sociology of the Body in Poland* conference, which took place at the Faculty of Economics and Sociology, University of Lodz in June 2016. The aim of the conference was to develop methodological standards, discuss research trends and possibilities of application of outcomes. The proceedings included as well reflections on such issues as teaching of sociology of the body and the specificity of the subdiscipline, its difficulties, challenges, and perspectives.

The effects of inquisitive discussions and workshops which took place during the conference are present in the texts. Each article in this special issue of *Qualitative Sociology Review* presents a different aspect of research practice in sociology of the body in Poland. All of them, however, have a qualitative character, and the majority is based on empirical studies. The contributors in this issue share their individual perspectives on human body, its practices, and manifestations in social reality.

In the first paper, **Girls in Football, Boys in Dance. Stereotypization Processes in Socialization of**

Young Sportsmen and Sportswomen, Honorata Jakubowska and I depict the issue of gender stereotypization strategies during the socialization process of children practicing atypical gender sports. We present outcomes of two qualitative studies: among girls playing football and boys practicing ballroom dancing. The text is focused on various types of social influence of the children's families (mainly parents), coaches, and peers. Moreover, we demonstrate the strategies which the children participating in atypical gender sports are subjected to, such as stereotypization, destereotypization, apparent destereotyping, and hidden stereotyping. The benefits of participating in atypical gender sports are also discussed, particularly in terms of social and psychological profits.

In the following article, Izabela Ślęzak reflects on **A Present and a Non-Present Body—Experiencing the Body by Female Sex Workers in Commercial Sexual Relations**. The article is based on qualitative data, mainly unstructured interviews, which were analyzed in accordance with the procedures of grounded theory methodology. The problem discussed in the text concerns making women's bodies accessible to men in the commercial context related to specific ways of experiencing it. The author's discussion focuses on category of a non-present, selectively present, and present body, which refers to ways in which female sex workers experience their bodies during commercial sex acts.

Issues of gender present in body experiences are continued by Mariola Bieńko. Her paper, **The Body as a Private and Social Space. The Margins of Research Regarding Old Age and Gender**, concentrates on the body as a project in the context of late modernity. The author bases her outcomes on a two-year, qualitative research conducted in four Polish cities. The aim of the author was to review theories and empirical studies concerning socio-cultural issues and the subjective determinants of perceptions of physicality. The body has become the main instrument of experiencing the world and oneself, a significant area, a key element of an individual's identification strategy. The presentation and reception of body is dominated by an aesthetic perspective, organically bound with the tendency to aestheticize daily life in general. As we find out from the study, the emotional aspect of experiencing body, as well as the cognitive aspect within consciousness, the mental image of one's own body differ according to respondents' age and gender.

Incorporated gender issues, but not only, are also present in the fourth article, entitled **The Theater Plays the Body. Replication of the Canon of Beauty among Young Actresses in the Theater**. Anna Dwojnych and Katarzyna Kuczkowska-Golińska depict the results of a qualitative research conducted in Polish theater circles. The authors' aim is to answer the question whether the theater has currently become a place where bodily images are being standardized and beauty canons reproduced. The text presents conclusions concerning how studying at a theater school significantly impacts the perception of one's own body, a widespread belief among the students concerning the importance of the body (and the beauty thereof) in the profession of an actor, which results in subjecting the body to some regimes, often destructive ones, and last but not least, the pressure to have a perfect body strongly internalized in the theater circles.

The bodily image is as well featured in Tomasz Ferenc's **Nudity, Sexuality, Photography. Visual Redefinition of the Body**. The article presents changing relations of photography with a naked or semi-naked body and different forms and recording conventions. From the mid-19th century the naked body became a subject of scientifically grounded photographic explorations, an allegorical motif referring to painting traditions, an object of interest and excitement for the newly-developed "touristic" perspective. The author examines three main ways in which photographs depicting nudity were being taken at that time and shaped three visual modes. These include artistic-documentary, ethnographic-traveling, and scientific-medical. Tomasz Ferenc presents one more, probably prevalent in numbers, kind of photographical images: pornographic. He looks back to the middle of the 19th century and depicts the repertoire of pornographic pictures, which was already very wide, and soon became one of the photographic pillars of visual imagination of modern society. The author discovers the development of this genre to date. He tries to answer how all the processes connected with pornographic images affected our imagination and real practices, what does the staggering number of erotic photography denote? One of possible answers comes from Michel Foucault who suggests that our civilization does not have any *ars erotica*, but only *scientia sexualis*. As the author claims, creating sexual discourse became an obsession of our civilization, and its main pleasure is the pleasure of analysis and a constant production of truth about sex.

The issue of visual representation of the body and bodily practices is continued by Agnieszka Maj. Her article, entitled **A Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body—Recipes for a Healthy Living as Seen in Polish Vlogs**, focuses on one aspect of the fashion for leading a healthy lifestyle which has recently reached Polish society. One of the most popular sources of information concerning healthy lifestyles is, of course, the Internet. Some people have decided to introduce changes into the way they eat and exercise, primarily in order to become healthier and slimmer with the help of Internet. The article analyzes examples of Polish vlogs posted on the Youtube.pl platform that are principally devoted to improving fitness, as well as showing the most effective ways to lose weight. The author investigates four main areas: the vloggers' motivations for creating and publishing videos, the vloggers' reference to their own bodies, the reasons they offer for seeking a healthier way of living, the vloggers' bodies as their representation in the social space of the Internet, and the role of the Internet community in the many processes in helping people become slimmer.

Wojciech Goszczyński and Anna Wójtewicz introduce an inquisitive topic related to the previously mentioned article, namely, food and eating. Their paper on **Body on the Plate. On the Relation between the Carnality and Food (on the example of meat in advertising)** poses questions such as: do we own our bodies? Do we control them during the meal, or does the meal control us? The authors aim at examining the complex nexus of social and physical practices embedded in eating habits. The investigation of selected culinary advertisements gives an answer on the way food stabilizes, catalyzes, separates, and mediates social relations, as well as social and individual bodies.

The last paper, authored by Honorata Jakubowska and I, **Sociology of the Body—Teaching Embodied Approach through Autoethnography**, represents the subject of teaching sociology of the body and use of a qualitative research technique—autoethnography. Additionally, the article presents and discusses the way of teaching sociology of the body whose aim is to allow students to become familiar with embodied methodology and make them methodologically sensitive. We describe the research tasks given to the students in terms of the advantages they might bring in the educational process and difficulties that they may cause to both the student and the teacher and illustrate the subject with examples of the students' works. As the most valuable benefits deriving from this way of teaching we indicate raising methodological sensitivity, the ability to link embodied experience and knowledge with theoretical concepts, self-understanding in terms of social processes, but also putting into practice the perspective of embodiment in the social sciences. The article sets the issue of teaching in the specific cultural context, the courses of the sociology of the body in Poland and their status at Polish universities is proposed.

As the editor of this special issue of *Qualitative Sociology Review* I must express my deepest gratitude to the reviewers, who made the time to advise and improve the articles. I would as well like to thank the authors for their contribution and hard work during the long process of preparation of this special issue. A big thank you to the editors of *Qualitative Sociology Review*, for their time, excellence in publishing, and great support during the whole process.

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Girls in Football, Boys in Dance. Stereotypization Processes in Socialization of Young Sportsmen and Sportswomen

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Abstract The article at hand presents and discusses the issue of gender stereotypization strategies during the socialization process of children practicing atypical gender sports, which is perceived as inappropriate to their gender. The outcomes of two qualitative studies among girls playing football and boys practicing ballroom dancing focus on various types of social influence of their families, coaches, and peers. The importance of parents' role in reproducing or challenging stereotypical gender roles is outlined in the text. The strategies to which the children participating in atypical gender sports are subjected to include: stereotypization, destereotypization, apparent destereotyping, and hidden stereotyping. The benefits of participating in atypical gender sports are also discussed, particularly in terms of social and psychological profits.

Keywords Sociology of the Body; Stereotypization Processes; Socialization of Young Sportsmen and Sportswomen; Atypical Gender Sports

Sport has for ages been perceived as a "masculine" area of social life and was dominated by men (Hargreaves 1994; Dworkin and Messner 2002). In the 18th and 19th century, it was inappropriate for a woman to practice any kind of sport, due to possible changes in her appearance and a risk to her reproductive abilities (Vertinsky 1990; 1994). This started to change in 20th century, but still, there are many stereotypes concerning participation of women (and men) in different sports. Gender stereotypes states that, "masculine" sports, such as boxing, MMA, weightlifting. While "feminine" sports embody beauty, lightness, delicacy, and lack of hardness (Metheny 1965; Koivula 1995; 2001; Jakubowska 2014), such as dancing, figure skating, artistic gymnastics, and synchronized swimming, where direct physical contact is not required. Moreover, these sports represent the illusion of effortlessness (Len-

Honorata Jakubowska, sociologist, professor at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. The author of the books: *Skill Transmission, Sport and Tacit Knowledge. A Sociological Perspective* (Routlegde 2017), *The Game of the Body. The Practices and Discourses of Gender Differentiation in Sport* (in Polish, 2014), and *Sociology of the Body* (in Polish, 2009) and about 60 articles and book chapters in Polish and English related to her main research interests: sociology of the body, sociology of sport, and gender studies. The coordinator of European Sociological Association Research Network "Society and Sports" and vice-president of Polish Sociological Association Section "Sociology of Sport." The principal investigator of the research project focused on female football fans financed by the National Science Center (2016/21/B/HS6/00846).

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skyj 2003:89; Jakubowska 2016) and are perceived quite often as an art or an entertainment rather than a "real" sport.

That does not have to be the truth, since a lot of hard training and strength are needed to perform, for example, a dance or gymnastic figures. Also masculine sports require a lot of features that are perceived as "feminine," like precision in boxing or playfulness and finesse to perform football tricks. The division between "masculine" and "feminine" sports is strongly culturally constructed. Sports are not being perceived the same way as appropriate for men or women all around the globe. Football (or soccer) is perceived in North America (USA and Canada) as mainly a feminine sport, where, at the same time, the most masculine sport activity one can observe worldwide is a New Zealand dance called haka, performed before matches in other disciplines of sport.[1]

Despite many years of participation of both genders in different sports and cultural differences in perceiving certain disciplines, there are still various stereotypes of who should and who should not practice them. In spite of the fact that women practice all sports disciplines, the perception of sports as "feminine" and "masculine" has not changed since Metheny's study conducted in the 60s of the 20th century (Hardin and Greer 2009:22). This subject has also been adopted by

[1] The variety of sport games before which the haka is performed may be seen in "The New Zealand Haka across Many Different Sports" available on Youtube.com. Direct link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x21u-GzI8c. Retrieved April 20, 2018.

the popular culture. As an example, one may refer to two movies that illustrate this issue. The first is "Bend it like Beckham," it tells a story of a girl of Indian descent, grown up in a traditional hindu family in London, who starts playing football. The other movie is "Billy Elliot," a story of a boy, from a working class family, who is supposed to participate in boxing classes, but chooses ballet instead. Both main characters have to challenge gender stereotypes related to the perception of a particular sport.

The aim of this article is to compare stereotypization processes present during the socialization of children and teenagers in atypical gender sports such as football perceived as a "masculine" sport and in a ballroom dance, perceived as a "feminine" sport.[2] Both authors of this article are interested in various social aspects of embodiment and have carried out two independent researches. The first of them was focused on the practices and discourses of gender differentiation in sport (Jakubowska 2014) and the second one studied the social world of ballroom dancing (Byczkowska 2012). Specifics of bodily experiences in both disciplines demonstrate many similarities. One of these similarities: socialization and stereotypization of boys and girls in atypical gender roles is presented in this text.

Theoretical Framework

The division between "masculine" and "feminine" sports is based on socio-cultural patterns of femininity and masculinity. They reflect the features perceived as feminine or masculine and set what is appropriate for girls and women or for boys and men. This division is based on the social construction of a gendered body, the dichotomy between feminine and masculine body. The first should be slim, beautiful, and delicate and the second—strong, muscled, and resistant to pain and punches received in a direct fight. Therefore, women and men are encouraged to develop different sport skills and practice different sport activities (Messner 2002; Wasch 2005). A significant role in this gender division reproduction is played by a socialization process during which attitudes towards physical activity and choices of a sport are being formed.

This dimension of socialization can be described using Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus as a process of production of embodied dispositions and taste. Both are gendered, built on masculine and feminine dichotomy, and express individual traits, as well as values and features specific to gender (Pfister 2013). Boys and girls internalize specific ways of behavior which correspond to gender related social expectations, which afterwards influence their further involvement and attitudes towards sport (Coakley 1990:192-197; Hargreaves 1994).

The process of sports socialization is mainly based on gender stereotypes. Those can be defined as generalized beliefs about the features and competences of men and women in a particular culture and society (Eagly 1987). They are reproduced by the process of socialization, education, mass media, religion, art, et cetera. Deaux and Lewis (1984) define gender stereotypes by four components: personality traits,

[2] Ballroom dancing is a dance genre which is strictly institutionalized, put into rules, which makes it more similar to other kinds of sport than to other genres of dance. It is also called dancesport.

gender role, physical appearance, and occupations. They influence not only the way men and women are perceived but also the tasks and jobs appropriate to them. According to the stereotypes, jobs where care and socialization abilities are required are more suitable for women, while men are better in jobs requiring either physical strength or leadership skills. Men and women are also described by a set of traits, for example, activity, independence, courage are perceived as masculine, whereas empathy, fragility, tenderness are perceived as feminine (Bem 1974; Deaux and Lewis 1984). At the same time, both genders should embody the physical characteristics seen as ideal to their gender.

Gender stereotypes influence the perception of gender appropriateness of sports disciplines, as well as self-perceptions, motivations, and sport participation (Chalabaev et al. 2013:136-137). Girls feel less competent in sport and sport itself has a lower value for them (Fredricks and Eccles 2005; Slater and Tiggemann 2011). These attitudes are created among others by the parents who play a key role in the transmission of gender stereotypes (Fredricks and Eccles 2005). In this process, one can observe the influence of other significant actors of children environment, that is, teachers (Chalabaev et al. 2009) or peers (Wasch 2005).

Previous studies revealed that parents have different attitudes towards girls and boys (Messner 2000; Raudsepp and Viira 2000; Mennesson 2011; Łuszczyńska 2012; Pfister 2013; Bertrand, Mennesson, and Court 2014). The boys are much more frequently encouraged into active behaviors and sports, while the activities which do not require physical effort (or seem like it) are proposed to the girls. They listen more often to recommendations about being cautious and attentive during a play. Parents also provide different sports equipment and encourage the children to practice sports "appropriate" to their gender. Therefore, the significant others (parents, teachers, and coaches), as well as the media and commercial marketing, create distinct attitudes of girls and boys towards sports. As a consequence, they "develop the preferences for certain sports in accordance with gendered social norms, values, and expectations" (Pfister 2013:48).

In this context, it is important and interesting to analyze the process of sports socialization in the case of children who practice sport stereotypically perceived as inappropriate to their gender. The issue of atypical gender on the sports field has been analyzed among others by Christine Mennesson and co-authors (Thouault and Mennesson 2004; Mennesson 2011; Bertrand et al. 2014). Although in the French studies the majority of children practiced activities which corresponded to their gender, a particular attention was drawn to the families in which children practiced "opposite" sports activities. Studies revealed that "familiar sports heritage" (parents' sports activities and their attitudes towards sport) plays a crucial role in children's choices. However, one should take into account how this heritage is transmitted and "updated" (changed) over time in family relations. The analysis of the gathered data emphasized also an important role of cultural capital—the families with a higher capital were more willing to accept and support the choices of gender "inappropriate" sports, and for the children themselves the social

costs of these decisions were lower. Whereas, for other parents, it was important that sport will allow their children to develop their femininity and masculinity (Mennesson 2011; Bertrand et al. 2014). The second indicated factor that makes the parents less attached to a traditional gender division in sport was personal, particular experience, as illustrated by the example of a feminist mother (Mennesson 2011). Therefore, in socialization into sports, the family role is crucial. Parents can both reproduce and challenge gender stereotypes in sport.

Gendered Character of Sport in Poland

The statistical data reveal that sport in Poland fits into the division between "feminine" and "masculine" sports. Among the amateurs, the sports with the highest ratio of men are: football, basketball, table tennis, chess, snooker, bridge, skiing (including snowboarding), athletics, fishing, swimming, and strength sports. In contrast, women dominate in dance, aerobics, gymnastics, yoga, fitness, jogging, and nordic walking.[3] The percentage of sportswomen practicing in professional dance and football clubs also confirms this division. In 2014, women constituted only 5% (19765 out of 378600) of football players, 64% (1813 out of 2811) of practitioners of ballroom dancing, 81% (5848 out of 7115) of sports dancers. However, it should be noted that female participation in football has increased during the last years. Moreover, the only team sport that is more popular among women is volleyball and there are more women playing football than, for example, basketball or handball. The number of women and girls practicing football is similar to their number in the athletics and a little higher than in swimming. Interesting to notice is that the number of women in dance sports is increasing.

Another important issue that the statistics reveal is a significant percentage of young girls (juniors) among female participants.

In football, only 14% of female players are senior players, however, in dancing it is a little more than 20%. A higher percentage of young girls playing football can be explained by two main reasons. A growing popularity of female football can be observed. There are more football clubs where girls can practice football, female teams participate in the biggest football tournaments organized for young players and achieve some success, like the victory of the U17 national team in the European Championship in 2013. On the other hand, a lot of Polish players finish their career early (quite often after graduation) because they are not able to make a living with the money they receive from clubs and the football federation (Jakubowska 2014).

However, it should be noted that in spite of women's growing participation in so-called masculine sports, Polish fans perceive sports as "feminine" or "masculine" in the same stereotypical way as sports fans in other countries (Koivula 2001; Hardin and Greer 2009). As "feminine" sports they list: artistic gymnastics, synchronized swimming, or, to a smaller extent, figure skating. As "masculine" sports they

[3] The data refer to declared skills of performing a given sport. Source: Central Statistical Office of Poland, Department of Social Research and Conditions of Living (2013). Participation of Poles in sport and physical recreation in 2012, Warsaw.

indicate: boxing, wrestling, weightlifting, and football (Jakubowska 2014). The permanent character of this division can be perceived as one of the main barriers of women's inclusion in football, as well as men's into dance. It may also be caused by the fact that when it comes to sports participation, the only thing that may be evaluated is human body and its skills. It is discouraging for kids and teenagers when their changing body is perceived as not feminine or masculine enough to practice a certain sport.

Methodology

In the ballroom dancing research, grounded theory methodology has been used (Strauss and Glaser 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990; Konecki 2000; Charmaz 2006). During the research, 16 interviews had been conducted (some were photo elicited), 4 video elicited interviews, 5 day-long observations on ballroom dancing competitions, 339 analyzed photographs, 12 videos, an autobiography of a ballet

Table 1. Participation in sport dance and football altogether and among women.

Discipline	2004			2006			2008			2010			2014		
	Total	women	%	Total	women	%	Total	women	%	Total	women	%	Total	women	%
sport dance	1812	1190	66%	3783	2405	64%	3780	2714	72%	2802	2021	72%	7175	5848	81%
football	197063	2207	1%	236821	3022	1%	237064	4344	2%	239578	3562	1%	378600	19765	5%

Source: Self-elaboration based on data from the Center of Sport and Tourism Statistics, Regional Research Center of Podkarpackie Voivodeship (2015). Physical culture in Poland in the years 2013 and 2014. Warsaw-Rzeszow and Center of Sport and Tourism Statistics, Regional Research Center of Podkarpackie Voivodeship (2013). Physical culture in Poland in the years 2011 and 2012. Warsaw-Rzeszow.

* The data concerning participation in ballroom dancing have not been gathered until 2014, therefore it is not included in this table.

Table 2. Participation of girls in junior teams.

	2014	
	Total	Girls
Football	19765	17037
Sport dance	5848	4551
Ballroom dance	1813	1380

Source: Center of Sport and Tourism Statistics, Regional Research Center of Podkarpackie Voivodeship (2015). Physical culture in Poland in the years 2013 and 2014. Warsaw-Rzeszow.

dancer (Bittner 2004), a radio audition, and the statute of Polish Dance Association. The analyzed data have led the researcher to theoretical conclusions, some of which are presented in this article. Symbolic interactionism was the theoretical background of this research (Blumer 1969; Charmaz 2006), particularly social worlds theory (Strauss 1984; Clarke 1990), Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1965) phenomenological perspective, Goffman's (1974) dramaturgical perspective, and Nelson's (2001) dreamwork. Apart from an ethnographic description of the social world of ballroom dancing, there was constructed a theory on social aspects of embodiment, concerning such phenomena as institutionalization, career constructing, adapting dancer's body to the requirements of the social world, non-verbal embodied communication, spatial aspects of dance, and the socialization of children in ballroom dancing, and many others (Byczkowska 2009; 2012).

As the theoretical framework of the study about practices and discourses of gender differentiation in sport, Nancy Fraser's (2003; 2005) concept of justice has been used. During the research, 43 interviews had been conducted with female athletes, coaches, as well as representatives of sports clubs and federations from 5 sports disciplines (football, boxing, running, shooting, and chess), 3 group interviews with sports fans (both men and women, 25-45 years old), and 10 interviews with representatives of the feminist environment. Also, a large number of secondary data concerning, for example, sports participation, media coverage, Olympics, and sports regulations have been analyzed. Apart from socialization into sport other issues were discussed, like: Polish sport history, media coverage of women and men competitions, financial differences, women's participation in sports organizations, et cetera.

Girls in Football, Boys in Dance—Findings and Discussion

The Importance of Parents' Role

Parents of children practicing dance or football (and most probably any other sport, see: Kremer-Sadlik, Jeemin, and Kim 2007) and other members of their families are usually quite engaged in these activities. Their role in career constructing is vital, as lack of help may seriously slow the child's development or even make it impossible to last. Mainly the parents decide whether the child will participate in trainings (Mennesson 2011; Bertrand et al. 2014), they sponsor it by paying for trainings and lessons, participation in tournaments, and all the necessary equipment. Parents usually also interfere with the coaches' role:

> — How are you getting along with the parents?
> — Badly. Well, you know, we have to get along well. Without them, it wouldn't be possible. [male ballroom dance instructor, ex-dancer, 45-years-old]

Parents, as well as the coaches, are the most influential persons for a child's psychological features, some of which are incredibly important during the beginning and development of a sport career. These features are responsibility, perseverance, and hard work, discipline, openness. If parents concentrate on supporting the development of these features in their child, it is more probable that they will be better prepared for severe competition, for example, in ballroom dancing:

> It's a sport, it's a sport for them. It's like a boxing ring. A furious twelve-year-old boy runs into a changing room, he didn't manage to win, he rips of his tail-coat, his shirt, throws it all on the floor, and he falls into hysterics. There his daddy enters, "Don't worry, son, next time you will kick his ass"…I think that's the problem, they [parents] treat it like competition, not upbringing, but competition…if it was more an art...well, first, second, third this always counts, but now it's the most important thing in it. And it evolves in a bad direction. [male ballroom dance instructor, ex-dancer, 45-years-old]

Parents' engagement and support may be in the child's favor when parents use their resources to help the upgrowing career. However, sometimes it may be problematic, if it causes the child's stress, for example, when the parent is overly enthusiastic and has high expectations (Nunomura and Santos Oliveira 2013:6, 8).

> I can say that, for me, as a coach, because I have been working with children for 7 years, parents' participation in their children's sports activities is very important. In the past, when we were participating in tournaments, for example, "From the backyard to the stadium—Tymbark Cup," the parents were not very interested in it. Nowadays, during home, but also away matches, the parents are always present. There are 20 girls here and it happens that a mother comes, a father, a grandmother, a grandfather, a sister, a brother, and sometimes there are 50 people who are standing and cheering. This is cool, but also it is something new because parents used to be less interested. Today, when we are at a camp, I am not calling parents numerous times like it was previously, but they call themselves to get some information. Let's be honest, parents of children born in 2001, 2002 are much younger and, as a consequence, more open and have different perceptions [than older generations]. Without a doubt, based on working with children's experience, one can see that the world's view has changed. [former female football player and clubs' coach]

If parents are not convinced that atypical gender sport is a good choice for their child, they would probably engage less, and therefore they would not pay much attention on developing the child's psychological features. A similar role is played by parents in the social world of ballet. Mary Lorentz Dietz (1994:68-69) calls it "ballet parents." This term concerns parents who encourage, or even force, their children to constantly increase their engagement, and have a leading role in decision-making about their career course. This is possible, since children in ballet, ballroom dancing, and football start their career and serious trainings at age 6-8 years.

Of course, the problem does not refer only to atypical, but also to typical gender sports:

> Parents have a very big influence. It happens that a child really wants to play. I have this case now. There are two boys in my class and they want to play football, but their mother keeps saying: "You are not doing this because you have homework to do," or: "You will not manage to do it, you will play wrong." [former female football player, children and youth coach]

Strategies of (De)Stereotypization of Children in Atypical Gender Sports

Four categories of strategies which shape the actions and narrations of all social actors (parents, coaches,

and the children themselves) involved in the process of socialization in atypical gender sports have emerged after analyzing interviews about the perception of atypical gender roles in sport. These strategies are: stereotyping, destereotyping, apparent destereotyping, and hidden stereotyping. They highly influence the career path (Hughes 1997) and often decide whether the child continues their participation in a particular sport, in this case—football or dancing. Usually more than one may be observed, and sometimes all four categories are present in a child's social environment. They appear and interweave in various phases of a child's career and have different importance to their career development. The dominating, at a certain period of time, strategy depends on interactions between social actors, the most important, between coaches and parents.

The first distinguished strategy is stereotypization. It refers to all actions undertaken by social actors, which reinforce the traditional division between "masculine" and "feminine" sports. However, this strategy is not limited to the issues of physical activity but also refers to psychological and social aspects of traditional socialization of children.

The second strategy—destereotypization, refers to actions based on an assumption of gender neutrality in sports. Actors representing such attitudes would usually deny gender specificity of a certain sport and act neutrally towards both genders participating in the activity.

The last two strategies, apparent destereotyping and hidden stereotyping, refer to actions that encourage both genders to participate in a sport activity, regardless of its connotation. However, they are based on a stereotypical assumption that a gender specificity for football or ballroom dancing exists, and participation in atypical gender sport may have some benefits for a child. These two strategies often appear together, as they are both based on the same stereotypical assumption. They will be therefore described jointly.

These four strategies' framework is not based on actor's approach declaration only but on actions concerning participation in a certain sport activity as well. Both authors have conducted their research on the participation of young people in sports, therefore, the framework is based on a rich source of data from interviews, as well as observations. The similarities of socialization processes and stereotypization of children in atypical gender sports have lead us to create four categories, which exist in both types of sports. A more precise description is illustrated by the citations of the listed strategies presented below.

Stereotyping

Stereotyping refers to all practices and opinions of the social actors, up to which certain sports (as mentioned above football, boxing, ballroom dance) are ascribed to one particular gender and should not be practiced by another gender. This would mainly involve successful and unsuccessful attempts to discourage children from participating in an atypical sport, such as parents' argumentation that girls who play football have a masculine figure, crooked legs, bruises, and are getting sweaty. When asked whether there are instances of girls wishing to prac-

tice football but their parents will not permit it, one football coach responded:

> Yes, it often happens. I had a few cases like this. And the worst thing is when parents say that the girl will have bowed legs because of practicing football. [female football player and children coach]

When it comes to boys who want to dance, the argumentation involves general effeminacy (of body, figure, and gestures) and reluctance to use decorated outfits. The problem of reluctant attitude of the fathers towards their sons' participation in dancing has been described by Dietz (1994:72-73) in her article about ballet. As the image of a ballet dancer is consistent with a stereotypical image of woman, male dancers have to face homosexual stereotypization. This stereotypization causes their fathers to think that dance may "make" their sons homosexual (see also: Olszewski 2008:74, 78). Studies also show that this is an issue for other atypical gender sports like rhythmic gymnastics. Boys from working class families, where division of labor (masculine-public-technical work and feminine-private-domestic work), engage in a sport activity which is in contrary to their habitus and expectations of their fathers, but not of their mothers (Chimot and Louveau 2010:441-442).

The stereotypization of gender roles in dance has also another aspect. Ballroom dancing, as dancing in heterosexual pairs, shapes gender roles and intergender relations at a very young age. What is more, the relations are much more stereotypical than in the "real world." What we mean is, for example, very skimpy dresses worn by teenage girls, wearing high heels, being "presented" by the male partner. At the same time, boys are encouraged to play a dominant role in the pair, take responsibility for the pair's movement. The effect is in quite an early creation of masculine or feminine identity among the dancers (in contrary to the identity of a girl or boy).

The stereotyping concerns not only children but also coaches. Female football coaches experience a lot of distrust in their competence. When it comes to male ballroom dance coaches, the main stereotypization concerns their suspected homosexuality. In both cases, the main strategy of dealing with this problem is openly communicating and informing of the facts, like in the examples below:

> When it happens that a woman becomes a coach, one can observe [the parents'] resistance. How come? And, there are a lot of questions: "Do you play football?" "Did you graduate an appropriate high school?" "Do you know something about football?" And, when I talk about my experience, the parents are quite shocked and start to apologize. And then, when they see how I conduct my trainings, that I know something about this, and I am able to trap and pass a ball, she plays football! [former female football player, children and youth coach]

> [Fathers sometimes say] "What, are you raising my boy into a faggot?!" Mister, I have a wife, I have a child, I like women, what are you talking about? Right? [male ballroom dance instructor, ex-dancer, 45-years-old]

Stereotyping also has its active form. It refers to all the situations when parents force their children to

perform a gender stereotypical sport, mainly to fulfill their ambitions. For example, one football coach said that contrary to girls, boys are pressed to play football:

> in the case of boys it is the opposite. The boys do not want to play, but the parents force them to do this because they have some ambitions, mainly their dads. When the boy is screaming, the father slaps him and forces him onto the pitch. [male football coach]

Destereotyping

The second category, destereotyping, refers to actions undertaken by social actors, which are based on an assumption of gender neutrality in sports. This mainly involves giving girls access to stereotypically masculine sports and treating children equally, regardless of their gender. The strategy chosen mainly by coaches includes, for example, presenting a particular child as an example of a talented participant or a player. The citation below shows the situation of a girl football player:

> This girl, she has been practicing the second year with me. Jagódka, she is better, at least at skills level, than some boys who are training with me. She does not have bowed legs, she is not bruised, has long hair. She deals with the football excellently. And, I have tried to use her as an example to convince parents to give their daughters a chance to play football. It is possible to reconcile school and football. But, parents say no and, as a consequence, a child also says no. Parents' influence is big. [former female football player, children and youth coach]

Another example of this strategy is to present the values of a certain sport for the child, mainly by emphasizing its gender neutrality and the nonsense of gender stereotypes in sport. This strategy does not appear as often as the other three, and is usually presented by coaches who practiced an atypical gender sport.

Apparent Destereotyping / Hidden Stereotyping

Apparent destereotyping / hidden stereotyping is another category including situations when a social actor uses argumentation or undertakes actions which encourage a child/children to participate in an atypical gender sport, but are based on the assumption that the sport itself is improper to a child's gender. In this case, the trainings are to a smaller extent perceived as an acquisition of a particular sports skills, but mainly as a chance for general physical development, education, or play. This would include situations when a particular sport (e.g., football) is presented by the coach (and sometimes parents) as not a "real" (male) football, but gender neutral sport with a use of ball as an attribute.

> Now we want to start with the girls' recruitment and we want to present football as something healthy and say that due to football, children have body conditioning development. Football is only a tool. And, in the future, one can assume whether a girl will become a player or not. But, if you tell the parents that it is only football training, there is no chance, even after a three-hour conversation, they will not believe that everything will be alright, that nothing wrong will happen and their daughter will not have bowed legs and will not become a tomboy. [former female football player, children and youth coach]

> I think that we should present football from this perspective that there is a girl, she can wear high heels, a skirt, she has painted nails, and she is also a football player. In this way, we can open parents' eyes that football is nothing wrong, that it is a normal sport discipline, like, for example, volleyball. [former female football player, children and youth coach]

Apparent destereotyping / hidden stereotyping may also have a lighter form. The atypical gender sport is accepted as long as it is just a play. When it comes to bigger investment of time and money (which is a normal stage in any sport career), girls in football and boys in ballroom dance are discouraged to continue, not treated seriously, encouraged to engage in another, more stereotypical activity.

> With the boys it works this way that each parent sees in them a future Ronaldo who will earn money for all the family. I had one case like this. A father gave his son a lift to 10 or 15 clubs and did not begrudge fuel, et cetera. However, when his daughter plays and needs a lift somewhere, he says she is in your club, so you should give her a lift. [former female football player and clubs' coach]

> Boys more often strictly declare that they want to play football and they attend football trainings. Whereas girls learn to dance, or to play a piano. It causes that when they have to choose one thing, they often resign from football. The parents also often persuade them to do this. With the boys it seems to be easier. [female football player and children coach]

Even if a girl continues her trainings and career, this would be explained socially in a different way than if it were a boy. Girls in football are encouraged to train and educate because they could get a good and steady job as a trainer, boys are tempted by visions of professional football careers and financial success.

> When we want to establish a sports [football] class for the boys, we hang an announcement on the bulletin board, the boys come and the class is established. When we want to create a sports [football] class for the girls, we also hang an announcement, but additionally we invite the parents. At the end, we have to call each parent individually to convince them and urge them to come and listen to what we have to say. When the parents arrive, we focus on convincing them that playing football here is not only an ability to play but also a possibility to be educated and that we will offer their daughter a job in the future. [male football coach]

Benefits for Children Who Cross Gender Stereotypes in Their Choice of Sport

The emphasis on the positive effects for those who engage in atypical sports to their gender can be perceived as an example of a hidden destereotyping / apparent stereotyping strategy. Parents and coaches stress the capacities that children can acquire, and the benefits which go beyond a particular sport or sport in general. For example, ballroom dance coaches very often would justify the boys participation in this sport by explaining that the boy may become more responsible, persistent, and tough thanks to dancing:

> They are tough men, they grow up as tough, hardened people and that's how I convince parents. Not

> moms, but fathers. Moms want to dance and it's not important, but daddy wants a commando, right? He wants a commando...They do. Or sometimes they say: "What training is that? In special forces," and I say, "You know what? Foolery." But, we have such too. And it's only later that they get convinced when they see that their sons can do, you know, splits, that he works hard, that he is fit, and that he is polite to girls, this is very, very rewarding…but dads usually put it this way: it's not a sport for a boy. They all want to raise a superman. [male ballroom dance instructor, ex-dancer, 45-years-old]

Moreover, the coaches would usually say that boys learn how to behave towards girls and women, which has a very positive influence on their relations with the opposite sex. Teenage male dancers also emphasize this, sometimes boasting their successes in contacts with women.

> In my opinion, it is not true [that male dancers become womanly] because, after all, I dance with a woman and even in rumba it's really all the time that I touch her and so, well, let's say in places where not everyone touches women every day, for example, I grab her hip. So I think this is not true. [male ballroom dancer, age 15]

> And what I liked the most about it, that later, as a dancer, I can really do much more when it comes to women. Well, then it really turns out differently when someone says such a thing [that male dancers are homosexual] that sometimes you may be ashamed to be a dancer, but when it comes down to it, it turns out quite opposite. Dancing raised me. Come on, dance taught me to respect women, so that I can play, not deceive, but I can play, I can respect women, we always had to respect the girl while dancing, we were always taught that. Respect above all, a presentation of your partner. Who is more important in dance? Who does what, does all the things? We've always been taught that the male partner leads, but the female is the most important. I always say in my classes that: in dance it's always the man who leads. Then the guys enjoy, applaud, "Of course, I lead." But, the female partner is the most important in ballroom dancing. So it's not just that I lead, but I have a really hard mission to do so when she dances, as I want... [male ballroom dancer and dance instructor, 22 years of age]

Boys profits from practicing ballroom dancing would include a skill of taking care of one's appearance, ability to choose good quality clothes and shoes, as well as a knowledge of female fashion, which women may find attractive. Constant contact with the female body makes the boys familiar with such aspects of physiology like menstruation, body hair, or sweat, which are usually concealed by young girls and usually not present in the public sphere, and therefore become a taboo.[4] Boys get acquainted with the female body as a physical and physiological entity in a context other than sexual.

Similarly, the participation of girls in football can have some benefits. First, girls develop not only football skills but general sports skills and are physically active. Second, they also learn some social competences due to participation in a team sport. Third, they receive a message that there are no areas which are not accessible for them, that there are no "male" areas. It can be important not only in sport

[4] This refers to girls acquainting with boys' bodies too, for example, uncontrolled erection during close dance.

but also in other areas of social life, still dominated by men. The girls concentrate on their abilities and skills, ascertain that much depends on their hard work, not looks, what seems to be promoted by the mass media.

Generally, the profits of participating in atypical gender sport focus on understanding the opposite gender better, acquiring the skills and knowledge not popular among boys or girls not participating in atypical gender sports. Growing up in an environment where competition and cooperation between children of both genders concentrates on their actual skills and abilities instead of stereotypes may lead to conviction about one's own hard work and development as main factors of success in adult life.

Conclusion

In social imagination, there still exists a strong belief that some sports are proper for male and some for female participants. This has been shaped by the centuries, although there are many examples that both men and women may achieve good results in atypical gender sports. Individual stories of sportsmen and sportswomen who have fought against this division reveal how much determination this requires.

In ballroom dance and ballet, also in rhythmic gymnastics, boys are accused of becoming womanly and gay, which sometimes prevents them from participating in these activities. It is usually followed by their fathers disagreement or lack of support. Also, girls who want to practice football or boxing are discouraged, and being threatened to develop a male figure or crooked legs.

The research on children participation in football and dance have revealed that both parents and coaches reproduce gender stereotypes in sports socialization. The parents want their children to practice sports appropriate to their child's gender and coaches confirm their convictions. As a consequence, one can observe early resignation from atypical gender sport despite having sport talent or willingness to train. This reduces the number of possible future football or dance stars. In dance, as a sport which requires a dancing partner, many girls have a problem with continuing their career because the higher the age category becomes, the less boys want to participate in ballroom dancing. It is possible to continue training alone only for a certain period of time, and without participating in dance contests, one's skill deteriorates. Therefore, this causes consequence for both typical and atypical gender sports.

Only a small group of parents who decide that their child will practice atypical gender sport challenges sports division into "masculine" and "feminine." Meanwhile, the article has indicated several benefits from participation in atypical gender sport. Among them, one can mention general physical development and being physically active. Girls can gain self-confidence, belief in their own capacities, while boys learn how to take care of their look, how to behave towards women, cooperate with the other gender, and get familiar with female physiology. At the same time, a growing participation of girls in football and boys in dance may contribute to smaller stigmatization of children participating in an atypical gender sport and destereotypization of their nature.

Therefore, one can speak of the positives of both sport and cultural socialization through participation in atypical gender sports. Its meaning requires further analysis, focused on parents' role and factors that can contribute to a higher inclusion of both genders in all kinds of physical activities, teaching children to co-operate with the opposite sex. A study comparing the similarities and differences of mother's and father's attitudes towards their children's participation in atypical gender sport could bring interesting results concerning socialization in families.

It would be worthwhile to compare the results of the studies presented above with the data from other sports, strongly identified as "masculine" or "feminine." These include artistic gymnastics, rugby, or weightlifting. What could also bring more valuable information to understand the processes of socialization inside a group of children practicing certain types of sport is a study concentrating more on coaches who train typical and atypical gender sports and their interactions with boys and girls.

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A Present and a Non-Present Body—Experiencing the Body by Female Sex Workers in Commercial Sexual Relations

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Abstract Making women's bodies accessible to men in the commercial context is related to specific ways of experiencing it. The purpose of the article is to discuss the category of a non-present, selectively present, and present body, which refers to ways in which female sex workers experience their bodies during commercial sex acts. There will also be conditions listed that correspond to the occurrence of each of these categories. The article is based on qualitative data (mainly unstructured interviews), which were analyzed in accordance with the procedures of grounded theory methodology.

Keywords Female Sex Workers; Commercial Sex; Body; Qualitative Research

Prostitution is a phenomenon that cannot be completely analyzed in scientific terms when the body, and how sex workers experience and define it, is omitted. At the same time, the body is, in this context, a difficult subject for research. On the one hand, the researcher faces the same problems that are encountered by researchers into corporeality who carry out their projects among representatives of different social groups and categories (e.g., the disabled, athletes, dancers). The basic difficulty is the fact that experiences related to the body are hard to verbalize. They are beyond linguistic manners of grasping them, as the body is experienced routinely, or in a manner deprived of any reflections (Jakubowska 2009; 2012; Byczkowska 2012; Niedbalski 2015). Therefore, it is hard to describe what happens with the body, as in many situations one does not even realize it (Jakubowska 2012). On the other hand, additional notions emerge in the context of prostitution, hindering the process of researching the body and corporeality. One of them is the taboo that covers the details about any given sexual act.

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We usually do not speak with strangers about experiences of the body in such an intimate moment. In the case of prostitution, which is socially condemned, or at least assessed negatively, the women's experiences additionally serve as a source of shame. Regardless of whether they feelings are related to pleasure or suffering, they confirm the stereotypical image of a sex worker as a whore or a victim. The anxiety from the lack of understanding and stigmatization means that female sex workers are not eager to talk about their body experiences. This phenomenon is even stronger when, in carrying out the sex work, they are accompanied by strong negative emotions (e.g., disgust towards their body). In such situations, the women avoid reflexive consideration of their body, often trying not to think about what is happening with it, so they do not increase their suffering. Invalidation of this topic may be treated as an identity defense mechanism. As a result, female sex workers find it difficult to develop broad statements on experiencing their body. I observed it during my interviews, but this notion has also been raised by numerous other researchers. Here, we can recall a reflection by Maddy Coy (2009), who, while describing her research related to prostitution and (dis)embodiment, noted that,

> in the narratives and life stories, inclusion of the women's corporeal reality was characterized by the paradoxical "absent presence" of their bodies. Like a shadow in the dialogue, the body was rarely the subject of explicit reference. Yet bodily practices were referred to frequently, via discussion of the cycles of drug dependency and injuries associated with drug use, injuries from violence and abuse as children and as adults, pregnancy, abortion and childbirth, and dissociative mechanisms women used to manage the commercial sex encounter. [p. 64]

Despite those difficulties, there are many spheres that are related to the notion of the sex workers' bodies, and which are worth being analyzed in more depth. In order to better understand the actions undertaken by women engaged in sex work, we need to take a closer look at processes such as: the necessity to become accustomed to nudity (one's own and other people's) and to permit strangers to encroach upon your personal space (Hall 2009), the necessity to get used to wearing specific clothes (skimpy, vulgar, associated with porn); the need to develop adequate manners of presenting oneself, taking care of the body, preparing it properly for work (maintaining a specific weight, selecting clothes, makeup, etc.), et cetera. However, quite seldom do these matters undergo scientific reflection. The literature of the subject usually places emphasis on health, hazards caused by sexually transmitted infections, the practice and the consequences of using psycho-active drugs, and the stress, violence, and self-mutilation which are experienced (cf. Choudhury 2010).

It may also be noticed that the literature of the subject mostly describes the bodies of women providing sex services through the prism of suffering that it brings. Attention is drawn to the fact that prostitution is a form of violence towards women, especially in the perspective of radical feminism, and it is identified or connected with experiencing rapes and various types of body damage (Farley and Kelly 2000). Studies carried out among street sex workers and women that were victims of human trafficking suggest that they had difficult and painful experiences related to

their own corporeality. Numerous researchers notice that a significant proportion of sex workers feel estranged from their bodies. This phenomenon was termed "estrangement of bodily experiences" by Maria Epele (2001:165; Coy 2009:68). In order to be capable of remaining in prostitution, sex workers develop different manners of dealing with this destructive situation (e.g., they use illegal street drugs or cause self-harm; Coy 2009:69-70). One of the most radical ones is dissociation from the body. This means leaving it emotionally when it is impossible to leave physically. The phenomenon is a well-documented reaction to trauma, particularly sexual abuse, with violations of both the body and the self, and it is understood as a psychological defense strategy (Scott 2001 as cited in Coy 2009:68; also Farley and Kelly 2000). The notion of dissociation, the separation of the self from the body and the need to distance the thinking, feeling self from the physical body is what researchers often call a coping mechanism during commercial sex exchanges (Coy 2009:68). It is also an index of the psychological damage sustained by prostitutes through prostitution (Hoigard and Finstad 1992:63-74, 106-16).

As suggested by Oerton and Phoenix (2001:398), the narrations of women engaged in prostitution, their strategy of "switching off," also indicate a body/self demarcation in which the women perceived their "prostitute-selves" as nothing more than a body and as separate from their "real/authentic selves." Hence, commercial sex acts become mostly "not-sex," because they are perfunctory physical outlets for men, and secondly, they are "utterly embodied as no selves [which] are involved, only bodies" (Oerton and Phoenix 2001:399).

Researchers into prostitution draw attention to the fact that in the case of the women that they researched, distancing strategies had already been "integrated into their lived embodiment at the time that they entered prostitution" (Coy 2009:68). This results from the traumatic experiences that they had during childhood and youth (also Farley and Kelly 2000). This refers mostly to early sexualization, rape, and other forms of physical and sexual assault, which transform the meanings attached to the women's bodies and their sense of ownership of the body. As observed by researchers, "sexual abuse signifies to women that bodies can be appropriated by others for their sexual gratification, reinforcing both a sense of personal powerlessness, and (dis)embodiment, and wider male entitlement of sexual access to women" (Coy 2009:66-67).

Through switching off from the body, the women that had dealt with sexual abuse in childhood employ the same strategy during commercial sex encounters. Therefore, the processes of distancing from the body had become an automatic response (Coy 2009:68-69).

Julia O'Connell Davidson (1998) draws attention to the fact that analyses should be complemented with an additional dimension of the client's power of command over the body of the prostitute. This power "is not merely physical but symbolic: that is, the body is bought for the purposes of specific functions. In the commercial sex transaction, ownership transfers from the woman to the buyer who assumes belonging of the body within the parameters of certain (contractual) boundaries" (Coy 2009:66). A similar notion is also raised by Phoenix (1999),

who suggests that "women who sell sex construct perceptions of the sale of their bodies as commodified bodies that are tiered in layers: full ownership and control, a feeling of ownership but no control, and finally, no ownership or control" (Coy 2009:66).

However, it must be emphasized that the scope of the manners in which the women experience the body does not include only clearly negative patterns. As suggested by the results of studies, some sex workers experience their bodies in a completely different manner than that described above. For instance, within Coy's (2009:71) research project, where the researcher focused on disembodiment experiences, two researched prostitutes declared that they perceive selling sex as enhancing their confidence. According to the author, they redefined their situation by perceiving their body not just as a source of negative experiences but also as enterprising choices. This discourse of empowerment more often occurs within frameworks of prostitution as employment. Then, it is evidenced that women can use constructs of sexualization and femininity for financial gain (Coy 2009:72).

Female researchers that define sex work as a form of work analyze the body experiences of female sex workers from a slightly different perspective. They, first of all, emphasize that women in prostitution, such as professionals who work with bodies and feelings in other occupations, develop strategies to protect themselves (McLeod 1982:40) and manage their own emotions (Sanders 2002:562). An analysis of this process often adopts the concept of "emotion work," proposed by Hochschild (1983), complementing it with dimensions and strategies that are typical of sex work. Such research was carried out by, for example, Sanders (2005). She analyzed the emotion work by sex workers, which included "managing their own boundaries, feelings and identities." According to her,

> under certain material conditions, some sex workers are able to exploit the demands of sexualization by engaging in emotional and sexual labor for male clients and emotion work on themselves. These processes produce emotional management strategies that protect individual women from the potential stresses of selling sex while at the same time increase their marketability and financial gain. [Sanders 2005:322]

The literature of the subject presents descriptions of numerous "pragmatic, symbolic and psychological defense mechanisms to manage the tensions of selling sex" developed by sex workers (Boynton 2002:8; Day 1994; Warr and Pyett 1999; Phoenix 2000). An important strategy is to "separate, change and revise one set of feelings that are appropriate during sex work while reserving another set of emotions or feelings for private interactions." This may be achieved by "emotion management strategies such as: body exclusion zones, the condom as psychological barrier, the preference for providing domination services and the meanings attached to sex as work" (Sanders 2005:325-326), as well as by limiting the contact with the client as far as possible (e.g., not kissing, closing eyes during sex encounter) (O'Neill 1996). O'Neill also describes a technique of "making out" that is realized thanks to emotion work. It is related to separating oneself from one's own body and minimizing one's own world of experiences, at the same time "fabricating" the attention and affection

for the client so that the interaction is satisfactory for him. Carrying out this technique is related to redefining one's own identity as a person that somehow helps the clients, providing them with support. Hence, it is easier for women to come to terms with the provision of sex work.

Sanders also emphasizes that emotion work may be applied to modify feelings that the female workers recognized as too positive. "For example, sex workers who are aroused and attracted to a client may try to turn this unwanted or, in their view, inappropriate emotion into something more acceptable" (Sanders 2005:325).

It is worth emphasizing that, in the case of the two aforementioned approaches (applicable to both the supporters and opponents of perceiving sex services provision as sex work), the phenomenon of experienced or faked sexual pleasure during commercial encounters with clients is described in different manners. When it comes to radical feminism, the experience of an orgasm by women in the context of prostitution is perceived as impossible. However, the literature of the subject offers an analysis demonstrating that faking orgasms during a sex act with a client is one of the dissociation practices. Coy believes, based on her own research, that apart from "archetypal modes of dissociation (the separation of self from body)," there are also other types which are based on acting differently to how the self was feeling. She described the case of Becky, who blocked out the reality of the encounter through "a performance where she disembodied herself by presenting herself as actively deriving pleasure from the sexual interaction with each buyer. In this context, Becky was still acting to minimize her own embodied subjectivity, through disengaging from her body and locating her sense of self as alienated from the body" (Coy 2009:69).

In turn, the more liberal approaches interpret faking sexual pleasure during meetings with clients as an element of emotion work performed by sex workers. As suggested by Sanders (2005:328), "with some exceptions, most women did not receive sexual pleasure from their clients, but instead faked their arousal and physical stimulation. Shaping their inner emotions through emotion work in this way is the basis of how sex workers manage difficult and risky emotions." It is also worth stressing that, according to numerous authors, "faking orgasms and sexual excitement is a female skill that is learnt through sharing stories, imitation and dramatic performance." Many sex workers learnt it from porn movies (Sanders 2005:330).

An interesting analysis of experiencing the body within the process of professional identity development has been presented by Wojciechowska. She suggests that novices employ a series of actions intended to distance themselves from their bodies. However, along with acquired experience, numerous women change their approach to the body, starting to treat it as an interactional partner—an actor with whom they cooperate, and who they supervise in a work provision situation (Wojciechowska 2012:147).

The research presented above proves how complex processes entangle the bodies of women who provide sex services, and shows the vast number of patterns of ways they experience their own bodies.

From the group of numerous notions that can be further analyzed, the article will focus on the matter reaching the essence of prostitution, that is, female sex workers experiencing their bodies during sexual acts with clients. This is a matter that is relatively seldom raised in the research, and it usually is treated as an element of the emotion work carried out by the women. However, I believe that this notion deserves greater attention. The key element to define prostitution is a sex act with a man with whom the women are not emotionally related, and the sex worker's only motive is the willingness to earn money, while the client desires to fulfill his sexual need. The sex act is perceived as a basic action undertaken by sex workers, even if the practice suggests that it does not always take place during the encounter with the client. The client may expect other services (conversation, drinking alcohol, or using drugs). However, the client strives for a certain form of contact with the body of the woman who is providing the sex services. These might be fondling, touching, or even observing her naked body. Hence, it is highly significant how the women in such moments feel their bodies, and what actions and strategies they implement to facilitate the mental and physical aspects of those interactions. This notion is related to the wider processes of defining one's engagement in prostitution, marking the boundaries when dealing with clients, thus developing one's role as a sex worker and transforming one's identity, as well as emotion work, which must be carried out in order to deal with a multiplicity of often contradictory feelings and experiences. This multiplicity of notions exceeds the framework of a single article. Therefore, the subject of this text is only a fragment of wider analyses, that is, categories related to sex workers' experiences of their own bodies (disengagement from their bodies and things that interfere with this process; as a result, a non-present, selectively present, and present body emerges).

Methods and Techniques

The article is based on 42 unstructured interviews carried out with indoor sex workers. They were selected from a wider group of interviews gathered within the scope of two projects (regarding the situation of women in escort agencies and the violence that they experience). The criterion for their selection was raised during an interview on matters related to body experience during commercial sex acts.

One of the intentions of the project was to give a voice to sex workers, who are usually deprived of the possibility to speak their mind and reveal their experiences outside the group of persons involved in commercial sex services. Therefore, the interviews were of an open character, to encourage the interviewees to develop narrations regarding notions that are important for them. The questions in the interviews were of a general nature, so they fit various episodes that the sex workers had experienced. As other threads appeared in the interviewees' statements, they were expanded and developed by specific questions.

The interviewees were selected from the group of workers of escort agencies where I carried out my observations, and with snowball sampling. The women were aged 18-60, and had worked in various forms of prostitutions for several weeks to a dozen

or so years. Many of them worked in several or a dozen or so such escort agencies in various cities in Poland and around Europe. Therefore, the group included women with diverse experiences.

The interviews were saved on a voice recorder (if the interviewee agreed), or noted down during the meeting and then rewritten. Transcripts of the interviews were carried out according to B. Poland's recommendations (Rapley 2007).

While analyzing the notion of the sex worker's body, I will also use the data collected during overt observations that I performed in four escort agencies in Lodz. I was a person unrelated to the world of the sex business when I started the research. Therefore, I was an outsider to the potential interviewees, both in the descriptive and evaluative meaning of this word. As a result, the attempts I made to obtain consent to carry out research in the agencies during that time failed. A breakthrough for my research was when I met a person that was trusted by the managers of the agency, in contrast to me. The person had become a guide and guardian in that world. Not until the visit to the premises together with that person and with their help in negotiating the conditions of access did I succeed in obtaining the consent for the research.[1] Based on my own experience, I can say that an outsider, who does not have any connections with the world of escort agencies, would find it very difficult to carry out the ethnographic research if they do not have any support from insiders. It might even be impossible, as it was in my case.

[1] I took analogical actions at other premises.

The scope of observations covered actions undertaken by workers of agencies in restricted areas of the agency (social facilities), and in the lounge, where interactions with clients took place. All workers of the facilities were informed about the observations, only the clients were unaware that research was being conducted. This arrangement resulted from decisions made by the managers of the facilities, who did not want to inform the clients so as not to disturb their feeling of anonymity and not to discourage them from visiting the facility. The observations provided a highly valuable source of data, even if they did not cover interactions between the female worker and the client in the room. They acquainted me (thanks to the observation of their facial expressions, the movements of the women's bodies and their gestures during interactions with the clients and co-workers) with spontaneous ways in which sex workers speak about their body experiences and respond to the corporeality of others, which was not evident during the interviews. The observations provided data for comparisons and allowed me to define the generated categories.

As I have already mentioned, embodiment is not a fully communicable phenomenon. Hence, it is hard to carry out research only with techniques based on narration (Byczkowska 2009:104). While collecting data through the interviews and observations, I noticed various limitations of those techniques. First of all, the interviewees had many difficulties expressing the feelings of their body verbally. They often mentioned their sex work experiences during the interviews in such a manner that their body remained at the margins of their story. Even in detailed accounts from meetings with clients it

occurred only to a minimum extent (cf. Jakubowska 2012:15). And if the interviewees raised that topic, they often stopped talking, took a pause, and then used gestures and facial expressions, suggesting that it was difficult for them to find adequate words to reflect their experiences. Thus, it might be the case that regarding the selected techniques I failed to recognize what is difficult to verbalize. In the case of some women, sharing their reflections was hindered by negative emotions related to experiencing their body in the context of sex work. I think mostly about the shame arising from the experienced social stigma. For some researched women, the notions related to a sex worker's body are especially prone to stereotypical and simplifying interpretations. Therefore, they should be left in a private zone, and not raised during the interview. Some of the women also had some difficulties verbalizing unfortunate body experiences (e.g., related to violence). An element that hindered the conversation about the feelings related to the body was also presented by the character of the research based on interviews and observations, where the respondents put their thoughts into words spontaneously, with no time to think them through deeply. Although this feature is usually seen as an advantage, techniques that require greater involvement of thoughts might bring deeper data. It would be especially interesting to employ visual methods or those based on art. Numerous authors suggest that they are away to overcome methodological difficulties related to research into the body experience (after Byczkowska 2009; Jakubowska 2012). However, the researched women believed that they were too time- and work-consuming. Instead, they preferred to talk when they were waiting for another client. What is more, methods based on the respondents using video recordings or photos were rejected in advance. That resulted from sensitization to the notions of confidentiality and protecting the image of them, their co-workers, and their clients. Regarding those limitations, all that remained for me were interviews and observations; I attempted to overcome the difficulties that are related to research into the body/corporeality through the triangulation of data collection techniques (cf. Byczkowska 2009; Jakubowska 2012).

The gathered data were analyzed via the procedures of grounded theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). Taking into account the undisguised character of the researched phenomenon and the numerous difficulties with getting access to the subjects (resulting from lack of trust from the potential interviewees), implementing those procedures (first of all of theoretical sampling, but also constant comparison) was difficult and time-consuming. What is more, it was not always possible (especially in terms of those facilities which were managed in an oppressive manner, and sex workers who had extremely negative experiences from prostitution). However, these procedures posed a signpost for my research actions, and I took every effort to complement them.

The transcripts and notes from the interviews and observations underwent open coding. The selected categories were encoded in a selective manner, also via the coding paradigm.

The article presents selected analytical categories related to experiences of the body by the escort agencies' workers, in the context of commercial sex

encounters with clients. It is a non-present, not-feeling body, generated as a result of the process of disengaging from one's own body; a selectively present body, which results from failures within the process of disengaging from the body; and the present body, which feels, and does not undergo the disengagement process, or is subjected to the opposite process, that is, integration with the previously disengaged body. These categories may form phases of the process (*present body—non-present body* or the opposite), but they can also describe a certain longer and stable predisposition of a given woman to feel the body during commercial relationships in a specific manner.

Experiencing the Body in Commercial Sexual Relationships

The Non-Present, Not-Feeling Body

The category of a non-present body is of a paradoxical character. On the one hand, the body of a female sex worker is a basic condition of the meeting with a client. It must be emphasized that the body (its attributes, size, appearance, sex appeal) was usually the reason why the client was willing to meet a particular woman, selecting her from other workers of the facility. Touching a woman's body and observing its reaction provides a very strong sexual stimulus for men, and it seems to be a necessary condition for a satisfying interaction, also in the commercial context (Collins 2011:262-263). Therefore, the body is present and engaged in the course of the interaction by definition. The female sex worker should manage her body's impressions and reactions. It is necessary to secure and to carry out the meeting in an effective manner (i.e., with as little effort and high earning potential as possible).

At the same time, many sex workers that participated in my research projects found the disengagement process a basic procedure related to experiencing their bodies. This means that during the encounter their bodies are present physically, but from the sex worker's perspective, she loses a connection to that body for the time of the sex interaction. Hence, despite the fact that the client may do various things with the woman's body, the female worker tries not to feel it. She becomes a creature deprived of her body, which comes back when the sex act is completed.

The source of this phenomenon should be sought in the specificity of sex work, which is based on physical and sexual contact with a stranger with whom the woman has no deeper relationship nor feels sexual drive about. The interviewees spoke, on the one hand, about the experienced constraint[2] of "going to the room," even if they clearly felt reluctance—sometimes disgust, indifference at best—towards a given man. This constraint resulted from their perspective that if they wanted to make money (and the financial motif was the basic reason for taking up the job in the escort agency for almost all of them), they cannot "go to the room" only with those clients that they find attractive or pleasant.[3]

[2] It was usually an internal constraint, as during the interviews none of the women was forced to provide sex services, and it was not a frequent experience in the past, in other facilities.

[3] A more detailed explanation of the process where female sex workers selected men who they agreed to have a meeting with is included in the book (Ślęzak 2016).

Negative experiences by the women were also enhanced by the unpleasant, vulgar, or aggressive behavior of certain clients. The workers distanced themselves from their bodies in such situations, so it did not act as a source of suffering for them.

While analyzing the category of a non-present body, there are several dimensions that can be differentiated.

First of all, the level of disengagement from the body in the case of various female workers was different. Some of the interviewees reported their experiences as indifference, feeling what happens with the body, but freezing those emotions, so they become indifferent, not causing any suffering. In the case of other women, this experience adopted a form of dissociation—a feeling that it is not their body that is taking part in the sexual act, that is the body of somebody else, and the whole situation does not refer to them. The degree to which women disengage from their bodies seems to be a consequence of conditions related to the social context of their involvement in prostitution and psychological processes. An explanation of the various levels of disengagement from the body requires further and interdisciplinary research.

Secondly, the manner of awareness and volitionality of that process was shaped differently. Some interviewees spoke about their conscious actions in order not to feel their bodies.[4] Other women stated that the process takes place outside their awareness and control, "it just happens," as it was an automatic response to conditions of the sexual interaction with the client. The adoption of purposeful and planned actions that are intended to allow them control of self-body experiences was interpreted in moral categories by some interviewees. According to their interpretation, the body acted (or did not act) properly, responding to the situation of commercial sex in the way it should, that is, it ceased feeling, it just turned off. A different bodily response could be a clue that "there is something wrong" with the woman, that it might not be an unpleasant experience for her, as it should (I will come back to this notion later in the text).

Thirdly, some of the interviewees described this disengagement from the body as a permanent disposition, a manner in which they always felt their bodies in the commercial context. Other female workers highlighted that it was a strategy that they had developed along with getting experience in sex work. Distancing oneself from one's own body also is an acceptable manner to deal with difficulties of interactions with clients, which is communicated within the group of workers. It is suggested as one of the mechanisms that facilitate the provision of sex work. In this meaning, it can be suspended if the female worker stops needing it anymore, for example, she will adopt other manners that might facilitate her sex work.

A key matter which allows these women to separate themselves from their body is not feeling sensual experiences (both the pleasant and unpleasant ones). Thus, a non-present body is a not-feeling body. The

[4] In this context, it is worth recalling the case of one of the interviewees in the research project implemented by Sanders (2002). The woman said that she had made a conscious effort not to feel pleasure from sex at work: "If I let my mind go, then I would enjoy it, but I can't. I have to be in total control and I have to blank it" (Sanders 2002:562). It means that separation of one's own body may not only be related to the willingness to avoid suffering, but also to avoid pleasure.

female workers disengaged from their own body with a set of actions of various levels of intensity, aimed at leaving behind thoughts and awareness of the sex act.

One action that was popular among the researched group was *the selection of acceptable sexual positions and actions*. Two sub-types of that action can be differentiated: *removal of the client from the worker's field of perception* and *minimization of bodily contact*. In the former, they preferred and encouraged the clients to choose those sex positions during which the women do not need to look at the partner, especially at his face.

> It's not pleasant, not at all...I'll do something with that man, always the best from behind, because I don't see him, I look at the radiator. [w, 30 years old, 9 years of work in the agency]

It is worth highlighting that in such a situation the client also does not see the worker's face, so she does not need to become engaged in the performance (Goffman 2000) to the same extent as she would need to if she saw his face. With her back to him, she does not need to make the proper facial expressions suggesting emotions that the client expects (e.g., excitation). She may present her real feelings, for example, clenching her teeth or closing her eyes. In the case of numerous female workers, it was crucial for the course of the interaction with the client not to look into his eyes, or to close her eyes during the sexual intercourse. In our culture, eyes are a special part of the body, and there are numerous cultural beliefs that are interconnected (e.g., the eyes reflect the soul). Research shows that the eyes are a medium for communicating emotions. Observing the other person's eyes allows one to find out whether that person is feeling positive or negative emotions, along with their intensity (Leathers 2007:79). This also refers to sex contact, as pupils widen as the sexual excitation grows (Leathers 2007:75). Maintaining eye contact is also a signal that they are engaging in the interaction (Goffman 2006; Leathers 2007:74). When they close their eyes, the workers suggest, consciously or not, that they do not want to carry on with that interaction. They also symbolically prohibit the client from accessing them and the information about their emotions. Closing one's eyes is a direct response in a situation of stress and pain. Therefore, it also proves that disengagement from the body is based on strongly negative feelings and emotions:

> A guy sees your body, but there is one thing: you do everything with your eyes closed, IT'S NOT THAT[5] you agree to it with the girls, it just happens, it doesn't matter what the guy does to you, whether he fondles or touches you, your eyes are closed all the time, even if he asks you to open them, you are unable to do it, and you just tell him that you can't. Because you cannot look at a strange man that you DON'T LOVE, DON'T KNOW, DON'T LIKE, you don't feel anything towards the guy that is fondling you. You are unable to look at this face. JUST NO! This is a mechanism as you close your eyes. As simple as that. So, during this whole act, you don't see it, but you know mentally that he is touching your body. [w, 28 years old, 6 years of work in the agency]

[5] Capital letters have been used to highlight those words and statements that were expressed by the respondents with emphasis.

> I'm with a lot of men here, I do what I do because of my strength, just mechanically...you close your eyes and you want it to end as soon as possible. [w, 40 years old, 3 years of work in the agency]

In the second sub-type, *minimization of bodily contact with the client*, this is about selecting a position where bodies touch as little as possible, and preferably when it is more likely that the intercourse will come to an end. The women also avoid actions that they define as intimate, which they reserve for their partner in their personal lives (e.g., kissing, sexual intercourse without a condom).

> I don't kiss, they already know that it's not an option. It's best when I don't even need to undress. I just, you know, pull my panties down for a moment and that's it. No touching or lying on top of one another, or bathing together. Not at all. Such stuff I can do with my husband at home. [w, 30 years old, 1.5 years of work in the agency]

It is worth emphasizing that analogical strategies are described by other researchers. The one that is most often encountered in the literature of the subject is limiting the type of sex acts that are sold, so they involve the least amount of energy, often reducing contact to minimum. In many situations, sex workers take off as little clothing as possible, making only the bare minimum of their body parts available (Sanders 2002:562). The female sex workers also try to control the sexual position and many sex acts are not offered as they are seen as too time-consuming, too painful, disgusting, or are simply reserved for their own private pleasure (O'Connell Davidson 1998). However, a dominating action is to use condom in all commercial sex actions. As highlighted by Sanders (2002:563), "respondents found comfort in the fact that the condom prevented the flesh of the client touching their own body, particularly internally. This division between their own flesh and that of the client meant that emotional barriers were strengthened and sustained."

Another action that is intended to lead to disengagement from one's own body is to *provoke thoughts that take the "here and now" away*. These are: *comforting thoughts* (counting the money that the woman earns on a given client, during a given day, in a given week, et cetera, and imagining the things she can buy with it); *thoughts focusing attention on another action* (counting the elements of a radiator or the flowers on the bedspread, looking at a movie on TV, listening to a song on the radio); *counting time to the end of the meeting*—this actually combines two previous categories, however, regarding the specificity of interactions in the room, limited by the time that the client paid for, the interviewees differentiate this action in their narrations:

> It's certainly not pleasant, is it? Sex with your partner, or sex with a man who has just arrived. You think about something else, at least your try, and you look at the time, at your watch, you wait until it ends, because there are hours and half-hours, right? And the greatest joy comes when it ends. Everyone will tell you that...There's no difference, everyone sees it the same way, even if it's God knows who, a perfect model. [w, 33 years old, 2 years in the agency]

> While having sex, we "treat ourselves," we see THE MONEY. [w, 32 years old, 2 years of work in the agency]

> I count the flowers on the bed, the number of petals, or the number of elements in the radiator, or I count how much money I earned, and I turned him on so he can finish quicker and get out. [w, 30 years old, 9 years in the agency]

Some female workers carried out other actions, trying to *think about nothing*. They tried to turn off their thinking completely during the sexual intercourse, falling into a kind of apathy. They focused only on carrying out subsequent actions that the client paid for. While describing this action, the interviewees often used the metaphor of "work at a production line," to highlight the mechanical and automated character of the intercourse, deprived of any emotional components:

> I have no pleasure. None at all. It's like a production line...It's like working at a production line. You open your legs. "Let it start," you think, you look at the ceiling, and goodbye. Production line. No pleasure at all, but a really handsome guy can come here, so what? I don't love him, he may be handsome, but he won't do me any good and I don't like him as much as my husband. It's a guy that's just come in. And that's it. He pays me and goodbye, I wait for the next client. I have no pleasure at all. [w, 30 years old, 9 years of work in the agency]

Another action employed quite often by the researched women was *taking psycho-active substances*. It was usually alcohol, less frequently drugs, designer drugs or psychotropic medicines (Ślęzak 2012). This was the way in which women tried to weaken their emotional reactions, to not be aware and to not remember what happened with the body during the commercial sex, or simply to feel that they are freeing themselves from their body:

> You know, when I start my shift, I drink a little. And it's different. I feel differently and I can go to the room with a man. Because otherwise I couldn't stand when he touched me or something. And now I don't care anymore, it feels different when you're a little drunk. [w, 28 years old, 10 years of work in the agency]

The actions described above were applied in combination, interchangeably, or female workers found such solutions that were especially functional for them.

It must be emphasized that this manner of experiencing one's own body also impacts the clients' experiences and their satisfaction with the meeting. They usually expect the female sex workers to engage in sexual intercourse, at least on the level enabling them to reach and maintain sexual excitation.[6] A partner that lies there like a corpse is not what most of them expect from such a visit. In turn, such behavior is a frequent consequence of disengaging from the body. For some of the researched women (especially the novice ones), it was impossible to act differently. However, over the course of time, a significant number of the interviewees learnt strategies which allow them to fulfill the client's expectations while disengaging from their own body. A dominant strategy was to treat the meeting with the client as a performance, where the female worker plays the role of an involved lover. Thus, these dramatic metaphors dominate in the interviews: the sex worker as an actor, the

[6] Some expected much more involvement from the workers (cf. "The Girlfriend Experience" [Weitzer 2005:224]).

interaction as a performance, a game, pretending. The main point of the performance was to fake orgasms (with facial expressions, body movements, and voice) and feigning symptoms of deriving satisfaction from the meeting, at the same time undertaking actions that disengage the workers from their bodies:

> For me, sex is a neutral experience. I try to show that I already had like 4 orgasms if the client, for example, cannot come. I scream, maybe not scream, but moan, I simply help to satisfy him even QUICKER. But, I don't care...I HAVEN'T HAD any orgasm with the client over these several years. But, I pretend I HAD, I pretend like: "Yes, of course, honey." I moan on request, but it's just pretending. Like an actor. [w, 38 years old, 5 years of work in the agency]

> It's usually like, you know, if a client has money and he comes here, we try not to be discouraging, for example, if he insists on me having an orgasm too, then it's obvious I need to fake it so that he comes back. [w, 39 years old, 3 years in the agency]

> There are girls that have orgasms here. I, for example, don't have orgasms. You know, everything comes from the pituitary gland. I don't dwell on it, you know, I don't need it. I try to make it pleasant for the guy, so he comes back, so I fake it, et cetera. If you spoke to the others, you'd hear that I can be heard often here, like "moan, moan," he says, "please help me at least," so I moan and it, you know. [w, 38 years old, 10 years of work in the agency]

It's worth emphasizing that some paraphernalia, for example, lubricants, can be helpful in faking authentic involvement.

> It [sex] doesn't bring any pleasure, you know, it looks different with a stranger and with your own man, so we need to use lubricants, everything is dry, the woman is not excited because the man doesn't excite her, so she needs to use different enhancers. Otherwise there's dreadful pain, the women's skin is irritated, which is why these lubricants are applied. [w, 40 years old, 3 years in the agency]

If the act is credible enough for the client, it fulfills his expectations, but it also enables the female workers to realize the strategy of disengaging from the body.

This manner of presenting one's corporeal experiences (i.e., disengagement from one's body and faking sexual pleasure) was a dominant feature within the collected material. It is worth emphasizing that the literature of the subject mostly discusses such experiences. Although these actions were undertaken by the majority of the researched women, I separated several conditions that hindered or made it impossible to carry out the process of disengagement from one's body. They will be discussed below.

Failure of the Process of Disengaging from One's Own Body: The Selectively Present Body

In the case of the narrations of the researched sex workers, apart from experiences, which I called disengagement from one's own body, there is also a possibility to reconstruct other feelings related to the failure of this process. They take place although a female worker did not usually feel her body during the interaction (or at least she tried not to feel it). In particular interactions (incidentally, in

single cases, or regularly), the body started to feel, thus becoming present again. I will present this process through two categories.

The first one is *selectively present body, feeling negative emotions*. This category refers to situations when, despite attempts to disengage from one's body, the worker felt all the interconnected unpleasant experiences within a given interaction. It mostly referred to women who consciously tried to carry out actions allowing them to separate from their bodies, however, regarding specific conditions, they were incapable of doing so effectively. The interviewees looked for reasons in actions undertaken by clients which attacked their corporeality so strongly that they hindered or made it impossible to disengage from their body. It referred to all clients using physical and sexual violence. Also, exhaustion after a previous, difficult interaction with the client influences the effectiveness of body disengagement during a subsequent meeting. The abundance of intensive and negative experiences meant that the women became somehow vulnerable to their bodies, not being able to control and mute their emotions.

The second category is *the body selectively present, feeling positive emotions*. It refers to a situation when, despite efforts to disengage from one's body and to not feel what happens to it during a meeting with a client, the worker not only had experiences but these experiences were of a positive nature. Taking into account the conditions of sex work, many interviewees did not imagine sexual pleasure during interactions with a client. Such a situation was perceived as degeneration, an indicator that there is something wrong with the women feeling her body in such a way, that she is a nymphomaniac, not a decent girl.[7] Therefore, one of the key actions was to justify oneself and to explain why such experiences "came" to a given woman. The interviewees often stressed that they were of an incidental character, exceptional among the experiences in sex work, which can usually be described in the category of a non-present body:

> It's hard to talk about these experiences, there are actually no experiences in my case. I'd be lying if I said that it has never been pleasurable, you know, so many men, it can happen, it can happen. It can happen that it's pleasant, but it's not very often. You usually think about doing and finishing it, so it's the end. [w, 41 years old, 2 years of work in the agency]

While explaining the incidental experience of sexual pleasure, the researched women mostly emphasized the radically different features of a given client that interfered with the process of disengaging from the body. The interviewees stated that such a client was different than the others—nice, kind, very handsome, "their type":

> Sometimes girls come back from a meeting and they are satisfied, because he was nice, charming, kind, it even happens that she felt good. [w, 35 years old, 2 years of work in the agency]

[7] It must be stressed that despite the social perception of prostitution as a "fall" and the indicator of moral degeneration, according to the researched women, you could remain a "decent girl" or not. One of the indicators of such a state was the manner of perceiving one's own body and its experiences during commercial sexual intercourse.

A special sub-type of such a situation was provided by interactions with special clients that let them suspend the definition of the situation as commercial sex. These were usually meetings with regular clients whom the women treated as a partner, or at least a good friend. It was easier to stop controlling the emotions during such meetings, and to start to feel what the body experiences:

> But, you know, I can say that it's not always bad, it's sometimes fun, sometimes nice, if you know the client, spend some time with him, even cuddle. [w, 38 years old, 10 years in the agency]

An interesting manner of explaining the sexual pleasure is *to blame the body and its "nature."* According to the women, it is biologically shaped in such a way that it feels pleasure in specific conditions. This is one of the mechanisms that allows for the survival of the species, determined by the interviewees as "chemistry," "attraction," and "matching" sexual partners. Hence, the biological nature of the body in certain situations leaves no space for the conscious introduction of a strategy for its desensitization. In such explanations, the body is presented as autonomous to a certain degree, not subjected to mechanisms of control and steering by the brain:

> It happens that the girl feels something towards the client, if he's handsome, and even in bed he's like, you know, the guy is compatible with the girl, and they feel nice. And, you know, she doesn't need to think like that during sex, it just goes on, with this feeling, and it helps in such a situation. [w, 28 years old, 10 years of work in the agency]

> It's like when I was alone, I had no man around me, because I didn't always have someone, and if I got a client that I liked in terms of hygiene, I don't know, appearance, touch, I'm not a piece of wood. Yeah, this is what I'd tell you. But, when I'm bound to someone somehow...you simply do it, you're like a corpse. But, I never say never, so there might be a man, there might be this moment. Despite the fact that I do it with a condom, you might not touch each other, it may be from behind, I can lay on him, you know what I mean...it will be purely physical, nothing more, because if you don't have an orgasm for, let's say, a month or two… you know what, I don't believe it that a woman didn't have an orgasm, because it's not real for me. If there are women that say they are with a man for 2 years, and they have nothing out of it, it seems a little sick for me mentally, but that's my opinion. [Pause] Because, that's the way we're made, constructed, to get some pleasure out of sex, aren't we? I don't say it must be here, God forbid, no, if you have this sex, you have those clients, one, another one, the third one, the fourth, the fifth, the tenth, the sixtieth, at some point you simply must finally meet a man that you'll find pleasure with. [w, 43 years old, 10 years of work in the agency]

In this understanding, the "normal" bodily (and psychological) reactions of a woman are selective, limited to particular "adequate" conditions, the feeling of sexual pleasure, even in the context of commercial sex.

It is characteristic that women who experienced their bodies in such a manner presented sex as an issue of bodies, chemistry, or compatibility. Although they usually need to struggle with a client, trying to mute their bodily sensations, sometimes there is

"something" between them, a sexual attraction appears, and there is no need to pretend anymore. The meeting takes place in an almost natural manner—if we assume that sex with a stranger is natural.

The Present Body

The situation that was referred to by the interviewees least often was feeling their bodies during work in the agency exactly as it happens in other contexts. Hence, this body is a present, feeling body, not subjected to (or not prone to) the process of disengagement. Two sub-types of that category can be differentiated.

First of all, *the present body that feels at first positive experiences*. This was the situation that was described by the interviewees least frequently. This may prove its relatively seldom occurrence and difficulties with openly expressing such experiences. As I have already mentioned, experiencing sexual pleasure in commercial relationships is related to the specific labeling of a woman who reported her sensations to her co-workers in such a manner.

In contrast to the interviewees who reported the experiences described in the category of the *selectively present body*, in this case, the respondents did not focus on finding justifications for the incidental experiencing of a body. They rather described their experiences as *a conscious strategy that facilitates sex work*. At least three meanings through which it can facilitate the work can be specified.

First of all, focusing on oneself and one's sensations, and striving to make them as pleasurable as possible is a certain "bonus" that the woman receives during sex work. Apart from financial remuneration, the woman can also derive pleasure, which is an additional perk:

> You can make money here and have pleasure at the same time [laughter], that's my opinion, because, as I said, I also have pleasure from it. [w, 35 years old, 3 years of work in the agency]

Secondly, the orgasm or positive sensations are intended to neutralize the negative emotions related to that job; thus, it is a defense mechanism which allows a female sex worker to deal with negative thoughts or emotions related to a socially condemned activity.

> I try to treat it as pleasure because if I treated it as a constraint, I would really GO MAD. [Sighs] [w, 39 years old, 2 years of work in the agency]

Thirdly, signals or symptoms of authentic excitation or satisfaction from a sex worker facilitate the client's orgasm. Therefore, they help to finish the meeting quicker, rendering it less exhausting for the sex worker. Apart from that, it is more probable in such interactions that the client will assess such a meeting as successful (he may leave a tip, come back).

> I have it [an orgasm] almost every time. It's my very nature that I have it almost every time, if I have an hour, I have it...Girls said that they turn off, I don't. Or, if I really wanted to get rid of someone quickly, then I don't think of myself. Otherwise I think of myself most [laughter] and the guy will get excited himself [laughter] this is my beauty [laughter]. [w, 35 years old, 3 years in the agency]

> Those clients usually want the partner to feel good, too. It's usually like that if the guy is normal, he also likes when she feels good, she comes first, before him. And it's like that most often. At least it happens often to me, that he'd also like me to feel good. They are sometimes very delicate: "What would you like, what do you like? What kind of fondling?" like that, "Tell me what you like," and he tells me what he likes, so I try to agree on something in that room... he'd also like the woman to have pleasure. [w, 39 years old, 2 years of work in the agency]

In the described situations, the female workers consciously make an effort so that the body feels something, to make it present in the sex interaction. This strategy was usually realized by women who did not have many meetings with clients during a single day, and who declared that they seldom encounter aggressive clients or those under the influence of psychoactive substances. A small number of selected meetings made it much easier to carry out this strategy. Within the researched group, it was more often done by the older women, regardless of their experience in prostitution.

Another manner of feeling sexual pleasure in a commercial context was to present it as *an uncontrollable side effect of the body's biological nature*. In contrast to the women who felt their bodies in a selective manner, in this case, the interviewees did not point to any specific conditions responsible for matching with a client. They usually stress that it is a constant disposition, "this is how we are made," it is abnormal not to experience positive feelings during sex, not deriving pleasure from the body:

> I approach men with feelings, not like the girls who said they turn off. But, how can you turn off? I can't turn off in any situation. I live it, so how could I turn off? I don't know how you can turn off. I can't do it. [w, 35 years old, 3 years of work in the agency]

In this case, the interviewees seemed to equalize various contexts of sex (commercial and intimate), treating them as equal.

The second category of a present body is a *body that mostly feels negative emotions*. This manner of experiencing the body, contrary to that which might be expected taking into account the specificity of sex work, also seldom appeared in statements made by the interviewees. It was not usually the main topic of the narrations, and it was not a subject of wide descriptions. The women would rather allude to their deeply negative experiences with clients while describing other notions. Their silence about negative feeling may be explained by the fact that experiencing the body in such a manner was hard to describe or to verbalize. The interviewees more often used short and casual phrases ("unbearable pain"), pointing to their actions, not feelings ("he fucked me so hard that today he would be kicked out for such behavior"), or described the consequences of such interactions for their body ("irritated skin," proof of violence—bruises, scratches, wounds). One of the interviewees called her experiences a half-rape, referring to the definitions of rape, although not expressing them directly.

> What happens in the room may be called a half-rape... At least for me it's a half-rape. Listen, here he comes, you don't know him, you see him for 10 minutes and you go to bed with him, what is it then? You have to,

> it's not like you want to. You don't need to, but you do, what is it then? Almost a rape, but without defense. It's the same. Exactly. It's not different. This is how I feel it. I don't know what the opinion of others is, but this is mine. [w, 25 years old, 2 years of work in the agency]

This manner of experiencing body was mostly typical of novice female workers, in the first period of their work. This is a time when numerous adverse conditions for a novice female sex workers build up: a negative image of self, feelings of guilt and breaking social standards after taking up the job, the inability to deal with clients and respond to improper (e.g., aggressive) behaviors on their part, and no defense mechanisms that would enable them to deal with such a situation.

Regarding extremely negative experiences, it is probably impossible, in a longer time horizon, to carry on the sex work by experiencing one's body in such a manner. Therefore, another step is either to leave prostitution or develop a different manner of experiencing the body (mostly the aforementioned disengagement from the body).

Conclusion

The body is a crucial notion in occupations where the body is on display and is the central focus of the job task, in group relations, and bargain exchanges (Sanders 2005:330). It is especially visible in prostitution.

The manners in which female sex workers experience the body are varied—from disengagement from the body, being violated and estranged from their bodies, to pride, empowerment, and feeling powerful by using their bodies for profit (Wesely 2002:1185; Coy 2007:71). Experiencing the body as a source of suffering is described mostly by female researchers inspired by radical feminism, conducting research among women from the outdoor sector who are victims of human trafficking. Experiencing one's body as a source of positive emotions was more often related to women working indoors, in safer and more controllable conditions, defining their actions as work. However, research results suggest that both patterns can be found in both contexts. Their realization is possible thanks to sex workers performing emotion work on themselves in the classic sense of "deep acting" (Hochschild 1983; Sanders 2005:325). The distancing strategies that they employ are related to the process of retaining their sense of self (Sanders 2005:325).

As my research results suggest, sex workers try to disengage from their bodies in order not to feel what happens to them during sexual acts with clients. Thus, the body becomes not-present in such an interaction. It refers to both positive and negative sensations. However, this process is not always realized without any interference. In specific conditions, certain respondents were incapable of muting their body's experiences and separating from it. Selectively, in certain interactions, their bodies became present, feeling. Some of the women declared that they often feel sexual satisfaction during meetings with clients. Some of the respondents also spoke about feeling the body through the prism of suffering and pain. These experiences may be described as a result of a general failure or negligence of the process of separating from the body and, as a result, feeling it as the present body.

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The Body as a Private and Social Space. The Margins of Research Regarding Old Age and Gender

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Abstract In the conditions of late modernity, the body is a project realized in both the public and private spheres. The aim of this article is to review theories and empirical studies concerning socio-cultural issues and the subjective determinants of perceptions of physicality. The body has become the main instrument of experiencing the world and oneself, a significant area, a key element of an individual's identification strategy. The modern human speaks with and through the body, the person's identity is reduced to self-presentation, by projecting their physicality, they project themselves. The presentation and reception of body is dominated by an aesthetic perspective, organically bound with the tendency to aestheticize daily life in general.

The text is based on empirical data, analysis of 403 qualitative interviews conducted between 2012-2014 in Polish cities: Warsaw, Kielce, Chelmno, and Przemysl. The research shows that the emotional aspect of experiencing body, as well as the cognitive aspect within consciousness, the mental image of one's own body, differ according to the respondents' age and gender.

Keywords Body Image; Physical Attractiveness; Gender; Old Age; Culture

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Background

Our life begins inside the body, which is our first area of contact with the outside world. The dualism of mind and body proposed by Plato (Platon 1995) contributed to the devaluation of everything associated with the idea of the material because Plato considered the material body merely an imperfect reflection of an idea, a prison for the soul, and an obstacle in its drive towards perfection. However, the body is not just matter, it is a source of social and cultural tensions; it is not just a primary area for developing one's "self," but also an area of interaction with other people. In social studies, it is a multi-dimensional medium for the constitution of society. The presence of the body in people's experiences is intermediated by social practices. The idea of humanity depends on social forms of life, including the way in which we experience our bodies and the way others treat them. The body reflects the identity of a society, the mechanisms which rule it, and the knowledge it has about itself. According to Chris Shilling (2010:83), "the body has, in a way, been shaped, limited, and even invented by society."

The issues taken up in this article concern perception and treatment of the body in the public and private sphere, primarily in areas of identity, as well as the aesthetic and commercial. In the empirical field, this analysis is based on the results of qualitative studies conducted in age-diverse groups of women and men from Warsaw, Kielce, Chelmno, and the rural communities of Przemysl. The goal of the study is to show how gender and age are manifested in perceptions of the role of one's own body and the degree of satisfaction with one's physicality. Analysis of empirical data shows that age and gender are significant in the process of developing body image in the cognitive aspect—through the regulation of activity, as well as in the emotional—through building a sense of individuality and discreteness.

Postmodern Body Metamorphoses

The Christian emphasis on the privilege of the knowing soul, over the based, sinful carcass caused the significance of the body as subject to fade in European culture, while in the contemporary world of consumption, the body is a goal in itself. A characteristic phenomenon in Western culture today is the individual nearly obsessively occupied with better expressing the needs of their body, making their own physicality a product and carrier of information. An order is being created, which Bryan Turner (1984) called "somatic society," one which makes the body a foundation and the most important area of human cultural and political activity, constantly referring in various ways to problems of reproduction, control of desire, regulation and placement of bodies in space. In somatic societies, the body is an important aspect of both social life, being an important area of scientific, political, and cultural activity, as well as the everyday existence of individuals. The body has been overly exposed, its presence multiplied, residents of the modern world are surrounded by its images, reproductions of its entirety or fragments. Jean Baudrillard (2006:167-170) calls the body the "most beautiful object of consumption," indeed a fetish. In the media-focused, capitalistic, consumer society, physicality is a system of representation and a carrier of social meanings of prestige, strength, power, and subjugation, sexual

availability, and unavailability, cultural refinement, creative attitude towards identity (Shilling 2010).

The existence of the post-modern individual is a bodily one. The body, as Anthony Giddens (2002) points out, has become a reflective project, a system of action, source of practices, and its active engagement in daily interactions is required to maintain a cohesive sense of one's identity. One of the aspects of physicality the author specifies is the regimen which the body undergoes, that is, various ways of cultivating or even creating one's own body. The contemporary popularity of managing physicality is associated with the tendency to aestheticize life, which carries the possibility of "creating oneself." In modern society, the project of "self" as a decrease in individualism has currently been replaced with a project of body, which is increasingly becoming a matter of choice. Its appearance, size, shape, and even composition are potentially open to reconstruction in accordance with the owner's intentions. Control of the body occurs more through fashion and consumerism than through religion (Synott 1993; Giddens 2002; Shilling 2010). Bryan S. Turner (1984) admits that, in Western societies, we are dealing with a form of "new anti-Protestant ethic," which defines early aging, obesity, or lack of physical fitness as the modern form of corporeal sins. Thus, he upholds the view that aesthetically-oriented forms of affecting the body are not spontaneous, but rather a realization of social norms.

The visual character of contemporary culture and the dominant role of image in creating social reality cause a person's outward appearance to be one of the basic indicators of status and identity (Featherstone 2001). The feeling of power over looks coincides with the sense of being able to transform it into the most characteristic symbol of one's individualized "self." Michel Foucault (1998:27-29) uses the term "political technology of the body," which is regulated by numerous discourses regarding physicality and knowledge about it. In popular culture, power over the body is manifested through self-control, which an individual imposes upon herself/himself. Highly developed consumerism is a form of power over the body, as it constantly creates new temptations and increasingly strict standards of the ideal. The need to perfect one's appearance is becoming stronger. The image conveyed by media forms aesthetic ideals of beauty and ugliness. The ancient Greek ideal of beauty was defined by the *kalokagathia*, a category combining *kalos* ("beautiful") and *agathos* ("good"). In modern Western culture, aesthetic judgments take on the value of ethical judgments and divide the world into that which is aesthetically beautiful, attractive, associated with moral good, and that which is ugly, and thus evil. A properly maintained body is currently evidence of possessing a certain kind of cultural competence, an expression of proficiency in "managing oneself."

Modern formation of the body is an adequate form of auto-creation and self-narration for postmodern culture. Physicality is treated here as a reflective project of technological, medical, or artistic intentions and transgressions, having to do with personal identity. The meaning given to the body reflects the character of social conventions and requirements regarding its appearance and maintenance increasingly well. Currently, the recommended identity configurations of a body are an athletic

body, disciplined body, attractive body, one having undergone physical procedures (such as tattooing or piercing), a body which functions online. Human physicality is presented as a text or surface for information, messages. While in traditional societies, these messages had a social dimension, a collective one, then currently the individual, or even the narcissistic aspect, is dominant, associated with need to constantly "self-update" one's project of "self," or "search for oneself."

Managing one's physicality has become a stressful activity for individuals, due to excessive affirmation of external attributes and the idealized images of youth, physical fitness, and beauty in mass culture. Bodily perfection has become too superficial, and even hazardous to one's life or health. The line between reality and fiction is dangerously blurred—media create the illusion that perfection can be achieved, promoting retouched images of impossibly thin females and increasingly muscular males (Andsager 2014). The ideal of working on oneself has been replaced by working on the body. Adjusting one's own body to the normative models generated by consumer culture and ideals regarding physicality seems to be one of the key conditions for being appreciated in public opinion (Crossley 2006).

The improvement, stylizing of the body, "body upgrading," according to fashion and phase of life, mostly applies to women. According to Ellyn Kaschack (1995:77), the "physicality of female identity" is a result of the surplus of meanings which patriarchal culture attributes to the body, and transfers to women; thus, they later place their femininity within their physicality. It is they that are always placed on the side of that which is physical—and thus less perfect, associated with sensuality, and regardless of the period, they live under pressure from the cult of appearance and lack of acceptance for aging. Women want to earn acceptance, they monitor their bodies, especially their weight. In the XIX century, just as today, "one cannot even presume that a woman has a stomach. Its place has been taken by a void" (Waydel Dmochowska 1960:320). Inspired by the philosophy of Foucault, Susan Bordo claims that female bodies are constantly disciplined, remain "docile bodies," subordinate to the consumer regimen. The woman is being freed from the home, ceases to be a prisoner of the household, yet becomes a prisoner of her own body and "strives for all her life to decorate the prison" (Bordo 2004:17-18). In Bordo's (2004:166) opinion, beauty is an instrument of oppression, controlling women, who are constantly subject to external regulation, always "corrected" by normalizing, disciplinary practices, regarding diet, makeup, clothing—practices which organize the daily time and space of many women. Sometimes this way of perceiving the female body is internalized by the women themselves. They observe and judge their own body, just as their environment does. The habitual, constant monitoring of one's own appearance is called self-objectification. Constantly gazing at oneself leads to negative emotional and behavioral consequences, such as: shame, fear of gaining weight, guilt, concealing one's body (Frederickson and Roberts 1997).

The tyranny of body discipline is currently also experienced by men (Bordo 1999:223; Armengol 2013). The dictate of "being perceived" rules, and so expectations towards men, their bodies, and appearance

have changed. Male beauty, neutral until now, absent, unnoticeable, is also becoming a subject of public discourse (Bordo 1999; Lehman 2007). The increasing presentation of male bodies in media, combined with growing economic anxiety (which causes us to focus on things we can control, such as our appearance), has led to a radical change in men's approach to their body (Kimmel 2015:451). In the past, one of the most important functions of a male body was creating, that which Arthur Frank (1991:69) calls the dominating body, that is, one that elicits respect and recognition from other men. Technology has freed the man from having to be physically strong. In the 1970s, men with well-developed muscles were labeled deviants (Kimmel 2015:451-452). Currently, the realization of masculinity is associated with striving to have a muscular body, which is perceived more as an attribute of male beauty, rather than a tool for fighting and intimidation.

While the discourse around a beautiful body refers mostly to women, the conforming role in relation to men is fulfilled by the discourse of body building. In the same way that womanhood is often defined in relation to physical attractiveness, manhood is stereotypically associated with physical fitness (Kluczyńska 2008; Baker and Gringart 2009; Reddy 2013). In Western culture, the male body, like the female body, is meant to be attractive. "The traditional image of woman as a sexual object has expanded: anyone can potentially be an object of observation" (Luciano 2002:12). An especially principled approach to weight and musculature is exhibited by homosexual men (Tiggemann, Martins, and Kirkbride 2007). They also declared a significantly lower level of satisfaction with these parameters of their appearance in old age, compared to heterosexual men (Levesque and Vichesky 2006). The conviction that men's and women's bodies should be healthy, firm, smooth, devoid of folds, wrinkles, and any signs of old age is becoming solidified. It is no wonder then that lack of satisfaction with one's body is ever present: both women and men speak of it, it is not just limited to Western culture or to a specific age group (Orbach 2009). Michael Kimmel (2015:446) argues that, "new surgical procedures, birth control, the Internet, have transformed the system of gender signifying, giving us a greater than ever awareness of our bodies and allowing new groups to reach for their materialized expressions, a kind of embodied democracy." The ideology of freedom and individualism also imposes personal responsibility for your own body and its functioning, including caring for your health, fitness, and appearance. The body is constantly subject to valuing review, judgment based on socially accepted criteria of health and sickness, correctness and aberration, beauty and ugliness.

Media culture constructs an image of elderly people who are attractive, preserve their youthfulness and physical fitness. Efforts towards maintaining the illusion of youth lead to an increasing disconnect from one's own body, lack of contact with one's physicality. We are dealing with a so-called double standard of aging. Society depreciates older women, who are seen as less attractive and sexy, while men, despite their years, are still presented as attractive individuals, desirable on the matrimonial market. The image of an old, well-kept man is better written into social scenarios, it also fits within conventions of visual culture (Sontag 1997).

Women display much more determination than men when attempting to preserve the image of a person younger than in reality (Muise and Desmarais 2010; Owen and Spencer 2010). They engage in strategies of artificial rejuvenation, they are more susceptible than men to various forms of "beauty work" (Furman 1997; Gimlin 2002; Hurd and Griffin 2008). Studies conducted in European and American countries show that older women utilize the expanding range of body forming services, application of fillers, liposuction, extending and transplanting hair, and invest in all sorts of cosmetic procedures (Brooks 2010; Kinnunen 2010). This tendency applies equally to heterosexual and homosexual women (Morrison, Morrison, and Sager 2004; Huxley and Hayfield 2012). In Western studies, 8% of men and 16% of women claim they would undergo a cosmetic surgery procedure in order to achieve the appearance of being younger (Bond et al. 2007:250-251). Women are prepared to make many sacrifices in order to enter old age without radically losing physical attractiveness (McLaren and Kuh 2004). Therefore, fitness and external appearance become the measure of a human's social value. Mass culture together with cosmetic surgery (and soon also: transplants and cyborgization) exercise, limit, isolate, and medicate contemporary monsters: old age, sickness, disability (Wieczorkiewicz 2010).

The Body as a Subject of Studies

The human body, its place in the history of culture, and social consciousness is a subject that has been omitted in science until the early XX century. During the first half, the body starts to gain some interest from researchers, but beginning with the 1960s, we indeed saw an eruption of work devoted to the subject. The body becomes one of Western culture's obsessions, one of the great subjects of late modernity. The emergence of the topic of human physicality in social sciences discourse was caused, among other things, by the development of consumer culture oriented towards the body, the activity of feminist movements, demographics changes, medicalization, technification, and aestheticization of daily life (Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner 2006:33).

This article is based on previously unpublished research which is part of a wider empirical analysis of transformations in modern Polish custom (Arcimowicz, Bieńko, and Łaciak 2015). The presented segment of research concerns the image of body and physicality. I assumed the interpretive paradigm, where the methodological postulate is an understanding kind of cognition. The body exists in the actions and experiences of people and has those attributes which the active and experiencing people assign them within their activity and sensations. The studies had an exploratory character. The goal was to reveal meanings assigned by the interviewed to ideas of body and physicality and see how they apply them in specific actions (Silverman 2015). The most appropriate research perspective in this case is qualitative analysis, considering the subjective views accessible through direct conversation.

In my research, I applied the methodological rules and analytical strategies of grounded theory (Charmaz 2006). I did not set any initial thesis or hypothesis. I considered all early structurizations as detrimental, narrowing the perspective of the study. I took on the role of the "naive" researcher who does not impose

her conceptual network onto the interviewed. I treated division into categories of gender, age, and place of residence as additional information, which could serve as context for interpretation of the collected data. The process of collecting empirical data was not conducted in stages, phases, but alternately with parallel analysis and interpretation. The theory is derivative of empirical data analysis and emerges during systematically conducted field research, from the data which directly concern the observed segment of social reality. Terms and their properties were built, modified, and verified during the empirical research (Konecki 2000). This approach values the context of discovery, allows terms relevant to the studied reality to be worked out, and treats existing theories of the studied phenomenon not as models which determine the framework, but as an additional data source (Glaser and Strauss 2006; Corbin and Strauss 2008). The key role in this context is played by the coding process, that is, assigning labels to batches of material, which reflect the meaning given them by social actors and mapped out by the researcher, through procedures of theoretical sampling, constant comparative method, coding. When coding data, I took an approach based on a direct tie between data, assuming a gradual forming of analytical conclusions (data driven coding). According to the methodology requirements of grounded theory, materials collected in the research process were subject to analysis using objective open coding, which is assigning labels to elements of the observed reality (Konecki 2000:51-52). The other coding technique used was theoretical coding. This technique consists of describing mutual relations between categories. It allows for the setting of research hypotheses (Konecki 2000:51), verified in later phases of the researcher's work.

The data were collected during 403 in-depth individual interviews in four different Polish environments: a large city in the Masovian Voivodeship (Warsaw), a medium-sized city in the Swietokrzyskie Voivodeship with a population over 200 thousand (Kielce), a small city in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship with a population slightly over 20 thousand (Chelmno), and in the rural *gmina* (commune) of Przemysl. Studies were conducted between 2012-2014. Interviews with residents were held in the respondents' homes, the list of which was formed from a random sample of addresses. We were able to reach respondents from diverse demographics and attain a rich material, which was important, considering the study is qualitative, not statistical.

Due to the nature of the subject, it was emphasized that participation in the study was voluntary, that one may interrupt it at any stage, or refuse to answer specific questions; full anonymity was also assured. An audio recorder was used during the conversations. Fragments of interviews are quoted with permission from the interviewees. The symbols in parentheses next to each quote are the respondent's code: city of residence (W—Warsaw, K—Kielce, Ch—Chelmno, and P—Przemysl), respondent number assigned in order of interviews conducted, the gender and age of the person.

Significance of the Physical "Self" in Respondents' Lives

The body, or rather physicality or embodiment, is an experiential basis for an understanding of the world. This is knowledge that social actors consider obvious, yet it is difficult to formulate (Giddens 2001:89). Drew

Leder (1990) observes that a human makes constant use of their own body, without making it a subject of reflection or analyzing its method of functioning. In the studied group, this disappearance of body from the consciousness of women and men is visible. In many cases, respondents had difficulty with a question about the role of the body in their lives: "I can't answer it myself. So I can't tell you, it's hard for me to grasp it for myself even" (K-96, w-61); "I don't know. I'm too thick for a question like that" (Ch-78, w-71); "I can't explain it" (P-53, w-72).

The subject of body evoked emotions in the persons studied: "God, my body…" (P-42, w-45), but the question was generally considered "odd": "That's an odd question to ask. What role? Well, you definitely want to look good. You take care of the body. But, don't overdo it, right? You can't be staring at a mirror all the time" (Ch-79, w-50). Some respondents simply refused to answer: "What are these questions for? I won't answer" (K-19, m-27); "I would prefer not to talk about this subject" (P-45, w-48).

Especially older respondents demonstrated a low level of reflection regarding their own physicality, they admitted to never having wondered about the role of their body in life: "I've never thought about it. Well, I don't know what to say" (Ch-77, w-67). They pointed out that, at a certain age, one does not think about the body at all: "That's a question for young people, I don't have any special requirements, it's just how it is and that's fine" (Ch-71, w-70); "I'm old. I'm not a narcissist, I don't think about it" (K-56, m-77).

According to Kaschack (1995:78, 86), male sense of identity is less based on physicality. More often than women, men signaled that the topic gives them some trouble, as stereotypically "not manly": "Oy, it's embarrassing for me, miss! Miss, me, a guy, confessing to you?" (P-20, m-55); "That ain't a question for a guy, no, I refuse to answer" [laughter] (P-48, m-43).

The most refusals to answer were noted among older people from smaller towns, with elementary or vocational educations. Answers negating any kind of role of the body in the lives of the interviewed also appeared most often in this group: "I don't know, it doesn't play any role" (K-6, w-56); "I don't know? A body is just a body" (P-31, m-61); "Generally, asking an old person about their body, that's not too polite" (W-41, w-74). The lack of a significant role of physicality was declared equally often by young respondents, those under the age of 30: "Body? I don't pay attention to the body" (Ch-81, w-29); "My body does not play an important role in my life" (W-28, m-30); "I think it definitely pays some kind of role, though probably not a very important one" (K-4, w-20).

The interviewed emphasized the significance of the bodily, physical, organic "self": "I feel alive" (P-7, m-68); "Well, a man lives because he lives. When he's gone, then that's the end. And there isn't much to talk about" (Ch-78, w-71).

Respondents touch reality through their body, but do not always stop on the body itself. It is instrumental for them, a tool, with which they perceive the world. The human body, according to the interviewed, is a material basis for existence: "It's very important. Without the body we wouldn't exist" (K-82, m-42); "Well, it's a basis for living, right"

(K-87, m-54); "Of course the body is important. I'm not the Holy Spirit" (W-80, m-40). The body is a physical shell: "My body is a sack of bones" (W-2, m-25).

The body is a live creation, a living being. Respondents point out the motoric aspect of physicality: "The body? The body does what the mind wants. That's how I see it. Thanks to the body we work, move around, go places. I don't know what else" (K-77, w-55); "If I didn't have a body, then how could I live? Walk?" (P-26, w-75). In Przemysl area villages, the body is treated simply as a working machine: "I don't know, for working [laughter] and that's it" (P-37, w-48); "An ox for work. I gotta do mine. Miss, the worst part is, three days of holidays come and I'm sick because I'm not doing anything" (P-43, m-74).

In the declarations of mostly older respondents from smaller towns, the physical nature of humans is opposed to the spiritual. The body is not just a carrier of biological (physiological) information, it is also a place where the soul is situated: "The body? In Polish class, we had that, that the soul strives for what's in heaven, and the body sins down here on Earth…I don't know, it's possible..." (Ch-24, m-18); "Physicality is important, if we understand it as an area of personal life, as satisfaction from your body. If we give it to everyone, then physicality is just the body, but if we connect it with our soul, then the physical is on a higher level and gives us many more important sensations" (W-36, w-47). In giving spiritual values primacy over bodily ones, only in one case were the body and mind treated as complementary values: "The body is not a goal in itself. The harmony of body and mind, balance, is important for me" (K-28, w-46).

In the respondents' statements, the body is a point of reference to humanity, the body is simply human: "There is no man outside the body" (K-92, m-69); "I need the body to live! Like I said, the body is humanity, that's all" (P-55, m-55).

A body may be limited to the role of tool for fulfilling one's personal needs, but it may also be in communication with other people. The personality of respondents is expressed through their body image, which is the basis for social roles, shaping of identity in social relations: "The body is kind of for others. I think that, considering my age, it's not too bad" (W-90, w-56); "My body allows me to function, without it I couldn't be who I am" (K-59, w-41); "Reproductive function" (Ch-19, m-26).

Both women and men would like to feel good "in their bodies": "It's most important! Because if I felt bad in my own body, I'd be depressed. I'd get down on myself. Despite my years, if I hated myself, then I would walk around gloomy, no smile. Oh well. So, the body is most important!" (K-48, w-54); "And how do I say this—darn, I like to feel good with my body" (P-58, m-29). The respondents' statements show that a positive body image, positive evaluation of the body's role are tied to satisfaction in life: "I think that if you accept your body, your appearance, then you live better" (P-99, m-53); "My body is a tool for my heart to be happy. It's a great joy to me and I am happy with my body" (W-32, m-40).

Perception of one's own physicality is somewhat culturally "programmed." Attractiveness (the degree to which a body conforms to cultural models considered current in a given society) determines

social relations. The body is treated as commodity, stylized in accordance with fashion and life phase, adjusted to one's self-image and shaped to give it the traits we want, in order to be noticed by others (Finkelstein 1991:105). Respondents are aware of the social message which clearly indicates what the body should be like, so that it may be admired and desired:

> The body, physicality. I think it's pretty important. The appearance of a body as a whole. Let's say that in current times there is a certain stereotype of the ideal man or woman and everybody tries to stick to that and me too, I guess, like everyone. If it were different, then we would all be gaining weight, but we don't, because that's the stereotype and that's mostly because of television and all that. I won't lie that in my case, also because of what I see on the Internet, or television, which I rarely watch, but I can't lie that I don't like bodies which stray from those stereotypes. [K-40, m-26]

> Well, in my life, the body plays a huge role because of me being overweight, I can't find proper clothing. It also influences how I'm perceived in my environment. Generally, in our community, one does not accept overweight people, people with medical conditions, people with limps, for example, disabled people and such. Like we just want to create a society purely out of beautiful, young people who don't get sick or age. [K-91, w-44]

It turns out that the body is universal enough an experience that it goes "unnoticed" in the day to day. Respondents register both an "internal" body, seeing it as if it were a functioning machine, as well as an "external body," which relates to appearance, movement, and control on social ground (Featherstone 2001:171). For many of the interviewed, the body is their here and now, biological reality tuned into an organism and subject to its functions and specific rhythms. The body (physicality, flesh) is treated as an autonomous whole and differentiated from the mind, emotions, and will. Statements reveal a dualism of soul and body, and a substance-mechanistic understanding of the body, typical of Descartes' views. The body is a distinctly social creation, the interviewed break the traditional imagining of the body as pure physicality. They experience themselves as a whole, which is not at all identical with the body, on the contrary, the body is at its disposition. The way of experiencing oneself wavers between being and possessing a body (Berger and Luckmann 2010:75). In interviews, we encounter both examples of thinking about the body as something separate from consciousness—its experience and form of self-expression—as well as perceiving it in categories of the instrumental and objectified, transferred from the area of modern employment. Through the body the interviewed become individuals with identity. Appearance is described as a cognitive representation of the body, and it is evaluated with imposed social standards which determine the model to which the interviewed refer. Division into categories according to place of residence helped in differentiating the traditional perception of body, expressed especially by residents of the small town and village, as "given" and not "inflicted."

Gendered Physicality

In modern times, a woman's body is an object which is constantly subject to observation from

its environment. In recent years, the increasingly unrealistic requirements begin to be applied to men's bodies also, though they are less complex and therefore easier to fulfill. Interest in one's own body is the attribute of a "metrosexual" man, who in a consumer society bears all the traits that were traditionally regarded as threatening to models of masculinity (Forth 2008:222). According to the stereotype, masculinity means isolating yourself from one's body: "a real man should not know about his body, should not have full contact with it, but only angular, rough, unrefined contact, without grace" (La Cecla 2014:60). The statements of men interviewed contradict this stereotypical thinking: "one would want to be kind of a desirable lover type" (P-23, m-64); "My body? It should be decoration!' (Ch-9, m-29); "Appearance, aesthetics, I want to look nice" (P-6, m-68).

Western research shows that men dream of an ideal body (Campbell 2012), though compared to women, they are subject to less pressure concerning an attractive appearance. It is quite apparent that men in the interviewed group, regardless of age, have fewer complexes about their own physicality than women: "Yes, I like my body, I am happy with how I look" (K-58, m-22); "I think I haven't been disappointed with my body. It's alright" (K-82, m-42); "I like myself physically" (W-29, m-29).

Kaschack (1995:78, 86) claims that the physical aspect is not a signal of fundamental identity for men, which develops from inside outward, whereas for women this happens from the outside inward. A woman's value is determined foremost by her body, strictly speaking—her appearance. Depending on the study, 40-70% of young women and 50-80% of adolescent girls are unhappy with their own bodies (Levine and Smolak 2004). Declarations from women of affirmation for their bodies are definitely less frequent: "I love myself the way I am" (K-90, w-54); "I have accepted myself one hundred percent and still do…and I never had any reservations" (W-70, w-56). Many young women do not accept their appearance: "Looks influence contact with others, I have my insecurities and sometimes feel unsure of myself" (P-1, w-22). In their statements, we see ambivalence towards their own bodies: "something between contentment and disappointment" (W-3, w-23); "It depends on the day, whether my body is attractive or not. I have days where I think… oh, you look really nice, and other days where… oooooh…" (K-60, w-26).

A woman's appearance determines how she is treated by those around her. Identifying with an idealized vision of oneself may lead to abandonment of the unacceptable real image, and thus to destabilization and "blurring" of a sense of identity. Women sometimes present absolute negation of their own physicality: "And what is there to like, dry bones and skin. As long as I can walk" (W-41, w-74); "I always notice that something is off, something is wrong, there's too much in one place, or crooked, I'm always unhappy" (Ch-15, w-50); "I don't like myself. I am not attractive. I'm fat, not like I used to be. I don't like my body. I remember what it was like when I was younger, so I don't like to look at myself now" (K-32, w-41).

Study results indicate that satisfaction with one's body decreases after exposure to idealized media im-

ages (Grogan 2008). Women who base their self-image mostly on their outward appearance are more likely to internalize the beauty ideal shown in media, which influences their dissatisfaction with their own body (Durkin, Paxton, and Sorbello 2007). Female participants emphasize, somewhat justifying themselves, that dissatisfaction with one's body is the domain of all women: "With the female gender there is always something that I'm not happy and it's normal, and something pleases me and there isn't much you can change about that, that's just nature" (Ch-44, k-20); "Well, like every woman perhaps, I am not happy with my own body" (W-101, w-28).

According to Naomi Wolf (1992:12), though "beauty is an attribute that exists universally and objectively, women must want to 'embody' it, and men must want to possess women who 'embody.'" An indicator of femininity is being attractive to men. That is why a woman identifies with her body, "with her appearance." Within the studied group, the main censor of female body beauty is the man: "The wife's body is important, it plays an important role and I am happy with it" (P-30, m-40); "I was liking kind of medium women, my wife was fluffy. A woman has to have a bit of body. On the beach I call it crematorium, bones, when a woman has no body. Breasts are another thing, but there should be some meat on there. A man's gotta grab on to something" (W-96, m-72); "Stereotypical beauty? Well, a tall woman, long legs, large breasts, slim waist. Round butt and so on. That's a combination of elements which rarely appears together. Well, unless someone has plastic surgery" (K-40, m-26).

Women mostly develop their self-image based on external messages (Kaschack 1995:77). Physicality reflected in women's consciousness is relational. The studied females do not see their bodies with their own eyes, but attempt to take the point of view of others, whom they wish to impress. Female respondents declare that they "look at their reflections" in the eyes of their life partner: "The body is meant to attract the partner, it gives you confidence, lack of insecurities" (Ch-1, w-25); "Everyone has some flaws and assets. Some like slim, others like curvy ones. It depends if a woman is attractive to her husband. If she is, that means she's pretty" (K-47, w-65). The body of female respondents is an organism on display for others. They judge their physicality by comparing to their peers: "I'm not entirely happy, but I'm also not entirely unhappy. Because actually, when I see friends my age, after the last reunion, I say to myself, actually, I'm not so bad" (P-57, w-55); "There are chubbier ones, I take comfort in that" (W-83, w-64).

The body, in young women's statements, is a tool for achieving aesthetic pleasure: "it's meant to provide emotions and bodily-visual pleasure" (W-7, w-24); "It plays an important role, it's pleasure, I can still look at myself. The body is my decoration" (Ch-7, w-37).

For women, the body is an always unfinished, open "product" (Howson 2013:99). In the interviewed group, women are convinced that an obvious element of femininity is "working on one's body," very often they declare a desire to change or improve their own image: "Obviously, every person wants to change something or other about themselves, something they don't like because it's never that you like everything about yourself" (W-57, w-55); "Generally, you could say that I'm happy with my appearance, though you can always

improve something, of course" (K-49, w-19); "Obviously, you can always improve something, but, generally, I'm pleased" (W-77, w-35).

Being overweight or being slim are among traits perceived as significant for attractiveness, and so they may be the basis for social acceptance or rejection (Grogan 2008). In the past, stigma in the category of disposition was treated as having a "special mark" which lowers the value of a person for themselves and other people (Goffman 2005). Many of the interviewed women tend to consider being overweight as a certain kind of stigma in their life: "All my life I've been saying that I'm too fat. I've been dieting all my life…like every woman I would want to always be slim, elegant, I never manage to do it…It's awful" (P-57, w-55);

> I'm always unhappy, I've already had my trials with dieting. They suspected anorexia, suspected I had bulimia, despite my figure. I have a sick stomach from vomiting, my kidneys are damaged, last year I ended up in the hospital, so, for me, my body unfortunately plays a huge role. I get crazy about it, I just don't let people know it, for me, it's just a tragedy, if I were to list everything. I feel that others always see me poorly because of me being overweight. [Ch-22, w-22]

Young and slim bodies are usually considered a personal and social "merit," which should be maintained throughout the whole life cycle of an individual (Turner 1984). It can also be seen as an expression of success or prosperity. Interviewees know that being slim is a basic element of female body beauty and they admit that trying various kinds of diets is a fixed element of their everyday reality. It seems that, for the interviewed women, regardless of age, their body is never skinny enough: "Ever since I've been caring about my weight and eating healthier, I'm very happy with my figure, but, of course, you always want to lose those 3 kg, even when we lose them, it's another 3 kg" (W-42, w-30); "I've always been chubby and I've never liked it. When I was still 65 kg, that was decent, but now I weigh 77. So what can I do? I'm dieting, of course" (P-79, w-64).

In Western culture, 95% of women admit to dieting during certain periods of life, and 40% do it regularly (Grogan 2008). Losing weight is the most often (53%) desired change in Poles' appearance, according to respondents. Women want this decidedly more often (63%) (CBOS 2003). Nearly 20% of Poles (more often women than men) have dieted or kept a regimen in order to reduce their body weight, several times in their life, 8% a dozen or more times, and 9% have used over-the-counter dieting substances (CBOS 2009). The heroic stories of slimming, in the interviewed women's descriptions, bring to mind *Bridget Jones's Diary* (Fielding 2014): "When I lose weight, I'm happy, when I gain it, it's a tragedy for me" (K-75, w-64); "Well, I'm currently trying to slim down, but I'm not doing well. There was even a time where I started exercising, but that wasn't going well either. So, currently my body is resting. I'm in despair" (P-76, w-20); "I would definitely want to lose weight...I stopped adding sugar to my coffee, I've gotten so used to bitter coffee, that's my diet mostly. But, sweets, unfortunately I've tried, but you want something sweet so bad, it's ridiculous" (P-103, w-33).

For the interviewed women, a large body size is a symbol of personal and social failure, and exces-

sive indulgence. Young women explain their extra weight with a past pregnancy: "Now mostly disappointments, after the pregnancy I had more body left than I should. That's the one thing I would change. Before that I think I was more attractive" (P-67, w-30); "I'm post-pregnancy…I have a tummy left, so I'm trying to get rid of it" (K-8, w-27).

Diet can be a way to gain the approval of others, to raise one's self-esteem, not just considering looks. Bordo (2004:192) claims that being overweight is seen as a reflection of moral or personal inadequacy, or lack of will. Extra weight on women is a manifested undermining of stereotypes of beauty. Nearly one out of every two women, regardless of age or place of residence, was, is, or wants to be on a diet, to lead to a transformation in body and identity: "I like my body, but I could lose 10 kg to improve my shape, get a better job, snag a boyfriend. I'd be a different person! Better!" (W-31, w-26);

> all us, girls, we got it together, made a resolution and now each one is trying to find the better miracle diet… we all jog…and stuff like that, because I think your figure is pretty important, but not even physically, more spiritually, I think. Even my mom went to a nutritionist, she lost like 15 kilos and you can see the change right away, physically, because 15 kg is quite a bit, but also mentally. She feels a lot better, she can find more clothes and friends too. Everything is different. [P-82, w-21]

Survey studies show that 72% of Poles believe that people care for their appearance and build because that allows them to feel better and have greater self-esteem. According to 45% of respondents, motivation to care for one's appearance and physique is an expression of wanting to be attractive to others (CBOS 2009). Women diet to accentuate their sensuality and sexuality, and so they lose weight to look good and be attractive to others. Men follow a diet in order to preserve an attractive appearance and the results of effort put into working out their body, for as long as possible. Increasing numbers of men are dissatisfied with their bodies. More and more men show signs of eating disorders (Pope, Phillips, and Olivardia 2000). Among the men interviewed, there is the conviction that paying attention to one's own appearance is not manly, but cultural pressure to slim down is also visible in their statements: "I quit smoking and gained probably 5 kilograms, so I have to get myself together" (P-14, m-50); "On the move all the time—work, eat a little something, just not too much, to not gain weight" (P-18, m-68); "I lost 20 kilograms. It started with a joke, with my girlfriends in the office, that I won't eat sweets for one day. I did it, and that motivated me to keep going. I noticed that I started losing weight. I bought a scale and I control what I eat. I don't go to the gym, but try to do sports" (W-80, m-40).

Traditional ideals of masculinity have been focused around physical strength and values associated with fighting. Christopher F. Forth (2008:169-200) claims that, in modern Western culture, this has taken on the form of a metaphorical perception of the correctly functioning male body as a capable machine. The male body must be a durable, resilient construction. Mature men consciously and regularly undertake activity intending to shape their own bodies, they emphasize the need for care in the areas of hygiene, health, and sport: "A body should be cared for,

nurtured, it should be enriched, hygienically. You should know a lot, read about your body, how to protect it from disease, from everything. Well, culture… That's your attitude to your body" (K-81, m-74); "The body is useful…You have to take care of it—do sports, appropriate nutrition. You have to, for it to be capable—sport: skis, bike, kayak; in the areas of everyday living, in the erotic sphere. The body has to have building blocks, fuel. Doctors say that you must eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and that's how you take care of it. For this machine to function (K-64, m-52).

Popular culture imposes a method of creating one's own image. Athletic build is associated with health, energy, vitality. In Poland, the significance of a muscular and slim build is usually emphasized by men aged 18-34 (CBOS 2003). One in ten young Poles uses supplements meant to increase muscle mass (CBOS 2009). Within the studied group, an athletic, muscular body is a requirement among younger men: "I used to be more focused on working on this body, muscles. I ran a lot more, exercise, gym, swimming—I enjoyed it, that my own work was bringing results…But now, well, I feel so-so with my body. No mass, but that's a matter of time" (P-58, m-29); "I'm not entirely happy, that's why I go to the gym. Generally, I like to engage in sport, look like an athlete, have bulk. I used to do sport, you could say, professionally, extremely. I stopped, and, let's say, it doesn't last you your whole life, you have to start again" (K-40, m-26); "I don't have the bulk like I used to. I've neglected myself a bit. I used to exercise, I looked better, I intend on going back to that" (W-74, m-34).

There is a growing conviction in Poland that caring for one's build and appearance is associated with a healthy lifestyle (CBOS 2009). In the studied group, men emphasize behavior associated with health more often, and descriptions of beautifying practices dominate in women's statements.

As Chris Shilling (2010) puts it, the body is a project. Study participants of both genders take responsibility for their appearance and try to realize the desired result, through appropriate exercises, diet, or procedures. The aestheticization and cult of a young, smooth, slim, and athletic body is reflected in the statements of the interviewed women and men. The body image presented is mostly a reproduction of gender roles typical for modern consumer culture. As the conversations show, the physicality of women and men are two different orders of experiences. Women are much more concentrated on their physicality than men; they also devote a lot more energy to it. Appearance is more an object of detailed analysis and comparisons among the interviewed women than in the case of the men. The identity of interviewed women is based on physicality, which is subject to aesthetic judgments. In the man's perspective, the woman is defined by her beautiful body. A slim figure, especially from a woman's perspective, is a synonym of discipline, self-control, social approval, and guaranteed success in life. The aspect of male physicality emphasized many times by men is brawn and physical ability. Their conviction is that a man's obligation is to accept his physicality, care for general physical ability and a fairly slim build. Apart from the aesthetic benefits of a slim figure, emphasized mostly by women, men emphasize the health aspects. A slimmer build among women is more often a goal in itself than for men, where it is a result of healthy lifestyle, associated with athletic

activity. Women and young people tend to be more strict in evaluating their own appearance, which may be explained by the higher social requirements set for them, concerning body image.

Vitality, Sexuality, and Asexuality of an Aging Body

Numerous studies argue that old age is more likely to lower self-esteem and good mood among women than among men (Baker and Gringart 2009; Hurd Clarke 2010). The social defining of masculinity and femininity largely relates to roles associated with physicality and sexuality. Physicality, called biological capital by sociologists, is attractive appearance, as well as physical and sexual ability (Jakubowska 2009:101). Catherine Hakim (2011) refers to "erotic capital," being a combination of aesthetics and visual, physical, social, and sexual attractiveness. The author emphasizes that women especially develop and expand their assets in this area.

It is likely age is significant in this area, because within the studied group mostly older men, and not women, emphasized sexuality as a domain of physicality in their lives: "Physicality can be understood as lumbago, as well as male-female matters" (W-46, m-61); "You have to care for your appearance. That creates good self-esteem, which, in turn, improves contacts with people, that is also tied to sexuality" (K-10, m-57); "I like all kinds of chicks. And if I'm walking, for example, and a nice hmhmhm babe is walking, shaking her little ass. I like ladies regardless of age. Now I'm 74 years old and what should I look at? There are some flings now and then. If I could live another 10, 15 years, then yeah" (K-41, m-74).

The female body is treated as a sexual object which provides men with pleasant sensations. The interviewed men focus more on perception of the women's body than on the sensations coming from their own body. Older men appreciate the character of experiencing pleasure through contact with a woman: "I think that the sensual experiences of our body, the feeling of intimacy with another person, warmth, hugs, or even kisses are the most pleasurable in life. Physicality is important to me and I would rather feel my wife than anything else... the body and nudity is beautiful" (W-8, m-63); "like hugging, touching—we have no problems with that. My wife also likes to hug, I think, and likes to be embraced, kissed, or caressed" (K-67, m-51).

A beautiful, healthy body helps attain pleasure in interpersonal contacts, not just one's own body, but also the partner's, which, on the one hand, is tied to caring for one's physicality, and, on the other, with perceiving, even classifying another person according to their physical form. Mature men connect sex with health: "if the body is healthy, it's all pleasant...you can do sports, sex, and everything is fine" (K-64, m-52);

> the area of sexuality, for example, is maybe the foundation of humankind's existence in general. However, I also treat it in categories of health. The point is not to torture the body, but also not make it lazy. Simply, everyone has some genes, some kind of predisposition, physical, I mean. Something that needs to be developed, to not be wasted. And so you have to keep up, let's say walking, running, exercises. Not to mention looks, yeah, but looks, it's women that look after that. Men, not so much, but they try as well. [W-59, m-68]

Physicality has a significant influence on women's perception of changes through aging, which they often associate with a loss of femininity. The beauty ideal in relation to women is identified with sexual attractiveness. According to Jean Baudrillard (2006:183), there is a "Great Aesthetic and Erotic Myth" organized around women. The aging of a woman's body is seen as the end of their life connected to sexuality. Older women speak of their erotic capital in the past tense: "I wouldn't go for any man now, even if he had half of Warsaw and half of Rome… some guys? That's it. I had a few in my life and it's over, I'm not drawn to that any more" (Ch-83, w-65); "As far as that's concerned, I had a good life. Now I'm an older lady and my workshop, so to speak, is closed down, but gestures like embracing or something are still nice. But, all my life I had a good sex life, meaning, when I was a young girl, I was aware that I have a great figure, slender legs, and sometimes when I went outside, men would turn to look at me. Or if I was going through the plaza to work, I had the impression it works" (K-38, w-60); "At a certain age you… don't have physicality, just respect" (Ch-59, w-76).

Women, especially elderly, internalize stereotypical convictions to do with physical attractiveness (Durkin, Paxton, and Sorbello 2007). The timestamp for an "asexual" thinking about one's physicality, among women, is sometimes giving birth and raising children: "Physicality or sexuality no longer plays any role, in my case. I've been raising children by myself for quite a long time, and it's not really a problem for me" (Ch-88, w-45).

Germaine Greer (1995:75) believes that an older woman, "though she was once tormented through her excessive visibility, her current invisibility causes her to feel lost." Old age lowers self-esteem and confidence more often among women than men. In the opinions of the older women interviewed, their body becomes "transparent": "Today the body is not that important. It's a matter of age" (P-98, w-70); "Those years are behind me, of being attractive, the body is not all that important" (K-47, w-65). Women who attribute themselves physical ugliness, avoid looking at their reflection: "I used to like my body, when I bathed, I liked lotions. But now, when I'm putting on makeup, I close one eye and then the other, so I don't see myself, I don't want to keep the image of myself I see in the mirror everyday" (Ch-13, w-63); "I don't look at the mirror now, I did when I was young" (P-79, w-64).

Mature women, as a group, show a low level of satisfaction due to the transformations of their own physicality during this period, because they feel the internal and social pressures to remain physically attractive more acutely than men (Johnston, Reilly, and Kremer 2004). Women declare the need to accept their physicality at an older age: "somebody is thinking about some kind of plastic surgery, or Botox, and that, it would never cross my mind and I certainly won't do it. I'm just aware of my age, of my various imperfections, but that's who I am and I accept it, it's okay" (W-70, w-56); "I've made peace with my age. You grow out of that phase of attracting attention… now, years later, I can say that those are trifles" (Ch-47, w-52).

According to research by Laura Hurd Clark (2002), older women form a more realistic image of their desired body shape and thus do not compare them-

selves to the overly idealized figures, unlike women of younger age groups. The majority of female participants, however, have a problem with accepting an aging body: "Young bodies are pretty, I like them because in old age, you get to be so ugly" (W-19, w-62); "Right now I'm 70 years old, that used to be important, you took care of your body, showed it, tried to show it off. That's long gone, so to speak" (P-70, w-69); "What could a 70 year old grandma have that's attractive?" (P-64, w-69).

Maladjustment to social expectations at an older age becomes the reason for dissatisfaction on one side, and stigmatization and devaluation on the other. Older women miss their youth and past beauty: "I used to be attractive, pretty, and generally happy with my body, but now, bleh! Don't look at me" (P-19, w-80); "Ah, the body ages, because we do. And they're young so they have supple bodies, we're old now, wrinkled. We have different bodies now. I can't count on beauty anymore. I won't be pretty anymore. When I was young, I was a pretty girl then. But now, you know, a person gets old, wrinkles and everything" (Ch-78, w-71); "I'm getting fatter now, can't lose weight. My skin is sagging. Sometimes when I'm bathing, I miss my body" (K-25, w-62).

Older men long for former physical fitness: "I liked being active. I would play around with amateur sports. Volleyball. Used to be swimming, biking, then my son got me into tennis. I played a lot, only 5 years ago" (W-93, m-65); "It was always a source of satisfaction, but after illness it was disappointment. If I can't tighten a screw in the car. We had a flat tire when going on vacation and my wife had to go, get somebody next to us to do it, that's disappointing" (W-89, m-62); "I was always physically able, always in the lead in school…At university I even stood out in sports, despite my 160 centimeters height with a hat on" (W-66, m-80).

Western research shows that throughout their whole life-cycle men are dissatisfied with their musculature to a similar degree as women are with their weight (Bessenoff and Del Priore 2007). Constant concern for a fit body, especially during old age, is clearly visible in the interviewed group of men. Unlike interviewed women of the same age group, older men emphasize the role of physical fitness, constitution, they praise the able body: "Well, first of all, you have to work on your fitness, to stay fit as long as possible. I like to ride my bike, I like swimming, taking walks. All that stress is relieved, you can forget about certain things. And the muscles are activated. So yes, that's important for me, to be able as long as possible, to not be a burden to someone later on, or not be dependent on someone" (K-97, m-66); "the body is very important, unfortunately, with age, certain things show up and sometimes you feel a pain, I would definitely prefer to be more fit: (W-4, m-63).

In the interviewed group, the body is seen as troublesome matter, old age as an unsightly defect, and visible signs of aging suggest the owner of the body has lost control of it. For older participants, male and female, the body is a source of disappointment and suffering due to illness: "if I were healthy then, I would be happy, and not arterial disease and diabetes, you get older, it hurts here, it hurts there. All the Egyptian plagues have got me!" (P-43, m-74); "The body and my physicality are something that

lets me down, causes me pain and unpleasantness… all those conditions…" (K-69, m-68); "Oh, I'm an old lady now, so my body is just pain, it's slow and doesn't want to listen" (W-41, w-74).

Older men are pleased with their own bodies more often than women, despite their illnesses and the aging they have felt: "A person is just glad to be alive" (P-56, m-70). Old age is a challenge for men: "I'm pleased with myself so far, two operations, I got sick last year, one after the other, but I came out of it, I can't complain. I don't complain" (P-66, m-69).

The older respondents are, the less likely they are to assign large significance to appearance. Studies conducted on a representative sample in Poland show that one's looks lose meaning with age, but even among respondents 65 or older, 80% declare that their own appearance is important to them (CBOS 2003). After turning 50, men have more perspective when it comes to them and their appearance: "A person gets old, and so he loses attractiveness. I'm not 20 years old. I'm aware of that. To some I can be attractive, to others not. Now I appreciate what's inside, more than the physical" (K-13, m-50); "I look in the mirror: I used to be beautiful and young. I'm young no more" (K-43, m-57); "I'm trying to lose a little weight, to look a bit better, dress better, I'm not quite an old grandpa yet, you know. When I'm walking, I can suck my stomach in a bit, so I look a bit younger" (Ch-57, m-55).

The likelihood of experiencing a sense of alienation related to the body (embarrassment, awkwardness, shyness) is higher the more disproportion there is between the socially desired body and one's own (imposed on the body through gazes and reactions of others) (Bourdieu 2004:81). Turning 50, for a woman, is associated with menopause—the first significant signal for her that the process of aging has begun. A sense of the end of womanhood and a loss of physical attractiveness is felt. Interviewed women in this age range more often admit a lack of will in fighting for a slim figure: "That… not so much. Taking into account that I've gained weight—I also totally don't do anything about it, to be clear. I tried, nothing worked, and now I just put it down and I don't do anything, but I don't accept it" (W-88, w-54); "I am happy, but why do we have to get old so quickly? One could stand to do more for the body, the organism, but... don't feel like it" (P-17, w-59).

Though the idea of diet is culturally associated mostly with womanly care for appearance, older men, not only for health reasons, but also to increase their own sense of attractiveness, use the services of nutritionists and fitness trainers relatively often (Gough 2007). Within the studied group, regardless of age, men also declare a will to fight to maintain an appropriate weight: "I'm not happy because once I didn't yet have these here, fatty bits, but now I have to ride my bike 10 km a day, because I can't do more. In the morning, I wave my arms around, there's these various gymnastics exercises I do, because I know I have to pretend to not be an old geezer, but always be like, young of age" (K-42, m-73).

In a consumer society, a great emphasis is put on self-managing the body—maintenance, conservation, and parts replacement (Featherstone 2001), in other words, a return to the tool metaphors applied by Descartes. Even if the majority of interviewed

do little to submit their body to full self-control, they certainly are aware that they should. The clash of cultural beauty norms and real-life appearance of an elderly person leads to frustrations and becomes a potential source of suffering; within the interviewed group, this mostly concerns women. For older women, judged in aesthetic categories, looks are a basic indicator of self-esteem. According to the interviews conducted, the body is a vessel of pleasure and auto-expression mostly in the declarations of men. Women are less satisfied with their weight and age, compared to men. Mature women are a group which shows a lower amount of satisfaction because of changes in their physicality, because they feel internal and social pressure to maintain physical attractiveness more acutely than men. Not all older respondents feel discomfort about their appearance, the main source of satisfaction for them is not so much physical attractiveness, but—especially in the case of men—an able, healthy body.

Summary of Study Results

In the narration of the participants of both genders, physicality is a biological (physiological) reality, as well as a cultural text. Like in the studies of Charyl Laz (2003), in the quoted interviews, one can distinguish four distinct, though overlapping dimensions of embodiment, including: 1. activity, fitness, and health; 2. energy; 3. appearance; and 4. ailments and illness. Physicality can be experienced individually and socially, it is a phenomenon exhibited in various forms. In the respondents' statements, the body often undergoes reification, thus it is presented as an object, a shell, or collection of elements. The emphasis on human physicality is clear, the duality of human nature, parallel of soul and body, is pointed out less often. Separation into soul and body stems not only from religion, but from the progressing secularization and medicalization of the body, of which the respondents are aware.

Most statements contain an element of judgment, a large emphasis is put on the aesthetics of the body. In the studied group, caring for yourself is founded on caring for one's body, which turns out to be a pliable material. The respondents are "owners" of the body, which should be cared for and shaped according to one's own preferences and social, cultural ones. Working on one's body—upkeep procedures, physical exercises, dieting, and their result in the form of achieving the intended appearance, give a feeling of fulfillment and self-realization. On the one hand, respondents' activities in the bodily sphere are set on hedonistic goals, equated with leisure, on the other, care for one's body is associated with self-discipline and hard work. The interviewed, especially those younger, fulfill the model of the "disciplined" body, they subject their bodies to modification, and often it becomes an enemy, whose resistance (mostly weight) they must defeat. In the case of women, the process is subject to emotions, desires, and passions to a greater degree than in the case of men, who more often organize perfecting the body with rational control and instrumental procedures.

Similarly to other empirical analyses (Mirucka and Sakson-Obada 2013:94), in the studied group, there is a specific set of convictions, among women and men, about the body:

1. Physical beauty is the axial trait of a woman's appearance.

2. Care for one's appearance is one of the most successful strategies for building and controlling positive relations with other people.

3. Achieving physical attractiveness in the form of being slim (among women) and having defined musculature (among men) is one of the main life goals.

The tools with which the interviewed discipline their own bodies are, in the case of women— counting calories, and in the case of men—taking up sports. In the statements of women, the drive for social acceptance of the body is clearly noticeable. Young women live under pressure from the cult of beautiful bodies and lack of acceptance for aging. Both men and women give meaning to the physical-bodily aspect of "self," however, in the case of women, this foremost concerns appearance, while men, regardless of age, definitely assign more value to models of athleticism and physical ability. Younger and older women reduce their value to physical attractiveness, it is worth emphasizing, however, that in the interviewed group, men also have the awareness of "being a body." They are becoming increasingly conscious of their own looks and the benefits of maintaining themselves.

The cultural obligation of possessing a good looking body, flawless and young, brings with it embarrassment associated with old age. The opposition of young body versus old body seems very significant. The image of an old body is not a positive one within the group studied. The physiological symptoms of aging are seen as a loss of beauty, sexual identity, visibility, and social significance. In the older group, men accept their bodies to a greater degree than women. This does not mean, however, that their appearance is a main source of life satisfaction for them. Men give lesser significance to their appearance than women, and most of all consider the functional aspects of physicality to be important, that is, physical fitness, strength, stamina, ability to perform work, potency.

Old age, weight problems, and the inability to maintain a slim figure become a stigma, as well as a significant indicator of the respondent's identity. Women, regardless of age, are less satisfied with their body and have a more negative cognitive-emotional body image compared to men. Women in the interviewed group more often define themselves through their looks and consider being slim and youthful as the most important aspects of their physical attractiveness. Especially in the statements of mature women, the stigma of being overweight or ill is especially prominent. The cultural requirements set for a female body are much higher than that of the male body, which may be why lack of satisfaction with one's appearance and body weight are a significantly lesser problem among the men interviewed.

The presented study results show that, in Poland, there are two opposing currents in the area of customs regarding the body. On the one hand, the liberal Western custom is reflected in the research, for example, in the new model of gendered physicality. Like in the narcissistic culture of the West, the body is meant to be a source of pleasure, and

physical attractiveness, tied strongly to youth, has become an element of life success. Men are increasingly concerned with the appearance of their bodies, especially when it comes to physical fitness and weight. They want to appear strong and athletic. They see their bodies the same way that women are taught to see theirs—as an ongoing project which requires work. This partly coincides with general care for health and fitness, but partly concerns youthful looks, because being elderly is not valued in Polish society. On the other hand, a traditional custom is visible, referring to religious norms, promoting the patriarchal model of female physicality marginalized in old age. Men's anxieties regarding their bodies reflect the anxieties of women. While women are absorbed with the idea of weight, men are absorbed with muscle mass and build—which means that everyone is absorbed in those aspects of men's and women's bodies which suggest and exaggerate the in-born biological differences between the genders. In light of the study results presented, however, control of the body seems to apply more to women, regardless of age, and to negatively affect their self-esteem and acceptance of their own physicality.

Conclusions

The body is the most intimate part of human existence and yet also the most common symbol, representation of its public manifestation. Body is one of the seemingly simple, concrete terms, which is hard to define. As Turner (1984:7-8) claims, it is something most permanent, and yet most elusive; concrete and metaphorical, always present and most foreign. Between the discourse of biological sciences, social sciences, or law—to point out just three areas—there are serious discrepancies as to what "body" is exactly. Research shows that understanding that which is obvious is a complex thing. Body can be counted among the universal, indefinable terms (Karwatowska 2014:252). Polish Nobel prize winner, Wisława Szymborska, stated that, in the Polish language, there was actually only one word she did not like, due to its sound—the word "body" (*ciało*, IPA: [ˈtɕ̑awɔ]). Contrary to the Latin "corpus," in which, as she said, "you could hear the cohesiveness, the crunch of bones, tension of the muscles. In Polish it is sluggish, shapeless, too soft" (Rusinek 2016:90).

As the study results shown in this article illustrate, there are various functions, meanings, and uses for the body. The body is a space and simultaneously a point within it, a symbol, tool, image. Empirical landscapes associated with the term have expanded to huge proportions. Humanistic sciences have seen, in human physicality, a space formed by culture, taking on itself reflective functions, responsible for the shaping of human identity. However, as Bryan Turner (1984) points out, the term remains an "illusory" or erroneously defined category, often actually lost in the process of theoretical analysis. On the other hand, the body, due to its properties—changeability, fluidity, or ability to transform—is a considerable challenge as a subject of study and often escapes the regimen of sociological concepts. Rosi Braidotti claims that there is no such thing as the essence of contemplations of physicality, that area is empty. In the discursive structure of modernity, "the problem of the living body is linked with the loss of one, unified vision of embodied subject. Therefore, the issue of body is

as unavoidable as it is unsolvable…there is no consensus as to *what* the currently embodied subject is" (Braidotti 2009:77-78).

In modern humanistic sciences, the body is presented in various social orders: corporeal, interactive, genital, gendered, class, consumption, and material. Body, as an instrument of experiencing the world and a vessel for pleasure, is the central element of a modern human's identity project, a space of self-realization and self-expression. Mass media and popular culture make adventures of the body a prime topic, which organizes vast areas of discussion devoted to power, the erotic, violence, economy, politics, and art. In social reality, the body becomes a place of various clashing narrations and value systems. The explosion of new bodily practices, from cosmetic procedures, to tattooing, to cosmetic surgery, cannot be explained by reducing human motives to simple causes, such as the influence of fashion, popular culture, increased wealth. We are entering a period where the technical possibilities of developing medicine and science meet with the pressures of the market, where the body is becoming a form of capital circulation, which, in turn, increasingly often elicits a desire to oppose this logic of changing intimacy into a commodity. This brings up the question, does the modern human overwhelmed with physicality, paradoxically, feel safer in non-bodily relations.

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The Theater Plays the Body. Replication of the Canon of Beauty among Young Actresses in the Theater

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Abstract The article presents the results of our independent qualitative research conducted in Polish theater circles. In-depth interviews have been conducted with fourth-year female students of acting faculties from four state theater schools and with lecturers working at these faculties. The aim of the study was to answer the question whether the theater has currently become a place where bodily images are being standardized and beauty canons reproduced. The research material gathered allows for the formulation of the following conclusions: 1) studying at a theater school significantly impacts the perception of one's own body, 2) there is a widespread belief among the students concerning the importance of the body (and the beauty thereof) in the profession of an actor, which results in subjecting the body to some regimes, often destructive ones, 3) the pressure to have a perfect body is so strongly internalized in the theater circles that it becomes imperceptible to those who yield under this pressure.

Keywords Body; Canon Beauty; Eating Disorders; Theater; Sociology of the Body

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The sociology of the body is a research perspective present in nearly all the dimensions and realms of social life. However, despite the fact that reflections concerning the theater have often included the issue of the body (e.g., in the context of nudity), the theater has yet to develop research methods and techniques that would be adequate to recognize processes which are currently taking place on stage. Although this is not the main task of the theater, in the light of contemporary theater discussions (largely centered on the presence of women on the stage), it is an important part of the reflection on contemporary theater (Godlewska-Byliniak, Kułakowska, and Łukasz n.d.). Part of the mentioned processes are conditional upon mass culture as broadly understood. At the same time, the theater is a perfect place—while studying the body in it—to satisfy the claim of Honorata Jakubowska (2012) and truly reach the body and corporeality.

The role and meaning of the body in the theater is constantly changing and the category of the body itself can be used as a tool for distinguishing particular territories in the history of theater. However, as Krystyna Duniec (2012:10) points out, "regardless of the type of theater, the body will constitute architectonics of sense, since it is always intertwined in the meaning."

From the anthropological, as well as psychological and sociological perspective, the meaning ascribed to the theatrical body—a body which signifies and is signified—changes together with our embodied experience:

> The theater used to have the purpose of the post-symbolic sublimation of the soul and setting it free from the limitations of random carnality. In the 21st century—just as Adolphe Appia wanted it to be—the human body does not feign reality—since it is reality itself. In contemporary performance, in which the aesthetical, moral, notional, flowing limits between presentation and representation, between the artist and the work of art have been moved, the body is no longer merely a tool for evoking events, but a source thereof. [Duniec 2012:16]

It is a strange paradox, since the body, which loses its figurative sense, dependent upon the human spirit, gains an essential sense on stage. In the world of rickety identities, it becomes a symbol of authenticity. However, it is necessary to remember that this authenticity is clearly marked by "the spirit of the times" and intertwined with the aesthetical discourse: "The present body is a palimpsest, enmeshed in a multi-form process of figuration and transfiguration, where new layers of meanings are added by history, medicine, politics, literature, and gender" (Duniec 2012:19).

Within this meaning it is not only the body that plays in the theater but it is also the theater that plays the body.

The Theater as a Place of Meeting with the Body

The starting point for our reflections is the conviction that each aspect of human life has a carnal dimension and each experience is a carnal one. However, at the same time, this inevitable presence of the body is characterized by its absence in everyday experience—although it is embodied by nature, we erase the body from our consciousness (Jakubowska 2012).

The theater is one of the places where the body can be observed, not being subject to aestheticization with the use of graphic software, where the imperfections of the body can be instantly reduced. In the theater, we get to know the bodies of other people and compare our own. During the play the spectator begins to perceive his or her body as a significant element of existing in social reality. He or she assesses the actors' condition, confronts their bodies with images known from the media, or compares him- or herself to them.

We ask the question of how actors experience their own bodies, how they struggle with their limitations, how they experience shame, exposing their bodies in public. In the course of the research questions of treating one's body as an obstacle (in taking up professional challenges), or experiencing the body during an illness, also emerged.

Also, as far as the commercial potential of the body is concerned, selling the body in pop culture and mass culture relates mainly to women's bodies. Despite the postmodern discourse concerning transgression, the business and the market point directly to the female body.

The Female Body on Stage[1]

The growing phenomenon of gender transgression, as a result of the postmodern dispersion of identity, can also be seen in the theater. Therefore, the theater ought to be treated as a kind of a laboratory in which we observe images of femininity and masculinity. What is clearly visible in it is the further specification of models and canons of beauty present in the mass culture, both in the case of men and women. The regimes that people subject their bodies to in order to achieve a perfect image are both aestheticization on the level of stomatological and surgical interventions, aestheticizations performed with the help of stylists and image specialists, as well as the particular care of one's weight and "quality" of the body. This study concerns female bodies. According to the authors, despite certain similarities between the sexes in adjusting the body to the contemporary canons of beauty, the regimes that women subject their bodies to are different from the ones undertaken by men.

The need to distinguish the body depending on sex still seems to be valid, since the sex still remains the basic category regarding the use of the body (Mauss 1973). The findings concerning the general health of women and men, as well as the factors which determine it, also impact this differentiation (Giddens 2007:171-172).

Furthermore, the female body appears to be particularly subjected to constant control. Although the regulation of women's physical sphere by social standards (moral, religious, legal) is changing, it still remains extraordinarily strong (Garncarek 2010) and nowadays is outright destructive (Jakubowska-Mroskowiak 2002).

The Body as an Object of Control

Observing theater school learners over the last few years gives rise to the thought that the theatrical

[1] The original (Polish) version of this title contains a word play, with "stage" meaning both the theater stage and a boxing ring, where the female body lies, defeated.

body, at least when it approaches the stage, falling under internal and external pressure, appears to be quite uniform. It can be clearly seen here that the body is a cultural and social concept, as well as an object of social control, which involves various aspects (Jakubowska 2009).

The actor's profession, requiring taking particular care of the body as a tool of the trade (Jakubowska 2012), has always subjected the "scenic body" to reflection and focus, yet it allowed for a diversity of body forms. However, never has the body in the theater been so standardized as it is in recent years. Mimesis—one of the functions of the theater—seems to be limited nowadays to the reproduction of beauty canons.

At vocal faculties where voice is the basic criterion determining whether or not a person will be admitted to the school, the theatrical body appears to be more varied. However, the pressure to improve it and put it within the frames of contemporary ideas of a beautiful (slim) theatrical body is not decreasing. It might be said that today even ears have eyes.[2]

The presented study has enabled us to examine an interesting piece of the social world—theater schools—which corresponds to processes taking place among the younger generation, susceptible to criticism and control due to immaturity and external factors (expectations of their peers and teachers). As Jan Szczepański (1970) points out, control is one of the basic elements of socialization; thanks to control, it is possible to regulate the behavior of individuals and whole social groups.

Bulimia and anorexia nervosa which are, according to the authors, extreme consequences of the pursuit of the perfect body, are common in various circles, and the theater community is only one of them. However, it is this particular environment where problems related to eating disorders can be recognized much more easily, owing to the compulsion to shape and take care of one's body, which is typical of this community. We emphasize it in the very beginning, since the scale of the problem among female students at acting faculties (although representatives of acting circles are associated with eating disorders) has really surprised us.

Research Questions, Place of Research, Difficulties

The aim of the study was to understand, partially at least, the extent of the internalization of external pressure to have a body which meets the norms and canons of beauty. We assumed that the appearance of very similar bodies on stage is the result of various factors—the awareness present in the culture of beauty canons, the expectations of the selection committee in entry exams, and the personal preferences of the persons making recruitment decisions.

Through the study we wanted to answer the following question: Do young people bow so much to the pressure of mass culture and conform to the ideal of beauty reproduced in the mass media or is it the preferences of the lecturers that decide whose body will become the next model?

[2] Covent Garden paid for stomach-shrinking surgery and liposuction for Deborah Voigt, when she reached a weight which made the stage performances of the soprano in her costumes not so much impossible, as offending the taste of the audience admiring the singer's voice.

The study was conducted at the 34th Theater Schools Festival, which took place in Łódź, May 10-15, 2016. Conducting the research during the festival enabled us to reach a wide group of respondents.

Since we worked on an area that has not been explored before, as far as theater in Poland is concerned, we chose to verify the thesis with the method of in-depth unstructured interviews, not merely in order not to falsify the thesis but also to discover new problems.

We were aware that we were touching upon problems existing in the environment being researched on many levels, which the social actors themselves often remain unaware of. In addition, the problem of eating disorders selected already at the initial stage of research required that we demonstrate particular sensitivity, but also conversation skills, knowledge concerning the problem, and awareness of conditions in which people who are ill live and describe the world.

Methodology—Sampling and Methods of Analysis

Since qualitative field researchers strive to grasp experiences and interactions in their natural context, we decided to deal in the research environment (theater) of one of the authors, placed in the context of research interest of the other author (unification of the body according to a beauty canon).

We have conducted 17 in-depth interviews: 13 with female students of the 4th course of faculties of acting at four state theater schools and 4 interviews with teachers working at these faculties. Part of the interviews were semi-structured life word interviews, while another part used elements of factual, conceptual, narrative, and confrontational interviews.

The interview as a space for constructing knowledge was carefully structured so that reliable knowledge about the world and the awareness of the respondents could be obtained. However, where both the respondent's knowledge, as well as their willingness to share their own experience went beyond the scenario of the interview, other types of interviews proved to be valuable. Elements of a factual interview, in which the significance of the respondent's history to the identity of the group is more important than their personal relation to the events mentioned (Kvale 2011:124), were present in talks with teachers and the female respondents who admitted to eating disorders.

Elements of a conceptual interview, the purpose of which is to clarify concepts and ways of understanding the phenomena described (Kvale 2011:125), appeared in almost all interviews. Elements of a narrative interview made it possible to obtain a lot of information about the respondents themselves and the structure of their connections in a given institution. Narration is one of the most natural cognitive and linguistic forms through which individuals try to sort out and express meaning. If the respondent is used to the stereotypical style of the interview and uses "ready-made formulas," the researcher's request to tell their own story will leave room for "the author's element" in which the respondent, often unconsciously, "will come out of the role" and, ordering the quoted events while telling the story, will cast a new light on them (Kvale 2011:127).

Elements of a confrontational interview as a form of an active interview in which the researcher stimulates the process of narrative creation, suggesting views that the respondent may accept (Kvale 2011:131), made it possible to verify the obtained data.

Sampling was purposeful. The research was conducted in two stages: for the first 6 interviews we chose the respondents using the snowball method. This stage allowed us to examine the area; next respondents were chosen mainly on the basis of the specificity of the stage roles they presented.

Long-term presence in the environment, in-depth analysis thereof, and awareness of internal conditionings made it possible not only to reach key respondents but also to preserve symmetry in interaction of interviews.

Triangulation in the research covered the following methods: ethnographic participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, interviews with elements of factual, conceptual, narrative, and confrontational interview, interviews with experts, and visual method.

Prior to commencing the research we saw pictures of young actresses published on websites of students' theaters,[3] treating them as a kind of related data (Gibbs 2011:53). These were photos from previously announced sessions, taken by a professional photographer; presenting both portraits and whole figures of the actresses. We also presented this material to persons uninterested in theater and the issue we approached, asking them to assess the likeness between the actresses. We were surprised that many of those persons noticed similarities not only with regard to figures, but also the type of looks preferred by a given school. It can be easily explained, especially in the case of institutions in which the final decision concerning the admitting of candidates to the first year of studies is made by the year's tutor single-handedly. However, we are aware that "generally speaking, the nature of visual methods is more to explore than to verify" (Banks 2009:32).

The particular character of interviews also depended on the time they were conducted. When new research problems appeared, the interviews were supplemented by further questions, and the issues which appeared in them were taken up by people well-aware of the situation—connected with the artistic education system and theater. Such a practice is consistent with the assumption that definitions and hypotheses in qualitative research are developed and improved in the course of the research (Flick 2011:14).

These were forms of group interviews conducted in non-formal situations. In view of the particular character of the respondents, the interviews may also be categorized as expert interviews.

Data Analysis

When analyzing data we used the method of bricolage, an eclectic form of producing meaning (through the multitude of methods and theoretical approaches adopted *ad hoc*): "Bricolage refers to

[3] See: http://www.teatrstudyjny.lodz.pl/aktorzy-teatru-studyjnego-w-lodzi-20152016/. Retrieved April 17, 2018.

mixed technical discourses, that is, to a situation in which the interpreter moves freely between various analytical techniques" (Kvale 2011:186). Hence, in the course of the conducted analysis, there were various techniques interoperating:

1. Those techniques making it possible to notice the elements which are compatible with one another:
   - registering models and schemes,
   - noticing likelihood,
   - grouping.

2. Those techniques making it possible to combine various constituents of the data:
   - building metaphors.

In view of the small amount of the material, we were able to analyze it thoroughly. We made comparisons and differentiated by dividing the variables.

We are aware that considering such a small scale of the research, making generalizations from the interviews can be misleading. Thus, we emphasize that the conclusions which we draw on the basis of this research should not be generalized, but signal only the problems discovered.

Gathering factors, noticing relationships between variables, and searching for intermediary variables (Miles and Huberman 2000:252-253) allowed us to express the subject as a whole and seek a relationship between the observed state and the reasons which led to it.

Thanks to the bricolage technique we were able to determine the correlation between the recognized problem of the respondents' eating disorder and the willingness to talk about it, as well as the length of utterances. The persons identified as suffering from bulimia and/or anorexia and admitting to their illness clearly indicated both the internal (psyche) and external (system of education in artistic schools) factors which contributed to the development of the illness. The persons who did not admit to suffering from those illnesses (although they had been indicated by their teachers and peers as the ones who struggle with this problem), were unwilling to talk about the rate of occurrence of such disorders among their friends. Such a correlation clearly points to one of the basic recommendations—being aware of the problem and familiarizing oneself with it results in greater openness in talking about it and undertaking steps to deal with it.

Being an Actor

While researching the scenic body, we are aware that the actor "experiences his own body similarly to a dancer, as a tool, an interactive partner, or a material which has to be conciliated according to the needs of a social group" (Byczkowska 2009:102 as cited in Jakubowska 2012:14). The actor is exposed to critical social reception and continuously judged to a far greater extent than other professions. Youth is another element which increases the need for being accepted, sensitivity to external stimuli, and often the inability to set one's own boundaries, too. However, people willing to pursue this career are not in short supply; acting faculties are among the most popular choices in the country, with 50 applicants for each place.

At the same time, when touching upon the body, which is interesting to us as the subject of research itself, it reveals itself to us as an indicator referring to other dimensions of social life. We have singled out the following research questions and problems:

1. Perception of one's own body prior to the commencement of education at the school and currently.
2. Importance of the body in an actor's career.
3. Emphasizing the role of the body in the theater school education process.
4. Working on the body (at school and outside of it) and bodily regimes.
5. Acceptance as self-reflection and in feedback.
6. Can lack of perfection be an asset?
7. Is there conscious pressure to standardize looks in theater circles?
8. Who do I compare myself to? Colleagues and pop culture models as the mirror and reference point.
9. Presence of eating disorders.

The above questions and research problems constituted the basis for the interviewer to construct an interview scenario. They directed the collection of empirical material and then its analysis.

The rich literature on the role and perception of the body in the modern world has provided us with some tracks. We were also convinced that the issues we touch on in this particular profession and at this stage of the respondents' career will in many places be related to general corporeality analyses, although intensified by the specificity of the acting profession. The transition from general to specific objectives has made it possible to see how, by operating in the theater environment and confronting the social expectations of the actor's role, the attitude of a young actress to her own body changes and the feeling of pressure on the adaptation of her own image to environmental and social needs and expectations increases.

Both at the state of the interview stage and material analysis, we tried to preserve this pattern as an element illustrating the process of emergence of eating disorders in the theater environment. The above pattern of questions and issues allows us to see that the source of the problem of eating disorders is located outside of the educational system, although the educational system noticeably deepens it.

The Impact of School Education on the Perception of the Body

One can easily notice that the perception of one's own body prior to the commencement of education at the school, and after several years of studying, changes dramatically in the course of socialization in theater schools.

Perception of one's own body ought to be divided into two stages—before and after the school. All

respondents emphasize that they were completely different when they joined the school.

> It's hard for me to remember who I was those four years ago. I have an impression that each year of this school was a different me, that it all happened so quickly, this school results in such a development of self-awareness, self-knowledge, that I was a different person each year. [S8]

They understand the maturity which they reach at school in many ways—on the one hand, it is greater self-awareness—awareness of one's emotionality, as well as the capabilities and limitations of one's body. On the other hand, maturity is understood as acceptance of one's body (at least declared).

> Before I went to school I paid attention if my body was pretty…There's no such thing as a pretty or ugly body; the body can be interesting or not, each fat roll can be used to your advantage. The more I accept this, the better I can use it in acting. [S1]

Growing to be aware of oneself, one's own body and its capabilities was emphasized by nearly all of the respondents.

The second stage of one's own body perception is the body they are aware of, the body which is an effective tool, the object of reflection, focus, and care, but perceived more like an option than a necessity. It is then when the awareness of one's boundaries, the ability to protect oneself and say "no" appears.

> In the freshman year the tutor suggested that we all got undressed…there was a mirror and everybody approached it and took their clothes off, we were in our underwear, like at a swimming pool and he would approach us, standing in front of this mirror and ask us what we didn't like about ourselves, what our strengths and weaknesses were, as far as body was concerned. And so we looked at ourselves this way, that we had bandy legs, prominent ears and he said then that you have bandy legs and do you realize that your head is like a pepper, and this and that, and you should lose weight, that you should exercise...to become aware of it. This shouldn't have happened in the freshman year, if at all. If it had happened later, I wouldn't have participated in it. [S8]

According to the respondents, the boundary between exposing and showing one's body at school or on stage is very thin and easy to be breached, particularly in the hierarchical system of education. A fact which creates an additional difficulty is that the students are often taught by their future employers, so setting one's own boundaries (at least initially) is difficult or even impossible.

Lack of acceptance on the part of the lecturers, and excessive expectations regarding the students' bodies, are attributed by the actresses not to the teachers' lack of good will, but to external conditions and the laws of the market.

Whenever I Want to

Respondents claimed that they were able to change their bodies at will and work on them, which requires iron discipline and self-control. They admire it in their colleagues, but admit that they do not have such a need themselves.

> Sure, I'm jealous, I look at them and think what beautiful bodies they have, I envy them because I know it requires work and discipline, and I respect this and admire my beautiful colleagues, but I'm not like that, I could do it, too, but what for? [S10]

An exception is the case when they work on a role, which justifies complying with practically any regimes. In their opinion, the body can be freely transformed and disciplined. They see it as a process in the making.

> When I stand next to my colleagues who have flat bellies, firm butts with no cellulite, because they don't eat this and that, they exercise a lot, I could do the same, but I take care of my body because I'm gonna have it for the rest of my life, but some regimes are only for the role, but maybe just because I'm young and ready for a challenge. [S11]

It is worth mentioning that the challenges related to dramatic loss of weight are rather connected with accepting cinema roles. However, the awareness of the fact that the profession of an actor involves such a challenge makes going on an extremely strict diet behavior which is acceptable (and even admired) in this environment and never ostracized.

> I wish I could sing better, I don't know how to improvise when singing—skills, not looks? I can always change the looks, but it requires a great deal of discipline from me…I was never able to reach such a point, well, perhaps once I looked like a model, but I'm not able to reach such a point to be size 34—that's the desired one? Yes, 34 and 170 cm it's like...for a movie, because on the stage it's always like I shouldn't be plump, I should have bigger eyes. [S9]

Striving to have a perfect body is clearly inspired by the model suggested by mass culture.

Importance of the Body in an Actor's Career

The respondents emphasize that looks should go together with talent and personality, but they have no doubt that in many cases it is the appearance itself that swings the balance. They hear it even from their professors.

> Yes, sometimes it is so [that appearance is more important than skills—footnote authors]. Even before theater school, when I studied at a preparatory school, I heard it from a professor, an experienced actor who prepared us for theater school: "An actress doesn't have to be smart, she has to be pretty." [S1]

> Talented, with such a pointed chin, and though all the ladies were for, the tutor didn't admit her...because it's the tutor that finally makes the decision; actress reduced to a good-looking thing? I'm sorry to say so, but in fact, that's the way it is. [P2]

Beginning from theater schools, the theater environment is a basin of sexism. Actresses are not judged through the prism of their skills, acting, or vocal talent, but their body. It turns out that talent and knowledge do not decide on an acting career, but above all a "pretty face." The respondents speak directly, though in a more vulgar way:

> Always at auditions for movies and commercials, unless somebody is outstanding, but after school we all represent a certain level, but it's the muzzle that counts. [S9]

Enormous competition in the profession and the tough rules of the market leave young people with no illusions:

> We are a product—it's the pretty stuff that sells. [P9]

> There is something like that, it's not the most talented ones that make it, it's the prettiest ones, those dolls, and people in the theater start to admire them. [P2]

Female students are, therefore, aware of being objectified. After leaving theater school, and sometimes even while still studying, they become a "commodity" to meet the expectations of "buyers," first directors, and then the audience.

Emphasizing the Role of the Body in the Theater School Education Process

The actresses' belief about the importance of looks also results from the fact that the role of the body is emphasized in the education process, both during the exams, and in the course of education.

The body is greatly emphasized in theater education, which is expressed in regulations. The body has to be healthy in order to rise to the challenges it is put through:

> Schools have to teach the trade, the body is a tool of the trade, thorough workshops on the basics of dancing, movement improvisation, acrobatics, there are also additional workshops for them to meet personages from various fields, 50%/50%; a whole lot of moving, there's no theater outside the body. [P1]

> In the freshman year, there's a lot of it, three hours of dancing, the body doesn't have time to rest, then the second year is better, and in the third and fourth there's nothing at all. [S9]

It is easy to notice that in the course of socialization at artistic schools, young actresses internalize standards and values desired in a given group. Particularly explicit are the "vigilance systems" (Szczepański 1970) which, together with formal (bylaw) and informal actions (assessment of individuals by members of the groups he or she belongs to), make it possible to exercise social control over the bodies of young actresses, of which they are often unaware.

The extent of control depends, for example, on the social and cultural situation of a given community and the extent to which standards and values are internalized by particular individuals, as well as on their social position, and the resulting ways of fulfilling social roles (woman/actress/student/lecturer) (Weinberg 2007).

Working on the Body (at School and Outside of It) and Bodily Regimes

The body should therefore meet the social standard and expectations. Even if working on the body is often destructive:

> One student lost 20 kg for the role, we told him that he can't go through such a drastic change because today

> you play here, tomorrow there, and it's not healthy, it's not the USA where you have a coach, a dietician, a year or two...under our Polish circumstances it's impossible, it slowly changes, but for those who have the freedom to choose the roles, they want and have financial security… [P1]

> Out of the greatest cruelty I only drank juice for a month and I still rode a bike, it was a need for some kind of control. [S9]

Of course, these may be seen as extreme cases, marking already the beginning of eating disorders, yet many young people are able to do a lot in order to get a role or maintain it. However, gaining the acceptance of the theater environment (which translates into engagements and career development) is worth the great effort.

Acceptance as Self-Reflection and in Feedback

How important the role of the body is in self-acceptance can be exemplified by the following quote: "Our life is dependent on the proper functioning of our body. Even our sense of identity is based on the expectation that the body will make it easier, not harder for us to interact with others" (Giddens 2007:181).

Acceptance appears to be one of the basic conditions to pursue this profession, with the respondents claiming that it is to be searched for in oneself first.

> The more I try to be myself instead of striving to please somebody else, the more acceptance I get. Because I don't expect this acceptance, when you accept yourself, you don't need the acceptance of others so much. [S3]

The respondents also emphasize that the significant other is an important element of self-acceptance. It can be a loved one, but it is the professors and tutors that turn out to be the most important ones.

> There are really wise people in Wrocław, I followed the right path, I met…who didn't allow any of the girls to come to her classes in make-up, she made us uglier, I fought on the stage, I cried...she made us get used to being natural. I knew I didn't have to pretend to be anybody else. [S10]

> For me it's always important to hear a good word from the year tutor, because he's the one that leads us. [S4]

The professor-expert accepting the students as the "significant other" is the highest form of acknowledgement.

> You need to be reconciled with yourself, you need to read a lot and you need to have a boyfriend. [S8]

> This school is quite a psychology school, I got a lot from the professors, but I also had my private life with somebody outside this environment; support of a loved one really helps to overcome this jealousy. [S11]

Eating disorders remain inseparably related to feelings of low self-worth, the need to be accepted, fear, depression, and the inability to cope with one's emotions. They are an answer of still immature individuals to the postmodern requirement

to treat the body as a project, material that can be shaped at will, often under the pressure of culture or peers. The capability to shape the body is particularly important in the profession of the actor, who is required to be able to transform his body in a most spectacular way (putting on and losing weight for the role, appearing older, uglier).

Can Lack of Perfection Be an Asset?

Some of the respondents claimed that there is a place for every kind of body, also the one outside of the canon, in the theater. The actresses they mentioned (Hajewska-Krzysztofik, Celińska) have their admiration, but the girls are aware that imperfections are allowed once you already are a personage and an acknowledged theatrical talent.

> A "flaw" may turn into an advantage…the stage likes it when something doesn't add up, something isn't right, there is no such thing in the actor's body that would be a clear flaw, everything can be turned into an asset. [S2]

The imperfect body was also described in a positive way, as the one that can play a therapeutic role.

> It's necessary in the theater, people need to see somebody who is like them, who limps, who is dirty, who fails, who's posseting. People need that, women especially. People want to see life, not styled faces, hair, figures, it's just pretty, but it's boring. [S2]

The tendency to perceive bodies which do not belong to the canon in a positive way can also be seen as part of some theater fad which professors talk about:

> There is a fad for some kind of pathology, on the one hand, there is a whole trend like that in the theater, while, on the other hand, there are the pretty ones, there's nothing in-between, either a doll or a monster. [P2]

Is There Conscious Pressure to Standardize Looks in Theater Circles?

The pressure to have a perfect body and look beautiful is so strongly internalized that it is difficult to say clearly what determines the thinking and actions of students to the greatest extent; the perfect model of a female body present in mass culture, watching their colleagues who get closer to it or the suggestions of the professors who believe in it due to the "laws of the market."

The actresses themselves do not notice great similarities between one another; such a suggestion rather surprised them. They do not realize the pressure they fall under.

> I don't see it anymore, but come to think of it, then it is so, we are actually all one type, none of us are more than 36 and 170. [S8]

> From my point of view, this is absurd that we can be similar to one another, because we are so totally different, a collection of totally different characters, each one wants to be the alpha female, but I recently changed my hairstyle and people now recognize me; yeah, that third year are clones. [S7]

> In Łódź, it's like somebody comes up to me and I thought I had already talked with that person and

> it's a completely new person, it's amazing that they find people of the same type. [S10]

It is hard for the actresses to admit that they give in to pressure; they do not admit it, trying to justify the similarities between their figures. They explain that a slim and athletic body is related rather to trying to be in good shape, which is crucial in the profession of an actor, than to taking care of the appearance. The actresses mentioned the need for a healthy diet, keeping the body in good shape, and being aware that they would be competing with one another to get a job.

> Usually by the end of the 4th year they're all beautiful, thin, like processed...it happens as a side effect, but not because we have a lot of physical education classes, it's like from the second year on they are on the runway and in the third year the competition begins. [S7]

> It's obvious that there is some pressure, that we have to look good, we have to feel good in our bodies, and that's why everybody's athletic, exercises, and watches what they eat. It's not about being pretty. [S5]

Comments about body and weight are part of everyday life in this environment. The pressure starts from the dresser, because there are no size 38 costumes in theater warehouses. Professors' suggestions that a slim, slender, and flexible body is the key to success are the order of the day:

> We had classes with NL who does the auditioning for all the Polish movies and she said that there are five girls in our course who have to lose 5 kg immediately if they want to be taken into consideration at all, and she said it directly—honestly and bluntly. [S9]

> I had an audition for a short film and I was told that I don't meet the conditions [concerning weight], somebody once told me that there will always be time to put on weight. [S4]

Whom Do I Compare Myself to? Colleagues and Pop Culture Models as the Mirror and Reference Point

The example of colleagues who get hired as a reward for their intense work on the body motivates them to take similar efforts:

> I don't know if I envy other bodies, I know what body I would like to have and I strive to achieve it, I can see that she's beautiful and I ask myself if I am, too. [S3]

> We can impose an enormous regime on ourselves, I've seen that because many of my colleagues have problems with eating…it's like when one girl is athletic and has a job, then many people try to follow suit and some of them go to extremes. [S13]

One of the professors also notices this trend: "what difference does it make if we choose various types, if they format themselves on their own" (P4).

Presence of Eating Disorders

Eating disorders as a problem of the contemporary world are also present in acting circles, where they meet with particularly favorable conditions. Both

the respondents and the teaching staff are aware of the presence of the problem.

> I became ill when I was 16 and this environment only aggravated it. [S9]

> I heard that they have a huge problem with it in other schools, the extent of this obsession about body and looks is enormous. [S13]

It seems that it is no longer a problem of individual cases that the professors talk about in the context of sick leave. The students point out that the scale of this phenomenon is much bigger:

> In our course, I know more than 5 people that I know have this problem, people rather hide it because it's embarrassing, that's what this illness really is about, those people give off a sort of an air that everything's great, I'm perfect. [S10]

> I guess that there are 60% with eating disorders, bulimics, anorexics, and people don't talk about it, they say: "You look great." [S12]

One of the tendencies observed was hiding the problem. Girls who are ill can perfectly recognize the symptoms and determine the scale of the disorder. However, even the ones named by the professors as having the problem were often not ready to talk about it. We do not assume that the situation looks the same in all schools. Beyond any doubt, the awareness of the problem can be observed in Cracow and Wrocław. The schools undertake certain actions, for example, organize classes with a psychologist.

> They have classes with a psychologist in freshman year and he can refer them further to somebody else…it's a group of people working there, the emotions which are created there are so enormous, you need to learn how to keep the emotions stable, then it's easier for us, too, to work with them, there is also coaching for teachers, how to talk about difficult things with the students, because you can easily hurt somebody. [P1]

The students appreciate this form of assistance. However, they do not state clearly whether it is sufficient. On the one hand, they do not expect anybody to take over the responsibility for their life and health, while on the other hand, they are often incapable of fighting the illness on their own.

> The school does not take the responsibility in the form of medical inspections, we do it on our own. How do you do it? You lose weight, you don't eat, you sweat in the gym, they have no responsibility, nobody asks you: "Did you go to a dietician, maybe we can give you a refund. You lost weight? That's cool!" And if that's cool, then the girls keep losing weight because it can be even more cool. [S12]

Summary

Our research demonstrates that schools are the place where socialization to a specifically understood femininity occurs. This socialization takes place on various levels, and its sources are both external and internal. The external level consists of the visual surroundings (including the message presented by the media), teachers, and their educational methods. The internal level, in turn, is the students' ideas of

their own bodies. All this makes young actresses strive to standardize their bodies.

The research problem mentioned in our study, that is, the pressure to standardize the bodies of students learning the art of acting (manifesting itself in eating disorders), although it concerns individuals and their emotional dysfunctions, is undoubtedly a sociological problem. For it is the "sociological imagination," as defined by C. Wright Mills, that makes it possible to notice public problems in private concerns. Our respondents form a peculiar social group—on the one hand, they are young people, susceptible to cultural pressure to keep the body in a certain condition, while on the other hand, as representatives of the world of TV or the cinema—it is they that will soon be given the social legitimation to influence mass imagination. Therefore, the extent to which these individuals consent to submitting the body to regimes is of crucial importance. In the light of our research, it turns out that such a process does take place, which manifests itself in expressing approval of slim actresses ("the camera adds weight") or playing down the problem of mental disorders in the actors' community (such disorders are described as either minor cases or a natural, ordinary phenomenon in this community).

We realize that generalization of the results could be possible if the sampling were bigger (including students of all courses) or even full (which is feasible). We know that by conducting this study we have only outlined a certain problem, but we cannot generalize the conclusions, since the circumstances of students learning the art of acting, as well as the teaching practices, are different in various theater schools. The research should be deepened and broadened, for example, by including actors (men) or the students of all courses at acting faculties in the sampling. Nevertheless, we think that we were able to reach key aspects of the origin of this social problem, that is, eating disorders.

An exception is the case when they work on a role, which justifies complying with practically any regime. In their opinion, the body can be freely transformed and disciplined. They see it as a process in the making.

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Nudity, Sexuality, Photography. Visual Redefinition of the Body

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Abstract The article examines the relations between photography, body, nudity, and sexuality. It presents changing relations of photography with a naked or semi-naked body and different forms and recording conventions. From the mid-19th century the naked body became the subject of scientifically grounded photographic explorations, an allegorical motif referring to painting traditions, an object of interest and excitement for the newly-developed "touristic" perspective. These three main ways in which photographs depicting nudity were being taken at that time shaped three visual modes: artistic-documentary, ethnographic-travelling, and scientific-medical. It has deep cultural consequences, including those in the ways of shaping the notions of the corporeal and the sexual. Collaterally, one more, probably prevalent in numbers, kind of photographical images arose: pornographic. In the middle of the 19th century, the repertoire of pornographic pictures was already very wide, and soon it become one of the photographic pillars of visual imagination of the modern society, appealing to private and professional use of photography, popular culture, advertisement, art. The number of erotic and pornographic pictures rose hand over fist with the development of digital photography. Access to pornographic data is easy, fast, and cheap, thanks to the Internet, as it never was before. Photography has fuelled pornography, laying foundations for a massive and lucrative business, employing a huge group of professional sex workers. How all those processes affected our imagination and real practices, what does the staggering number of erotic photography denote? One possible answer comes from Michel Foucault who suggests that our civilization does not have any *ars erotica*, but only *scientia sexualis*. Creating sexual discourse became an obsession of our civilization, and its main pleasure is the pleasure of analysis and a constant production of truth about sex. Maybe today the main pleasure is about watching technically registered images, and perhaps that is why we may consider visual redefinition of the body as the main social effect of the invention of the photography.

Keywords Body; Photography; Nudity; Sexuality; Amateur and Professional Pornography; Sex Workers; *Ars Erotica*; *Scientia Sexualis*

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Photography, as a matter of fact,
is amoral and disobedient.
William A. Ewing (1998:11)

In 1839 in Paris, Louis Daguerre presented his technique of producing pictures, later called daguerreotype, to the French Academy of Science. More or less at the same time in London, William Henry Fox Talbot demonstrated the negative-positive photographic process. At first, in the initial stages of universal admiration for the new invention, it was difficult to conceive its consequences, including those in the ways of shaping the notions of the corporeal and the sexual. Along with the evolving rules of nudity, habits pertaining to the ways of perception have changed as well. The camera, isolating momentary images of things, has done away with the idea of timelessness of pictures; it has shown like no other medium before that the visual is intrinsically associated with the notion of the passing time (Berger 1997:18). It has also influenced the body perception, as well as obsessions, fears, and fantasies connected with it. As Hans Belting (2007) aptly notes, throughout its century-and-a-half existence, photography has been constantly changing the enactment of the body and the human alike. No other art celebrates human body with such fervor and in such magnitude as photography does. The history of this discipline is, to a large degree, a visual chronicle of photographed bodies and the ways they are being presented, distributed, and displayed, as well as hidden and censored. The archive of photographic images reflects an entire array of cultural problems pertaining to the representation of physicality and nudity. The logic behind photographic documentation, which was revealed promptly enough, shows a desire to record everything that possesses any sort of visual manifestation. Nudity became one of the popular and desirable topics early on, although at first its channels of distribution were limited. Photographers would record in all possible variants all feasible variants of nudity: entire and partial, voluntary and forced. Voluntary nudity, documented for instance by Diane Arbus visiting nudist centers in the USA, nowadays does not raise as many controversies as the forced one (which does not necessarily mean that it remains entirely neutral).[1, 2] Forced nudity can be dictated by medical, hygienic, or grooming proceedings (medical photography, pictures taken in psychiatric wards or prisons). Therefore, it can be entirely legitimate and justified. Still, forced nudity can be also a consequence of a violent act, aimed at humiliating, ridiculing, or subjugating the victim (i.e., photo-mobbing). This type of nudity can also be a consequence of systemic and legal actions, as cruelly evidenced by German pictures taken during the Holocaust (Struk 2007). Whether we speak of voluntary or forced nudity, each is accompanied by a specific set of rules and cultural contexts, changing with time. It is worth taking them under scrutiny, albeit a perfunctory one, to better understand the processes caused by the emergence and evolution of photography. The main part of this text, however, is going to pertain

[1] See: http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/arbus-a-husband-and-wife-in-the-woods-at-a-nudist-camp-n-j-1963-ar00527. Retrieved December 07, 2017.

[2] More information about Diane Arbus' nudist camp photographs can be found in the book *Diana Arbus Revelations*, published by Random House, New York, 2003. This important episode in her artistic work is also described by Patricia Bosworth in *Diana Arbus. A Biography*, published by W. W. Norton Company, New York, 2006.

to the relations between photography and body, nudity and sexuality, as well as cultural consequences of these relations.

Towards the Body and Photography: The Development of Their Mutual Relations in Western Culture

The relations of photography with a naked or semi-naked body can assume various forms and recording conventions. The invention of photography in the middle of the 19th century coincides with a strong rigor of customs, which manifested itself, among many others, in masking the body, avoiding nudity, and relegating sexuality to the taboo sphere. "To many Victorians no clear distinctions existed between studies of the nude made for artists, those done for personal expression, and those intended as titillating commercial images" (Rosenblum 1997:220). From the start, there has been a struggle to draw the line between artistic photographs with a potentially erotic charge and pornographic ones. The former were to be displayed at exhibition salons, the latter reached their audience through unofficial, hidden channels. Therefore, in the Victorian era, people were looking for a means to present nudity in a "legitimate way." Photographers had to work out distribution channels for pictures of that kind and a number of justifications for taking them. At least several of the paths they took are worth mentioning. The first one was the contemporary ethnographic photography, as cataloguing the Others in the times of thriving colonialism made it possible to perpetuate naked bodies for scientific reasons. Nudity of the "savages" was acceptable, as it belonged to the entourage of cultures perceived as inferior, uncivilized. Such pictures were also taken by 19th century explorers who, under the guise of tourist photography, could depict nudity and eroticism of the Other. William A. Ewing (1999:20) wrote about pioneers of this sort of photography, "they loved travelling to exotic countries, where shameless savage women were parading topless and *sharing* their own bodies with the master of the lens."[3] A series of such oriental travel pictures were taken by Roger Fenton in 1858. His famous *Reclining Odalisque*, although not a nude, does have strong sexual connotations. Unbuttoned shirt, bare feet, dim light and above all the gaze of the woman must have had a strong impact on a Western viewer, well in line with the Victorian vision of the exotic and erotic.[4] In the context of ethnographic pictures, interesting ones were provided by Bronisław Malinowski.[5] Although his studies fall to a later period, his pictures taken in the Trobriands remain educational even today. One of them, taken probably in 1918, depicts the Polish researcher examining a necklace hanging freely on the bare breasts of a young black woman. Malinowski, dressed in white, stands sideways to the camera, whereas the woman is gazing directly into the lens. Nowadays, this presumably unintentional photograph can be read as a certain allegory of a white explorer's fieldwork among the "savages" at the beginning of the 20th century.

[3] However, the same author stresses that even documentary ethnographic photographs caused an uproar and controversy in puritan England. Naked Zulu bodies caused as much alarm as study nudes aimed at artists.

[4] See: http: //www.metmuseum.org/art./collection/search/282039. Retrieved February 06, 2017.

[5] The role of photography in B. Malinowski's field of practice is widely discussed by anthropologists. Synthesis of these discourses can be found in Jakub Dziewit's article "How to Break Oneself's Teeth? Photographs and Discourses" (see: http://www.laboratoriumkultury.us.edu.pl/pdf/LK-2013-4_dziewit.pdf. Retrieved December 06, 2017).

Picture 1. B. Malinowski in the Trobriands, examining a necklace, is showing the backstage of fieldwork.[6]



Another means of introducing nude photographs into official circulation was taking them under the pretence of real or make-belief commissions from painters. This was the case of the French photographer Julien Vallou de Villeneuve who in the years 1851-1854 took a series of female nude pictures and "legitimized" them as photographs depicting models, for the purposes of painters. His works were probably used by Gustave Courbet.[7] This was quite a common practice in the 19th century. The third way to sneak nudity into mainstream and display such pictures legally was undertaking mythological, allegorical, and biblical themes. This method has been employed for centuries anyway, allowing the artists to show naked bodies. By mimicking painterly compositions, photographers could depict nudity aimed at higher goals. This is what Oscar Gustave Rejlander did, creating in 1857 his best-known allegorical picture, entitled *Two Ways of Life*. It shows two young men about to embark on their life paths. One of these paths denotes modesty, work, helping others, prayer, and study, the other—leads to debauchery, sexual gratification, and other sins. In the foreground, right in the center, Rejlander placed a nude woman, turned with her back to the viewer; and slightly behind—a frontally depicted nude female chest. The photograph caused a scandal, but when the controversies died down, Queen Victoria bought a copy for Prince Albert.[8] An even greater alarm was caused by pictures taken by Lewis Carroll (Rosenblum 1997:220). As a consequence, he decided to destroy the negatives of nude girls, but a large portion of pictures presenting Alice Liddell, his neighbors' daughter, who was also the inspiration for *Alice in Wonderland*, has remained until the present day. These photographs are still under discussion, just like in the case of other, more contemporary photo series, dealing with

[6] See: https: //commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File: Bronis%C5%82aw_Malinowski_among_Trobriand_tribe.jpg. Retrieved April 17, 2018.

[7] See: http: //www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/266980. Retrieved February 06, 2017.

[8] See: http: //e-magnifier.pl/oscar-gustave-rejlander-dwie-drogi-zycia-1856/. Retrieved February 04, 2017.

children's nudity or even sexuality.[9] However, it is a subject that requires a separate study, as also in this case we can observe a shift in the rules of nudity and perception. Another way of presenting nudity were the attempts to escape photographic realism through the aesthetics of impressionist paintings. Pictorialism, immensely popular in some circles of 19th century photographers, suggested depicting various themes, like "a dream, half-overcast by a mist; since the less possessed such things are, the more are they desired; the less visible, the more intriguing" (Sizeranne 1983:29). Robert de la Sizeranne promoted an idea of photography which by various optical and chemical processes could mimic painting and thus become proper art. In the nude realm, this concept was perpetuated by, among others, Robert Demachy. His nudes from the beginning of the 20th century were created by means of the so-called noble techniques, such as Arabic gum or bromoil, supposed to ensure uniqueness, softness, and painterly character of each print. In the actual fact it produced classicizing academic pictures that did enter artistic salons, but failed to bring anything new in the ways of presenting nudity. However, they made it possible to depict nudes in such a way as to be presentable in galleries or publications. Naked and semi-naked bodies soon made their way into medical photographs, both those studying the surface and the inner workings of the human form. In 1868, in the Paris Saint-Louis hospital, a well-equipped photographic atelier was opened. The first two publications illustrated with pictures taken there concerned dermatology and various deformations of the human form. Describing contents of both books, André Rouillé (2007:128) notes that "the first works of photographer doctors bring to mind real museums of horrors." Brutal realism of these pictures showing malignancies, skin growths, advanced stages of sexually transmitted diseases, and other symptoms of pathologies aimed at pushing medical science forward and providing objective report. Soon, photography applied in medicine was about to influence the way the human body was perceived and presented. One of these consequences, persistent until the present day, is segmenting the body into pieces, linked to specific diseases, studied and treated by specialized doctors. The presence of bodies in pictures taken in psychiatric wards is similarly intriguing. In Salpêtriere hospital in Paris doctor Jean-Martin Charcot together with his team created a photographic archive of mental illnesses. As early as in 1889, the *Nouvelle iconograpie de la Salpêtriere* periodical comprised, next to sketches and drawings, photographs of nude men and women, accompanied by descriptions of their illnesses. Employing photography for documenting patients in psychiatric hospitals heralded new modes of generating information, but also new systems of controlling and disciplining the body, as described by Michel Foucault. Thanks to pictures, visual representation of sick and healthy bodies could take on a modern form and achieve heretofore-unknown effectiveness.[10]

[9] One of the examples here could be Robert Mapplethorpe's *Rosie* from 1976. The picture, presenting a 7-year-old girl in a see-through dress, was deemed obscene and often banned from exhibitions.

[10] Another stage of the body-photography-medicine relations was Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen's invention (1895). Due to radiation, what is invisible can become subject of observation and treatment. Application of X-rays made "photography no longer a mere record, but an instrument and scientific tool" (Rouillé 2007:139).

Another interesting phenomenon is the presence and role of photography in popularizing medical science. It is described by Katarzyna K. Gorska in her study of Dr. Carl Heinrich Stratz's book, published in 1898. The book, entitled *The Beauty of the Female Body*, was dedicated to mothers, doctors, and artists. This lavishly illustrated work comprised both scientific photographs and nudes. "Photographed women are sometimes positioned properly next to a measuring tape, sometimes luxuriating stretched on an armchair or lying surrounded by decorative fabric or jewellery" (Gorska 2015:134). Titles of these photographs are a good testament to their nature: *15-year-old Viennese Girl with Thick Hair*, *Well-Developed Joints* or *Proper Eyebrow Line*. Each photograph is a classical nude, sat by young, attractive women within the canon of what Stratz considered normal and beautiful (Gorska 2015:136). The German doctor drew upon artistic tradition of depicting the female body to prove more effectively that health is synonymous with beauty and beauty with health. Moreover, as noted by Gorska, Stratz disapproved of artists who "pathologized" art by choosing the wrong models, that is, Jan van Eyck. According to his theory, science was connected to aesthetics and art, and evidenced the existence of beauty by images of young, healthy, proportional, real bodies, and not a mathematically derived classical canon. As a result, his work and other similar ones contributed to the "perpetuation of the idea of the female form persisting until today" (Gorska 2015:143). Currently predominant images showing "normal, healthy, and beautiful" female bodies are to some extent a consequence of educational guidebooks from the turn of the 20th century.

To sum it up, from the mid-19th century the naked body became the subject of scientifically grounded photographic explorations, an allegorical motif referring to painting traditions, an object of interest and excitement for the newly-developed "touristic" perspective. This short list allows us to specify three main ways in which photographs depicting nudity were being taken at that time; let us call them artistic-documentary, ethnographic-traveling, and scientific-medical. Those three modes of depicting the naked body in the 19th and beginning of 20th century were distinguished by analyzing photos and articles published in publications dedicated to the history of photography (e.g., Rosenblum 1997; Frizot 1998; Ewing 1999; Brauchitsch 2004; Hannavay 2008).[11] However, this list should be complemented by one more, probably prevalent in numbers, that is pornography. As Lynda Nead aptly notes, in Western visual culture, the artistic and the pornographic are polar opposites. "One of them is the female artistic nude, symbol of a pure, selfless gaze and transformation of the body, the other are pornographic images, the profane and mass culture sphere, titillating and satisfying the senses" (Nead 1998:145). Nead's remarks on the female nude can be extrapolated to any other image of that kind.

Towards Eros: Professional and Amateur Erotic Photographs

Nudity-depicting photography is usually classified into naturalist, erotic, and pornographic. Despite this simply division it is not always an easy task to

[11] This division is based not only on literature but also on author's experience resulting from visits to museums and galleries presenting historical photographs.

distinguish erotic and pornographic pictures. According to Gloria Steinem, feminist activist concepts of "erotica" and "pornography" are fundamentally different, but still very confusing. Both are about sexual behavior, but the "erotic" is based on free expression, sensuality, and acceptance, while the "pornographic" is about violence, dominance, and conquest.[12] Erotic art is usually described in terms of aesthetic, sometimes sophisticated forms and leaves lots of space for imagination of the viewer. At the same time, "erotic art turns into porn when it loses its aesthetic, emotional, and intellectual aspirations, or context."[13] Porn photography serves different goals than the erotic one and also has different channels of circulation.

Naturalist pictures often serve documentary purposes, do not contain sexual contexts and suggestions or minimize them. Authors of nudes, in turn, prefer to operate solely in the realm of art, therefore they utilize a different aesthetic and rely on other, oftentimes experimental, imagery conventions.[14] Metaphorically speaking, in this case, we are dealing with a "robe of art being draped over the body," which gives the author a variety of artistic solutions, such as, among others: unreality, deformation, solarization, geometrization, edging towards abstraction or graphics, et cetera (Śnieciński 2013:210). Pornography, as an applied art that serves purely pragmatic goals, should lead to sexual titillation and excitement. This simple, non-exhaustive classification only suggests a possible approach towards that topic and interpretation of photography. In the end, the reception of a photograph is up to the viewer and *there is no such thing as an innocent eye*. The degree of impact and picture-sensitivity is individual to each observer, depending on factors such as "age, experience, libido, professed morals, and even fashion and different cultural traditions" (Ewing 1998:206). In other words, what is obscene and revolting for one, can be erotic and exciting for the other.

The number of erotic and pornographic pictures rose hand over fist with the development of digital photography. Erotic daguerreotypes were few and far between, due to their unique character and high prices. "The models were young, the clients rich, the creators anonymous, and the pictures were viewed mostly in the form of stereograms" (Ewing 1998:23). However, it was already in the 1850s, with the rise of more affordable and mass techniques, including the print, that erotica and pornography became more popular. "The overall number of erotic daguerreotypes was estimated at five thousand, but soon thereafter, in a matter of several decades, pictures were mass-produced" (Ewing 1999:269). Nowadays, it is difficult to ascertain the scale of this phenomenon, but there is no doubt that the invention and popularity of photography led to pornographiza-

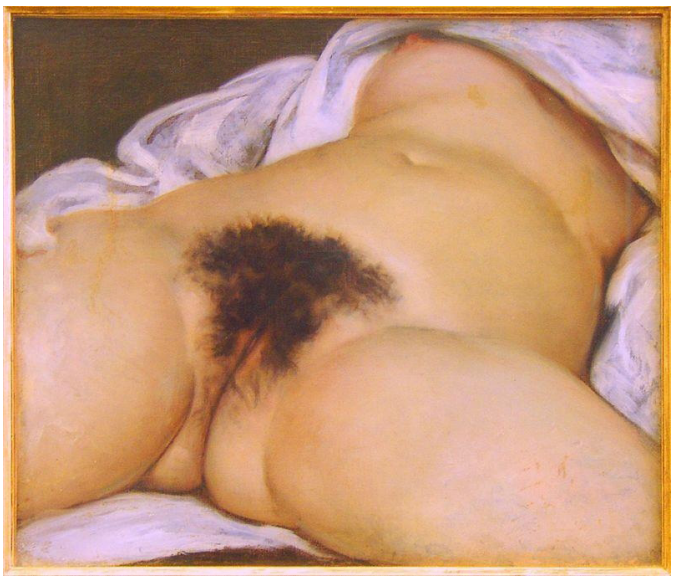
[12] See: https://masculinisation.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/erotica-and-pornography-a-clear-and-present-difference-by-gloria-steinem.pdf. Retrieved December 07, 2017.

[13] See: https://www.widewalls.ch/when-does-erotic-art-turn-into-porn-feature/erotic-art-as-in-art/. Retrieved December 07, 2017.

[14] These conventions may vary, starting from the delicate, almost pictorial eroticism of David Hamilton, to black-and-white frames of Jeanloup Sieff, more hardcore and provocative ones of Helmut Newton, mannerist compositions of Erwin Olaf, advertisement-inspired pictures by David LaChapelle, ripe works of Jan Saudek, and brooding ones by Joel Peter Witkin, to Nobuyoshi Araki's ones, bordering on pornography. It is but the beginning of a list that could be very long. What links all the aforementioned authors is the fact that in their works "the body ceases to signify only itself—it becomes a carrier of a specific aesthetic, completely overshadowing its presence Here and Now, in a certain history that allows for its existence" (Pilichowski-Regno 2006:48). Another aspect connecting these photographers is their heterosexual field of interest, whereas others, for example, Robert Mapplethorpe, were far more pluralist and provocative in this regard.

tion of the body to an unprecedented degree. It were prostitutes who posed for early pornographic pictures, often hiding their faces, which is a testament to the stigmatizing power of photography. One of the most popular forms of imaging were stereoscopic photographs, producing a three-dimensional effect when viewed with special equipment. In Auguste Belloc's pictures, taken around 1860, the models would cover their faces while exposing their genitals in "gynaecological" poses. It is possible that their resemblance to Courbet's infamous painting, *The Origin of the World*, commissioned in 1866 by a Turkish diplomat, a collector of erotica, is far from random, since Belloc's pictures, requisitioned by the Paris police, are almost identical.

Picture 2. The Origin of the World, Gustave Courbet, 1866, Musée d'Orsay in Paris.



In the middle of the 19th century the repertoire of pornographic pictures was already very wide; it catered to a variety of preferences and variants of *ars erotica*. This type of picture rose in popularity so fast that in the 1865 *Photographic Magazine* quoted by Marek Janczyn and Iwona Święch (2006:3) it said that pornographic photography is available in every stationery store and photographer's atelier. "In France at the turn of the century there was an entire pornography-producing industry. On offer were nude pictures of men, women, and children in various poses, as well as close-ups of feet and hands" (Ewing 1998:62). It is worth noting that until the end of the 19th century the line between soft erotic images and pornography was not clear-cut, and each photograph depicting nudity could easily enter the pornography-sale circulation. It is beyond a doubt, however, that the gigantic porn business is deeply entrenched in the 19th century processes of capitalizing on erotic art. According to Steve Edwards (2014:99), pornography became "one of the pillars of photographic imagination of the Western society." The power of such images lies in their photographic realism, an alluring illusion of medium transparency, a belief that if something was photographed, it must have existed in front of the lens. A photograph has all the requirements to become a fetish simulating the presence of another person.[15] In the case of pornography, which stimulates real impressions, this is especially important. The illusion of physical proximity, which no other imaging technique could provide, is to a large extent what made pornographic pictures so popular or even massive. Photography has redefined and

[15] Christian Metz, examining the element of fetish in film and photography, came to the conclusion that the former utilizes fetish better, whereas the latter can more easily become one. In his essay on photography and fetish, he writes about employing psychoanalysis for art studies. What he finds still useful in the Freudian concept is an analysis of fetishist nature of male desire, the suspension of disbelief (which is the main factor in representative art) and fetishist pleasure derived from cropping and decropping (Metz 2006:253).

completely changed pornography, made it possible to create pornography-focused social worlds, comprising creators, actors, distributors, and, most importantly, viewers. Initially, creating such photographs was mainly a professional endeavor; professional models would sit for professional photographers, whose pictures were published via specialized channels. Next to professional production, there quickly emerged a phenomenon which could be described as amateur pornographic photography. The scale of this phenomenon was made visible by the rise of the Internet, which created a new means of distribution. Rafał Drozdowski describes amateur pornography as one of the examples of social resistance against dominant imagery. Where lies the "counter-culture" quality of these pictures? According to Drozdowski, there are several decisive factors, and I will present them briefly. Firstly, amateur pornographic photography breaks all formal and technical standards and imaging conventions. An amateur dismisses dominant trends, focusing on the image content. Secondly, these pictures prove that the doors to promiscuity are not open solely for bodies that are attractive and considered normal according to cultural canons. In amateur photography, there is no awkwardness, shame, and, most importantly, guilt about physical imperfection. Thus, stresses Drozdowski, it goes against cultural mainstream with its elaborate beauty propaganda. Thirdly, which is directly connected to the previous point, amateur photography does not link promiscuity with social attractiveness and prestige. Instead, it questions media-generated stereotypes that erotic success goes hand-in-hand with social ones. Another "subversive" aspect of this sort of photography is the way it presents women and femininity. A traditional, professional photography is extremely male-centric. From a male perspective, a woman has to submit to specific requirements of body-presentation, surrender herself, and embody the role of an ever-ready sexual slave. Objectifying the woman, turning her into a workout machine has reached its zenith in professional pornography. According to Drozdowski, amateur pornography breaks this scheme and empowers women back. One-sided relations in professional productions of that kind turn into teamwork, where without a woman's full consent nothing can happen. These characteristics of amateur pornography allow it to deconstruct the scheme and artificiality of professional pornography. Verism is its main advantage. It is supposed to be an answer to a growing need for authenticity in a world defined by media productions, which deviate further and further from the "real life." To sum it up, Drozdowski points out that amateur pornography can be considered part of a larger trend: seeking authenticity, which stems from the desire to experience images unmediated by conventions and various ideologies. It is a desire to get an account from a direct, involved witness (Drozdowski 2009:63-68). However, the question remains to what extent the emancipatory and "counter-culture" role of amateur photography is a valid hypothesis. I do not mean the validity of the argument, as the argumentation seems convincing, but rather the faith in the power of social influence pornography of that kind may possess. Do "home-made" erotic pictures really shape the notions of sexuality, or is it rather due to other factors, with a larger field of fire and aptitude for influencing mass fantasy? On

the other side of the fence, there is the still-thriving porn-business, whose impact can be seen, for instance, in the pornographing of the advertising and eroticizing mass media (Berger 1997; Olechnicki 2005; Schroeder and McDonagh 2006; Mace 2012[16]). To say that the language of advertising is seeped in eroticism is an understatement. In turn, advertisement, which has a strong impact on modern iconosphere, influences the ways of defining the body and sexuality. It eagerly employs evidently pornographic stylistics. In their advertising work, photographers such as Steven Klein, Tony Kelly, Terry Richardson, or Mario Testino border on the pornographic production convention. Certainly, we could call it camp play, but images of that kind seem to influence mass imagination much stronger than private pornography. Take the Dolce & Gabbana advertisement which aestheticized gang rape, caused much controversy, but, of course, failed to stop that trend. As a consequence of universal aestheticization described by Wolfgang Welsch (1999:11), more and more elements of reality become an aesthetic construct. What prevails in the so-called surface aestheticization is hedonism, as a new cultural matrix in which pleasure and entertainment have become guidelines for the society of consumerism and leisure. Dolce & Gabbana merely slightly pushed the borders, jumping on the dominant popular culture bandwagon, known as porno-chic.

Picture 3. The Dolce & Gabbana 2007 advertisement.[17]



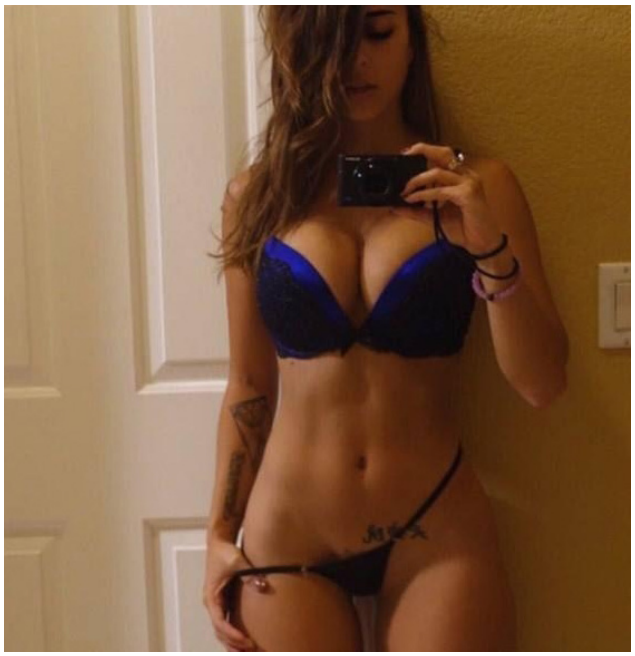
Another testament to the dominant role of advertisement in contemporary culture is the autoerotic "selfie," which abounds on the Internet. Photography theory of today studies the selfie phenomenon with increasing frequency. A "selfie" is a self-made single or group self-portrait, uploaded to social media. About a million pictures of that

[16] See: https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/34423669/THESIS.doc.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1512676161&Signature=aUmbiMm3Nb%2F0ESZbWVSQqquxoh0%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DFASHION_OR_PORN_THE_HYPER-SEXUALIZATION.pdf. Retrieved December 07, 2017.

[17] See: https://lbottino.com/2017/11/27/sexism-outdoor-advertising/. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

kind are estimated to be taken daily.[18] About 30% of the pictures taken by people aged 18-24 are selfies.[19] We can consider them one of the symptoms of the new global communication in which "the standard element of the daily life of millions—its starting point—...is producing and playing out one's own 'image'" (Mirzoeff 2016:83). According to Steven Edwards, the old paradigm of photography relied on documentalism (belief in reflection and representation of reality), whereas the mode prevalent today, which sets the tone and character, became advertisement. One need hardly elaborate what images are provided by this type of visual production, but its consequences cannot be overlooked. Even the selfie is to some extent a result of a purely advertising strategy: "broadcast yourself." The way selfie authors style themselves aptly shows how much we absorbed from the language of contemporary advertisement, how thoroughly it has shaped our vision of beauty, attraction, and happiness. The role of photography in socializing processes cannot be underappreciated. In the world of offers and products, it is extremely easy to assume their own ways of distribution and promotion and use them as one's own. Social media seem to corroborate that. And the selfie can be treated as a cultural syndrome, which shows how marketing strategy became an ever-present technique for creating one's identity by presenting attractive physical appearance. It also shows a new trend in the process of visual redefining of the body, a new relation between sexuality and photography.

Picture 4 and 5.[20, 21] Typical selfies with erotic connotations and mock-advertising stylistics.





[18] See: http: //stylecaster.com/beauty/selfies-infographic/. Retrieved February 10, 2017.

[19] See: http: //all-that-is-interesting.com/selfie-deaths. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

[20] See: https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/x-f-sit7U5wsy3wW-cCriKqcWJOZ72eypjXCJUAPWCIRJahBr0b8u1kU8Q1VejwN-pllOuhw=s87. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

[21] See: https://twitter.com/svetabiiy/status/808205588559581184. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

The number of autoerotic selfies shows the power of this trend, attesting to the deep internalizing of visual codes of advertising. The Internet provides a staggering number of such images, copying the dominant trends to a varied extent. These pictures hark back to advertising aesthetics and fashion photography, which in turn succumbed to the aesthetics of erotic photography. It is worth mentioning that a selfie is a contemporary continuation of the long self-portrait tradition, including the erotic one. A great number of such pictures can be found in photographic archives. The one taken by Dávid Sándor comes from the Fortepan Internet archive.

Picture 6. Dávid Sándor, Hungary, 1967 (FORTEPAN©2010-2014) under Creative Commons CC-BY-SA-3.0 license.



Access to pornographic data is easy, fast, and cheap thanks to the Internet. Circulating freely in specific channels of distribution, it remains safely "hidden," but raises eyebrows when it is extracted from its usual context. Probably that is why a series of works by Thomas Ruff, entitled *Nudes*, caused such a commotion, or rather kind of institutional resistance or even censorship, like in the case of the Center of Modern Art in Warsaw. The German artist digitally transformed pictures downloaded from pornographic sites. The idea for this cycle came during his research of Internet data concerning nudity in photography.

> Googling it, what we get is Helmut Newton and Peter Lindbergh. Their 19th century-like, heterosexual pictures of pretty women by the lake to me seemed boring. Looking further, I chanced upon pornographic websites. The pictures there were far more honest than artistic nude photographs, because they were concrete. People have certain needs and need to fulfill them…My aim was to present a full range of sexual practices and desires in a most democratic way, that is from heterosexuality to homosexuality, to fetishism, et cetera.[22]

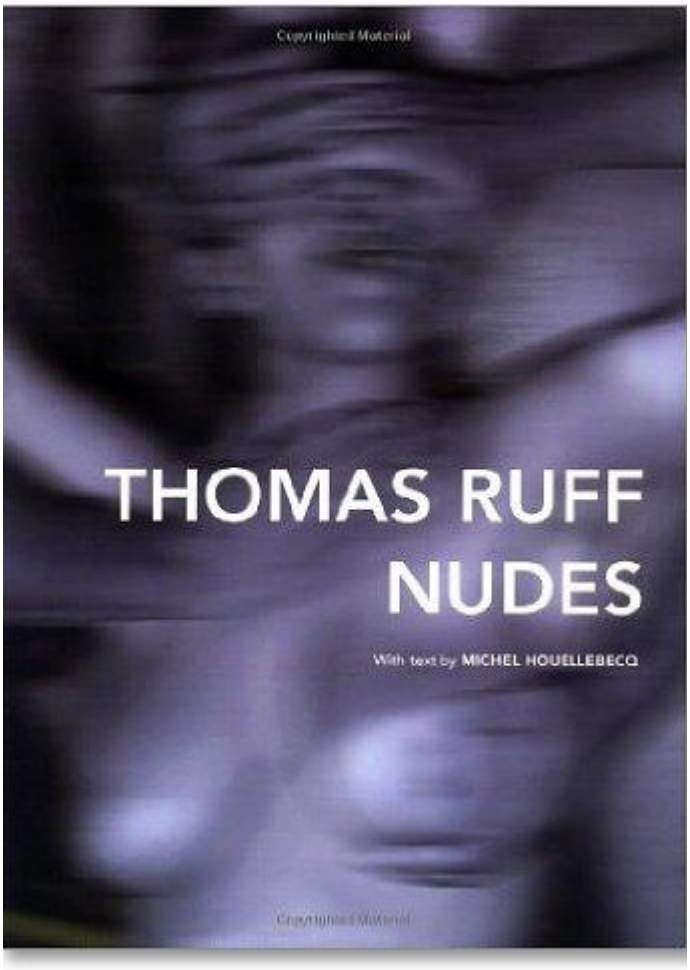
His creation is far more ambiguous and complicated than it might seem. It calls for a response and is certainly not a mere provocation. First of all, Ruff takes a stance in the debate on the nude, one of the greatest topoi in visual arts. The prevailing pictures taken by the "great masters" of the genre indeed present a mainly heterosexual

[22] Interview with Thomas Ruff. See: http: //www.vice.com/pl/read/bez-usmiechu-prosze-fotografia-mnie-nie-interesuje-mowi-fotograf-thomas-ruff. Retrieved January 20, 2017.

point of view, male fantasies, and ways of understanding the erotic. Simultaneously, emphasizes Ruff, they are profoundly conventionalized. They reflect a vision that has usually nothing to do with real sexual practices. On this understanding, the artist speaks of the "honesty" of photography. This cycle pertains to yet another issue. The Internet became an ideal meeting point for exhibitionism and voyeurism. Thanks to the network, these desires can be fulfilled with a heretofore-unknown ease. It is a mass phenomenon, which can no longer be marginalized. A spectacular exhibition and a concurrent album draw attention to this matter. Last but not least, Ruff's project is also a perception experiment. Thanks to a number of digital processes, usually uninteresting and crude pornographic snapshots were transformed into highly aesthetic images, truly artistic and intriguing.[23] "Ruff shows more than the moment when something becomes art. He uncovers the mechanism in which the reception of a photograph as a work of art is forced upon a viewer" (Pustoła 2004:203). His processed pornography was exhibited in many museums and galleries, but when the Warsaw Center of Modern Art presented a huge, retrospective exhibition of Ruff's works at the break of 2003/2004, this cycle was missing.

[23] Perhaps the very intrigue that we feel when viewing them is what is so disconcerting about them; and perhaps this feeling speaks more about us, the viewers, than the characters in the pictures. Thomas Ruff's project is undoubtedly provocative, subverting the order, playing with the conventions, and being very successful at that, as attested by exhibitions in the world's most prestigious galleries, like Tate Modern in London, Museum of Modern Art in New York, Art Biennale in Venice, and numerous publications.

Picture 7. Cover of Thomas Ruff's album with a text by Michel Houellebecq, Abrams Books, 2003.



Towards Documentary: Photographic Stories about Sex Workers

Photography has fuelled pornography, laying foundations for a massive and lucrative business. From the onset, photo sessions of that kind involved people related to the sex industry. These were usually prostitutes, unemployed actors, models, and other male and female sex industry workers. Such photographs are notorious for their downright industrial repetitiveness, formulaicity, and artifice, thus rendering Ruff's argument about "honesty" of pho-

tography an overstatement. On the one hand, photography has propelled the pornographic industry, on the other—many artists expose its tragic nature. There have been many such projects in the history of photography. Some of them have been romantic and humanist in convention, others took the shape of intervention features. An example of the former could be *Paris de nuit* by Gyula Hálasz, better known as Brassaï, an album published first in 1933. In the 62 photographs depicting the city by night, next to landscapes, sleeping tramps, bicycle police patrols, we can also see kissing couples, prostitutes, and the entrance to "Chez Suzy" brothel. All this is still pretty vanilla, though. He uncovered much more in his second album, *Le Paris Secret des Années 30*, published in 1976. What he merely suggested before became fully uncovered. It is not just the silhouettes of Parisian prostitutes, standing in the archways and street corners; it is a bold reportage on the city's sex life. He documented thriving jazz clubs, naked parties, portrayed semi-nude women waiting for their clients, visited by-the-hour hotels rented by lovers, immortalized ecstatic romps at Montparnasse, and opium dens. Still, his reportage remains humanist; it is a kind of homage the great photographer pays to his own city. Mary Ellen Mark shows different stylistics and an approach to the subject in her *Falkland Road* cycle. Pictures taken in Bombay between 1978 and 1979 show the life of prostitutes, the youngest of which were then 11 years old. The album, published three years later, contains an introduction describing, among others, strong personal relations the photographer forged with her subjects. "Like most countries, India has fancy brothels and expensive call girls. But the pictures in this book were taken on a street in Bombay where the less expensive prostitutes live and work, an area famous for the cage-like houses in which some of the women live."[24] Every photograph has a caption, which turns the series into a photo-essay. A juxtaposition of incredibly intense, colorful pictures with a short, often-laconic text magnifies the impact of these photographs. Many is the time Mark lets her heroines speak. They tell a story of their lives and how they found themselves in Falkland Road. Many were sold or kidnapped and forced to prostitution. Others, rejected by their communities or husbands, found a safe haven there. However, the price they have to pay is very high, and the safety is short lasting. All the women living there experience various forms of violence and rejection. Paradoxically though, they also enjoy a certain independence from the traditional, patriarchal caste system. It applies especially to transvestites, who find there a certain refuge. However, when 15 years later Mary Ellen Mark came back to Bombay with her husband, John Irving, she noticed that the living conditions of the Falkland Road prostitutes deteriorated, and it were pimps, drugs, and AIDS that reigned supreme.

A prostitute's body has always fallen prey to stigmatization, but has also been constantly subjected to dangers such as disease and all forms of violence. There is a long history of stigmatization and social exclusion of prostitutes. In medieval France, prostitutes had their hair dyed yellow, in England it was shaved off, in Soviet Russia they were deported to gulags. A list of such examples could go on forever.

[24] Fragment of the *Falkland Road. Prostitutes of Bombay*, introduction published in 1981. All the pictures from this album are available at her website. See: http: //www.maryellenmark.com/books/titles/falkland_road/300D-002-032_falkrd_520.html. Retrieved February 16, 2017.

A prostitute represents all the fears of a community: lawlessness, chaos, sickness, and uncleanliness. Yet, it does not change the fact that the profession still exists and nothing suggests it could change. The figure of a prostitute is not without its ambiguity though, and it inspires extreme emotions: repulsion for some, fascination for others. In art, the figure of a courtesan, prostitute, and whore is present since times immemorial. 19th-century artistic Paris has discovered the exotic and the allure of brothels, and introduced its inhabitants to literature and painting. However, what in Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's pictures looks innocent and alluring could be completely different in reality. Photography can divest prostitution of the aura of mystery and show its backstage, force a different perspective, not only more critical, but also reflective. One of such projects is *Ladies of Love* by Hubert Humka. The cycle of photos taken in brothels and so-called "love hotels'" was conceived in 2015-2016.

> *Ladies of Love* is a story about intertwined narratives of love, work, passion, solitude…Its heroines are nameless strippers, prostitutes, and porn stars, living day and night in the architecture of love. The background of their story comprises garish, darkness-devouring neon lights, gaudy interiors, and kitschy costumes. This world is not new; it's old and well-known. It's always somewhere out there, round a corner, in a neighboring district, next to the train station. It's attracting, hypnotizing, and deceiving us with colorful packaging, promising the world to us. Pictures in this story are both purely voyeuristic and portrait-like, depicting the way people captured in them appeared before the lens. The pictures are interspersed with text fragments, stories, and sentences that stuck in the mind. This project is not a documentary presentation of specific people, places or times; rather it's a general story, which by means of image and text lets the viewer weave his or her own stories, generate individual emotions. Let this story fulfill the fantasy of being a spy in a house of love.[25]

The author made use of documentary imaging convention, which, however, took the contemporary "glamour" shape. Humka's works formally resemble perfectly rendered pictures in lifestyle magazines. They are also much better quality than your average pornographic production, but above all it is difficult to view them through an evidently erotic lens. People photographed by him are presenting their bodies, which are their work tools, but that does not mean they present themselves. Window dressing is the essence of pornography, which is clearly visible in Humka's pictures, as they do not moralize, do not judge, and do not brutalize the message. Instead, they play with convention, leaving it up to the viewer to make up his/her mind.

There are also many other stories about sex workers, which use different stylistics and aim at different goals. The last project I would like to mention is *No Man's Land* by Mishka Henner. This cycle consists of pictures downloaded from Google Street View, showing European suburbs, where prostitutes work. Each picture includes a caption, stating the number of the road and town where the image comes from. Henner's project takes on a new trend of Internet photography and a completely different concept of being a photographer. The net becomes

[25] Text curtsey by the artist; written and made available for the purposes of this article.

Pictures 8, 9, 10, 11. Hubert Humka, pictures from the *Ladies of Love* cycle.



a search area; and for a photographer Google Street View can be as good a place as any. Yet, even more important is the theme itself. One of Henner's goals is exposing what has already been registered.[26] This very process of making things visible seems the key, connecting all the above-described, widely disparate projects. By actions such as these photography reclaims the ability to address the problem of pornography and sex business, even if only potential and hypothetical. These forays to the other

[26] See: http: //circulationexchange.org/articles/nomansland.html. Retrieved December 15, 2017.

side of the mirror do not show us mysterious lands but rather a world of abuse, violence, loneliness, and empty glamour, as evidenced by the photographers I mentioned.

Conclusion

In spite of an easy access to erotic films and photographs, although our iconosphere is overflowing with such content, nude bodies continue to evoke ambivalent attitudes. Ambivalent attitudes towards representations of that sort reflect profound tensions in the body-culture relations. Photography and film are very interesting study subjects in this respect, as they touch upon the very core of this conflict, and even keep aggravating it, stirring controversy and provocation.

> Photographers are fully aware that in their artistic endeavors they can find themselves in the heart of a battle anytime. Suffice it to mention stormy controversies brought about in the recent years by pictures of Robert Mapplethorpe, Sally Mann, Jock Sturges, or Andres Serrano—works transcending a conventional image of the body. Especially matters concerning sex cause a violent uproar of emotions. [Ewing 1998:10]

It is not a coincidence that Ewing enumerated names of several well-known artists, but failed to mention pornographic photography. The latter, until it stays in specifically designated channels of distribution, until it circulates underground and does not surface, until, in other words, it operates in its own domain, it remains outside the official discourse of visual arts. It is not until gestures such as the ones made by Thomas Ruff, Mishka Henner, Mary Ellen Mark, or Hubert Humka that a signal for a discussion is given, often a very tumultuous one. For this obvious reason the artists have a vital social role—of not only pointing out a problem but also giving it shape that can be presented in official circulation. Analyzing the ways of photographing nudity and erotica is a necessary complement to the sociology of the body. Photographs not only illustrate changing rules of nudity but also provoke these changes. It is therefore crucial to watch closely mutual relations of bodies and their images. According to Erving Goffman's theory, we are all used to specific idioms of using the body in social interactions. These idioms function also when taking pictures. That is why Goffman (2012:297) writes, "a photograph doesn't show us then, how a model could pose in front of a camera but rather how she could 'pose' in public." Pictures, even the ones showing intimate situations, are highly conventionalized. It does not apply to all photographs but a great many. To see it, it is enough to take a look at an Internet portal for photography aficionados, plfoto,[27] or any other website of that type. Among its many galleries that users can upload their pictures to, one of them is devoted to the nude. Even a quick perusal allows one to spot these constantly repeated idioms of presenting the body, exhibited by both sides creating these pictures: models and photographers. It actually resembles a ritual recreation of set choreographies.

To conclude, it is worth posing a question what does the staggering number of erotic photography denote? Is it a testament to society's fixation? Does it reflect the intensity of sexual practices of a con-

[27] See: http: //plfoto.com/galeria,akt,0.html. Retrieved February 19, 2017.

temporary Western society? Or, perhaps quite the opposite, does it expose a certain absence, loss, disparity between desire and real practices? According to Michel Foucault, our civilization does not have any *ars erotica*, but only *scientia sexualis*, whose task is to produce truth about sex, based on knowledge, power, and confession. For Foucault, religion is one of the most basic ways of efficient truth-production. "Western man has become a confessing animal" (Foucault 1978:59). Confession plays part in justice, medicine, education, family relationships, and love relationships. It has also become a matrix for a real sex discourse. Creating sexual discourse became an obsession of our civilization, and its main pleasure is the pleasure of analysis and a constant production of truth about sex. Pictures showing naked bodies for the purposes of medical, anthropological, artistic, and popular-science discourse participate in this process. The number of constantly multiplied, never-ending, look-alike, photographic images seems to corroborate the theories of the French philosopher. Foucault does not negate, however, that the Western *scientia sexualis* can be a specific form of *ars erotica*, in which a technically registered image has been playing a vital role, from the middle of the 19th century until this day.

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A Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body—Recipes for a Healthy Living as Seen in Polish Vlogs

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Abstract The fashion for leading a healthy lifestyle has recently reached Polish society. Inspired by exposure through the mass media, many people have decided to introduce changes into the way they eat and exercise, primarily in order to become healthier and slimmer. According to recent surveys, one of the most popular sources of information concerning healthy lifestyles is, of course, the Internet. It is an extremely functional tool that allows its users not only the possibility to find the relevant information they need, but it also helps them create their own resources containing advice and information for other like-minded users. This article analyzes examples of Polish vlogs posted on the Youtube.pl platform that are principally devoted to improving fitness, as well as showing the most effective ways to lose weight. The four main areas of focus investigated are: the vloggers' motivations for creating and publishing videos, the vloggers' reference to their own bodies, the reasons they offer for seeking a healthier way of living, the vloggers' bodies as their representation in the social space of the Internet, and the role of the Internet community in the many processes in helping people become slimmer.

Keywords Healthy Lifestyle; Vlogs; Poland; Slimming; Human Body

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According to Luc Peuwels and Patricia Hellriegel (2009:389-390), "Youtube is an open community that encourages its users to send in their thoughts and comments about their experiences of the site." In Poland, the popularity of the Youtube.com service is rising, and is currently in fifth place among twenty of the most popular broadcasters in Poland.[1] In November 2016, 73.9% of Polish Internet users were ac-

[1] Gemius / PBI Report "Polish Internet in October 2016." Retrieved December 20, 2016. (http://www.pbi.org.pl/pl/aktualnosci/292/polski-internet-w-listopadzie-2016).

cessing it, the numbers of which have quadrupled within the last eight years.[2]

There are several features which determine the popularity of the service. First, it can be accessed on multiple devices such as laptops, Smartphones, or tablets, which makes it available and easy to use in many everyday life situations. It also enables both the sharing of and the search for information in almost every field of expertise and knowledge imaginable. It has all the advantages of social media: it can be used for expressing and exchanging opinions, gaining other people's attention or subsequent admiration. As it allows access to a large audience, it is a powerful tool for marketing and trendsetting. The word "youtuber" has entered the (Polish) common language, and is used as a synonym of its service users, and is increasingly applied to people who have gained national or international popularity by creating the most subscribed to Youtube channels. Since Youtube.com is a source of inspiration for many, and is seen as a barometer of social trends, the authors of the most popular vlogs not only have the attention of their own followers; they also become authorities in the subjects which they want to popularize.

According to Susan C. Herring (2010:240), "[a] weblog (blog for short) is a type of web document in which dated entries appear in reverse chronological sequence…Like other web documents, blogs can be multimodal or purely textual and variants exist that feature photos, voice recordings (audio blogs) and videos (vlogs)."

In my article, I would like to analyze one kind of thematic vlogs as seen on the Youtube.pl platform, whose main purpose is to provide subscribers with information concerning healthy living. According to research results published by Gemius in July of 2013, dieting and fitness were two of the most popular topics searched for by Polish Internet users.[3] The Internet is an interactive medium that enables people to search for information, but also helps them find the support they need, as well as receiving useful advice from other users. I decided to investigate videos published on vlogs as I wanted to learn something more about the various experiences regarding a healthy lifestyle, which many authors of vlogs wanted to share. Due to the multiplicity of subjects referring to a healthy lifestyle, I decided to narrow the scope of my analysis to one specific kind of video, essentially those which present their authors' attempts to become slimmer.

Materials and Methods

Since there is little scholarly research on vlogs, the study's objective was explanatory. The research procedure was divided into several stages. The preliminary stage focused on selecting materials suitable for analysis. One of the tools used was a short survey conducted on 40 students who were asked to name and briefly describe their favorite vlogs concerning healthy living. The list of vlogs was then used as a starting point for selecting the most interesting ones. Another source of information

[2] Gemius / PBI Report "Polish Internet in October 2016." Retrieved December 20, 2016. (http://www.pbi.org.pl/pl/aktualnosci/292/polski-internet-w-listopadzie-2016).

[3] Gemius / PBI Report "Czas na dietę i odchudzanie w sieci." Retrieved December 20, 2016 (https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/czas-na-diete-odchudzanie-i-fitness-w sieci.html).

was the ranking list of Poland's most subscribed to Youtube channels,[4] which helped identify several vlogs devoted to healthy living among 100 of the most subscribed to channels as used by Polish Internet users. But, it soon transpired that most of the vloggers with the greatest subscription numbers rarely focused on healthy living as such, and that many of them diversified the topics of their videos in order to attract a greater audience.[5] For this reason, selecting vlogs suitable for analysis only on the basis of the number of subscribers proved to be inadequate. However, examination of the most often subscribed to vlogs helped identify a particular kind of video, namely, videos documenting the vlogs authors' attempts to become slimmer. To assemble a group of similar videos, I used the snowball sampling technique: all videos linked to those from the first stage were duly checked. This helped identify a group of 40 videos concerning the same topic. All of them shared a similar presentation structure: they demonstrated their author's efforts to become slimmer, usually documenting changes in the kind of diet they used, the fitness exercises they implemented, and the use of records to monitor changes in body shape (weight loss in kilograms or centimeters), as well as the authors' opinions concerning the observed changes both in their bodies and their state of mind. Some videos comprised a series of episodes documenting the process of getting slimmer. In such cases, all episodes were subject to analysis. In general, 40 videos published by 16 vloggers were analyzed over December, 2016.[6]

Only videos posted in 2016 were taken into consideration, and only those in which the authors declared themselves to be amateurs, therefore any videos posted by professional trainers or dietitians were rejected. The information concerning the vloggers (the information they provided about themselves) was presented in a table posted at the end of the article.

Also of note, viewers' opinions and statements in the comments section were not analyzed. The initial idea was to perform a systematic content analysis, however, due to a variety of topics mentioned by different authors, such as the fact that authors often digressed, and that not all of the videos covered the same topics, the identification of a particular unit of analysis proved to be very difficult.[7] Eventually, a non-systematic content analysis was performed.

According to Susan C. Herring (2010:241), "content analysis works well in analyzing themes represented in blog entries and comments." As Norman Fairclough (2003:6) indicates, the concept of "text" can be used in a broad sense to refer to a language that is written or printed, as well as visual images and sound effects. Texts can be analyzed as elements of social processes: they can bring changes in our knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and the material world. Meanings are made through the inter-

[4] *Youtube Top 100 Most Subscribed Poland Channels*. Retrieved December 20, 2016 (http://vidstatsx.com/youtube-top-100-most-subscribed-poland-pl-channels).

[5] For example, this was the case with Red Lipstick Monster (854,987 subscribers), whose vlog focuses on beautifying the body and makeup techniques, but several videos were devoted to her "turn to healthy living."

[6] The list of videos and vlogs visited was specified in references.

[7] As Susan C. Herring (2010:240) notices, "multimodality poses challenges on content analysis, especially as regards the identification of units of analysis. However, traditional content analysis has been applied to the analysis of photographs, radio, television and film content, so these challenges are not new per se."

play between the production of text, the text itself, and the reception of text (Fairclough 2003:8, 10). In my analysis, I was particularly interested in how the vloggers mediate in the process of disseminating knowledge concerning slimming practices and slimness as an important attribute of the human body in contemporary culture.

By watching each of the videos several times I became immersed in the worlds of the vloggers. As it was mentioned before, all of the videos were of a similar structure. This helped me identify four main areas of focus that I wanted to investigate further in the course of my analysis.

The four areas were:

1. The vloggers' motivations for creating and publishing the videos.

2. The vloggers' reference to their bodies and reasons for wanting to pursue a healthier way of living.

3. The vloggers' bodies as their "representation" in the social space of the Internet.

4. The role of Internet community in the process of getting slimmer.

Each of the videos was examined at least twice, which included close observation, taking notes when watching the videos, and the making of transcripts. The transcripts were then carefully read. This helped identify common patterns, which appeared across all of the videos, namely, the moments, in which the vloggers referred to their bodies or presented them to the audience. They were examined more carefully and the parts of transcripts, which referred to them, were coded.

Results

The Vloggers' Motivations for Creating and Publishing the Videos

The authors of the videos used different arguments to justify posting their videos on the Internet. According to the various motivational factors cited, they can be divided into four groups:

1. Motivators—those who wanted to share their experiences of slimming in order to motivate others. Both positive and negative argumentation was used. Different arguments were addressed to men and women.

2. Innovators—those who presented new forms of body care. They focused on following the latest trends in dieting or fitness exercises, and presenting them to an audience.

3. Documenters—those who mainly focused on documenting the step-by-step approach they followed in order to gain a slimmer figure. Some of the vloggers regularly published videos presenting routines of measuring and weighing their bodies. In such cases, vlogs were utilized as diaries.

4. Sharing experiences—those who sought the attention of other Internet users, including their support or admiration.

The aforementioned categories of vloggers will be further described in the subsequent parts of the article.

The Vloggers' Reference to Their Own Bodies and the Reasons They Give for Looking for a Healthier Way of Living

Although most of the videos were posted by different people, the stories they told had much in common. Many of the videos usually started with a description of their authors' lives, followed by the rules for healthy living, after which came the "turning point," a moment of reflection on the negative consequences of the described bad habits on their health. In subsequent parts, the authors often described what changes they had decided to introduce into their lifestyle, as well as the results of implementing these changes, namely, the impact these changes had on the way they looked and felt. In general, many of the videos adopted a schema of metamorphosis through the use of *before* and *after* pictures, which helped highlight the subsequent body transformations before and after implementing the necessary lifestyle changes. In the narratives of the videos, their authors often referred to their bodies, meaning the body itself was the subject of transformation.

Most of the authors were critically severe about the way they used to treat their bodies before they changed their lifestyle: "I used to eat rubbish, I used to drink rubbish,"[8] "I could see 'that' [that I gained weight—A.M.] in the pictures [of myself—A.M.] and that would bring me down."[9]

In the narratives of the analyzed videos, their authors usually stressed a particular moment when they realized that they had been neglecting their bodies for a long period of time. It was usually a turning point which helped them realize that their bad habits had had a devastating effect on their health. Common examples of such behavior were: ignoring the needs of one's organism, avoiding any physical exercise, eating fast food rather than well-balanced meals, or ignoring the fact they were gaining weight.

For most of the authors, the moment in which they decided to introduce changes into their lives took place when their bodies "failed" to function in some way. They had either fallen ill or they were "dissatisfied" with the way their bodies were functioning: getting tired very quickly due to a lack of any physical exercise, or that their bodies looked unattractive because of excess weight, lack of firmness, et cetera. This was usually expressed in such words as: "I didn't like looking in the mirror, I didn't like my body anymore,"[10] "I found it tiring to climb up the stairs."[11] Some of the vloggers experienced rejection from other people because they were overweight or looked unattractive, while

[8] Video by vlogger LilyChannel, published on July 03, 2016. Retrieved December 21, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iF5P1JZ30k&t=1s).

[9] Video by vlogger LilyChannel, published on July 03, 2016. Retrieved December 21, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iF5P1JZ30k&t=1s).

[10] Video by vlogger Aleksandra Żuraw, published on April 27, 2016. Retrieved December 10, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okMLQHLv-Sw&t=7s).

[11] Video by vlogger RoKoGym, first of the videos documenting the slimming process, published on September 14, 2016. Retrieved December 12, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQp7_nWkp0s).

other vloggers excluded themselves from socializing because they felt dissatisfied with the way they looked.

Another common pattern that appeared repeatedly in many videos was a kind of "struggling" with the body: difficulties in changing habits which had previously proved to be so destructive. However, the greatest effort vloggers had to make was changing their normal routine, and they often reported how difficult it was to get used to a new regime until it was fully "embodied."

One of the most challenging aspects reported by many of the authors was learning how to "listen" to their bodies, how to recognize the needs of the organism. Bloggers often recalled how they had to rethink their former approach to their own bodies, which they had to learn how to follow the natural "rhythm" of their organism by putting its needs first: "I did not respect my body,"[12] or "I had no time for eating well,"[13] or "I forced myself to eat five times a day."[14]

The changes introduced in their everyday routine were usually implemented gradually and reflexively. This reflexivity can be observed particularly in changes introduced in the two main spheres of everyday activity: the reorganization of preparing meals, and introducing fitness exercises into everyday schedules.

Changes in the sphere of meal preparation usually involved planning meals in advance, as well as eating about five meals during the day. This also entailed changes in other spheres, such as organizing shopping for food, or learning how to create meals according to the various rules of healthy eating. This "turn to healthy eating" was often documented in *foodbooks*, such as videos which showed how to make meals prepared for the whole day or week.

The reflexive approach also involved searching for the most appropriate form of physical activity for each of the video publishers. The authors of the films often stressed that before implementing the required changes into their lifestyles, they had not been in the habit of doing regular physical exercise. They went on to report how after some time they started to enjoy exercising, especially after their bodies had become used to regular physical activity. Doing sports was often described as the moment when they started to feel "in touch" with their bodies. Many of the vlog authors declared that they could no longer imagine starting the day without doing any exercise, whether that was running, visiting a gym, et cetera. They often compared how difficult it was in the past with how they were feeling now, in particular, that moment when they finally got to "know their bodies better," which soon became a more "familiar" sensation.

They often talked about how they were currently feeling, about the level of satisfaction they had

[12] Video by vlogger RoKoGym, first of the videos documenting the slimming process, published on September 14, 2016. Retrieved December 12, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQp7_nWkp0s).

[13] Video by vlogger RoKoGym, first of the videos documenting the slimming process, published on September 14, 2016. Retrieved December 12, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQp7_nWkp0s).

[14] Video by vlogger VlogLOLA, published on May 04, 2016. Retrieved December 17, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LAbEud_2A1Q).

about their bodies. This sentiment was often expressed with the words: "I feel more comfortable with my body," which indicated a newer, more intensive method in experiencing how to use their bodies, and consequently, the ability with which to respond to its needs.

Differences were also noted in the way male and female vloggers referred to their bodies. Videos posted by women focused much more on losing weight, whereas those posted by men sometimes involved attempts at making their bodies look more muscular. An interesting example of such vlogs was "Trenuj z Krzychem" ("Train with Chris"). The author of the vlog specializes in presenting freestyle football tricks, but in several episodes, he documented the transformation of his body from that of a very slim body into that of a muscular one. The metamorphosis was a kind of a tribute to footballer and idol, Ronaldo.[15]

In videos in which men demonstrated weight loss, they tended to describe their bodies differently than the way in which women did. They did not hesitate to use sarcastic expressions when describing the body parts with which they were most dissatisfied. For example, the author of the vlog, "Odwaga," documented his process of slimming in order to motivate other men to implement a healthy lifestyle. One of the very specific and negative ways he had of describing his body was to use self-mockery or self-deprecation, which became an identifiable hallmark of his vlog.[16]

The Vloggers' Bodies as Their "Representation" in the Social Space of the Internet

What was striking when watching these videos for the first time was the openness with which authors shared their experiences of becoming slimmer. Most of the videos included pictures which presented the way their authors had looked before the transition, when their bodies had still been unattractive. Nevertheless, this did not prevent them from sharing their pictures. On the contrary, referring to their own experiences made them a more reliable source of information for their subscribers, which was interpreted as a sign of "authenticity."

As I mentioned before, the videos served as a "documentation" of the slimming process. The "documenting" included practices of measuring and weighing of the vloggers' bodies, as well as doing the ""body work"—training them (e.g., in the gym). The purposes of body work were slightly different with regard to different genders: while female vloggers usually focused on the process of losing weight itself, male vloggers' videos documented the process of building up muscles as well.[17]

Some authors documented the moments of physical effort in their videos, others tended to avoid show-

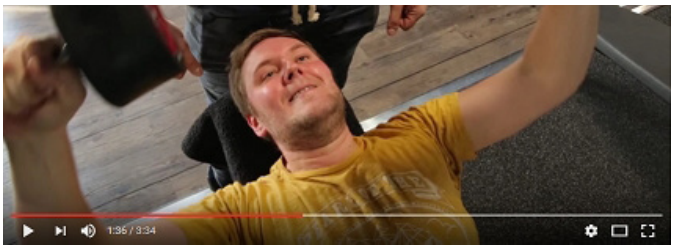
[15] An example video, a part of a series entitled "Form Chris to Ronaldo," published on April 09, 2016. Retrieved December 02, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMhrflPK-3sU&t=6s).

[16] An example motivating video published by Odwaga on March 18, 2016. Retrieved December 11, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iF5P1JZ30k&t=1s).

[17] This was the case in a video published on April 09, 2016 by "Trenuj z Krzychem." Retrieved December 02, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hl89_TF-W9c&t=299s).

ing the "dirtier" parts of body work (e.g., sweating) and focused on the results they achieved rather than on the effort they had to put into shaping their bodies.

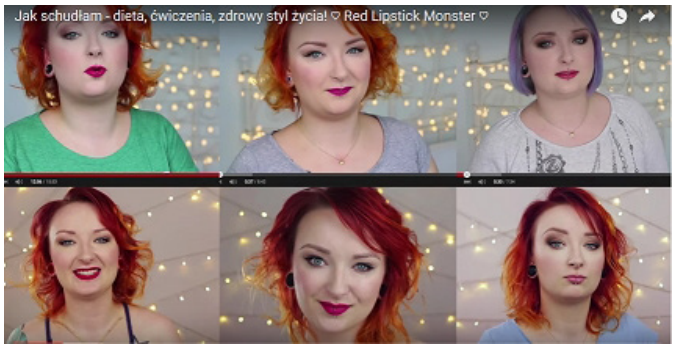
Picture 1. Documenting "body work" in a video posted by vlogger Odwaga.[18]



The way of "presenting" the slimming process to the audience seemed to be carefully planned: in the narratives of the videos, certain moments in vloggers' biographies were illustrated by certain "representations" of their bodies. Some of the vloggers took an active part in constructing their body images not only by trying to get slimmer but also by making attempts to find and expose distinctive attributes of their bodies, such as tattoos, dyed hair, or pierced ears, something which would make them recognizable among other vloggers. One could say that they were creating their own public *persona*. This was the case with Red Lipstick Monster, a popular vlogger specializing in presenting makeup techniques and beautifying the body, who referred to her tattoos, dyed hair, and vivid makeup as her "distinctive marks." In one of her videos, we can trace her "way" to a slim body (picture 2).

[18] Published on March 18, 2016 (Instagram: grzegorz_dakann_baranski). Retrieved February 20, 2017 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iF5P1JZ30k).

Picture 2. Red Lipstick Monster and the documentation of her slimming process.[19]



The Role of the Internet Community in the Process of Getting Slimmer

For many of those vloggers who had transformed their bodies, this ultimately became a source of pride for them, especially when they later became role models for other people. This was particularly noticeable in Q&A episodes, in which video authors who had managed to reach a certain level of expertise in the area of "body shaping" were then able to answer other users' questions. Many of them stressed that they were not professional counselors, and often instructed anyone looking for advice to refer to the appropriate person. Yet, the fact remains that they *were* asked for advice, which in itself served to encourage the vlog authors to post follow-up films documenting "their way" of healthy living. The vloggers declared that they did this so as not to disappoint their followers.

Sharing the results of their slimming processes with other people was also a means by which to gain the

[19] Retrieved February 20, 2017 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbM_bBv3KVo&t=183s).

attention of subscribers, not to mention their admiration. This could be observed through the words of one of the vloggers: "I cannot notice any difference, but you keep telling me: Wow, you look so slim!"[20] Therefore, the words can be interpreted as expressing the vlogger's need for approval, for staying motivated through the continued support of other people. Such examples help us to realize that the Internet is frequently employed as a tool which enables communication, as well as assisting in creating relations between the vlogger and their subscribers. Sometimes it also functions in the reverse order: this is the vlogger who makes attempts to motivate others or to give them support.

For example, one of the most popular pieces of advice given to the viewers by those who managed to transform their bodies was to "stop forcing oneself to do anything," for example: "I kept blaming myself for not eating regularly."[21] In this way, the vloggers were able to express their support for those who were putting their bodies through severe regimes, people who were being too strict. It can also be interpreted as a way of creating a sense of the so-called "shared experience" with their subscribers, as well as unifying the community.

During the course of analysis, I also encountered several videos posted by young women whose intention was to encourage other women not only to a greater acceptance of their bodies but to learn tolerance towards one another. One of these women presented a very intimate portrait of herself, one in which she shared firsthand experience of what it was like to suffer from an eating disorder, which she went on to explain was caused by her strict adherence to healthy eating. Another vlogger published a video in the form of a manifesto, in which she appealed to the audience for a greater approval of their bodies and a greater tolerance of the appearance of other people.[22]

The community also served as medium for exchanging information concerning all kinds of products which they recommended were necessary for leading a healthy lifestyle. As such, these vloggers were assigned the status of "authorities." There were those who recommended products because their "authority" was based solely on their experience, and as such were supported by such "salient" facts as being successfully able to reduce their weight. Even if the vloggers did not declare support for any particular brand as such, they still went on to state that by simply watching their videos people could learn how a variety of things could be helpful in leading a healthy lifestyle. As for examples of the products they recommended, among the many they "advertised," were types of sports equipment, food, and even Smartphone applications (apps that measured heartbeat and other body parameters).[23]

[20] Video posted by vlogger SSarusska on April 13, 2016. Retrieved December 08, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0jfg0Jp1_g&t=12s)/.

[21] Video posted by vlogger VlogLOLA on May 04, 2016. Retrieved December 12, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LAbEud_2A1Q).

[22] An example video encouraging women to a greater acceptance of their bodies published by vlogger Banshee on March 19, 2016. Retrieved December 18, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3emX2L2SLhg).

[23] An example video, a review of smartwatches, published by Odwaga on September 16, 2016. Retrieved on December 18, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7DMW60g7bU).

Vloggers also reported to their subscribers how they were often contacted by professionals who offered them assistance in planning diets or exercise, and so in this way the community was also used to popularize the services of personal trainers or diet specialists.[24]

Two of the vloggers referred to their past experiences and recalled that there had been no such a variety of products available when they were younger, or in some cases, just a few years before. They went on to say how today they could appreciate a greater availability and diversity of goods, but also access to a variety of role models whom they could follow. Some of the industry professionals mentioned were Ewa Chodakowska and Mel B., the current Polish and British fitness authorities.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I would like to propose some sociological interpretation of the findings of my study.

The aim of the article was to present how the vloggers mediate in the process of disseminating knowledge concerning slimming practices and slimness as an important attribute of the human body in contemporary culture.[25]

As Magdalena Szpunar (2011:92) indicates, in contemporary societies, the creation of knowledge is no longer the domain of individuals, but rather it is created by digital communities. The analysis of various vlogs illustrates that this shift in the means of creating socially shared knowledge is an excellent form for doing so. Referring this in regards to Michel Foucault's (1991) concept of power/knowledge, we can interpret the analyzed vlogs as a means of creating discourses concerning the human body. The videos are not only records of somebody's attempts to shape their body but they also serve as a series of instructions for other people to follow. The discourses concerning the most desirable body shapes are popularized by means of the Internet, and the discourse of how to attain slimness has remained unchanged, but is disseminated through new channels such as the Internet.

The authors of the analyzed vlogs are people who have become both adept and successful in disciplining their bodies (for instance, they managed to become slimmer). They have since gained the status of experts, and are often referred to by other Internet users. By sharing their experiences, they are able to help other users in reducing uncertainty arising from the fact that there are many different methods of "body work" available. Yet, the vloggers' status as authorities is, in this case, built solely on the criterion of self-experience. This finding can be interpreted with reference to the thesis of Wiesław Godzic (2007), a Polish media expert, who claimed that contemporary mass media has entered an era of Demopticum: that people no longer desire to rely on an experts' knowledge. They would rather prefer to refer to their own experiences.

[24] For example, the author of the vlog "Trenuj z Krzychem" was supported by professional trainers from "Fabryka Siły" Gym.

[25] As I mentioned before, according to Fairclough (2003), texts are mediated through the mass media.

According to Burges and Green (2009:47), "participants in Youtube clearly engage in new forms of 'publishing,' partly as a way to narrate and communicate cultural experiences, including their experiences as 'citizen-consumers,' which are bound up with commercial popular media."

Burgess and Green point out an important feature of contemporary culture, that social media users are "prosumers," they trust in other users' recommendations rather than the average commercials distributed by large media companies. This explains why recommending products comprised an important part of the analyzed videos.

The aforementioned authors (2009:47) refer to Nicole Matthews who names any culture which allows observation of other people's everyday lives as being a "confessional culture." This phenomenon can be observed in the vloggers' tendency to share even the most personal experience with their viewers. However, an alternative interpretation is also possible. As Jill Walker Rettberg (2008:145) indicates, vlogs are a mirror and a curtain at the same time. On the one hand, they are used as mirrors: they allow us to strike a pose in which we like ourselves. On the other hand, vlogs are a kind of a curtain, they allow us to hide aspects of our private lives which we do not want to reveal. According to this interpretation, the ways vloggers present themselves can be seen as result of their deliberate creation. This thought is further developed by Sherry Turkle (1997:9) who claims that: "we come to see ourselves differently as we catch sight of our images in the mirror of the machine…the computer offers us both models of mind and a new medium, on which to project our ideas and fantasies." Debra Gimlin (2002:6) indicates that body work is, in fact, work on the self. The Internet as a medium allows its users to construct the kinds of selves that they want to share with other people. This can be seen and referred to in the way that vloggers involve themselves in changing the appearance and condition of their bodies. Their initial intention was to create a more positive image of themselves, but their new image, based on a slimmer and more attractive body, was also used as a "persona," one which they use particularly in representing themselves in the social media. The authors of the vlogs instruct the viewers how to use certain products in order to make their bodies look more attractive. Joanne Finkelstein (1991:183) interprets such practices as "turning a self into a sign."

Referring to Paul Sweetman's (1999) terminology, we can say that, by pointing out to the distinctive attributes of their bodies, the vloggers are "anchoring" their selves in their bodies.

The way the vloggers experienced their bodies can be interpreted as turning from "dys-embodiment" to "re-embodiment" (Nettleton and Watson 1998:10). For most of the vlogs authors, the moment in which they decided to introduce changes into their lives took place when their bodies "failed" to function in some way. Because of experiencing pain or discomfort, their bodies, previously not important in their lives, became central objects of all their efforts. As Nettleton and Watson (1998:10, 12) indicate, re-embodiment "requires a considerable amount of *biographical work*." This can be observed in the vloggers' narratives about their biographical

experiences: their videos are illustrated with pictures of their bodies representing certain moments of their lives.

In one of my previous studies, I analyzed a magazine aimed at people interested in losing weight, a publication which has been in circulation since 1994. Using content analysis of press, I compared all magazine issues released in 1995 and 2015. I focused on three contexts in which obesity was described: aesthetical, medical, and the sphere of social relations. One of the findings of the study was that the social aspects of obesity, the way in which overweight or obese people function in society, such as problems with being accepted or rejected by others, were less often mentioned in the 2015 editions than they had been in the 1995 editions. I assumed that one of the possible reasons for this shift was because some people had begun to seek the advice and support of other people operating in the realm of the social media (Maj 2016).

Although the analysis of the selected vlogs does not allow us to draw far-reaching conclusions, it does seem to show that social media has become the new forum in which people can discuss how to effectively lose weight, among other health influence issues.

In contrast to traditional forms of mass media such as the press, social media is interactive, which allows dialogue and the exchange of relevant information and experiences. Most notably, social media is instrumental in meeting the needs of its users, and as a result plays a significant role in helping people gain the acceptance and support of other people. In essence, its users are able to become part of their desired community.

What is more, these communities act not only as receivers of information and knowledge concerning healthy living but in terms of facilitating; they play an active role in producing and disseminating it.

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Appendix: Analyzed vlogs in alphabetical order (all available on Youtube.pl).

The vlogger's name:	Presents themselves as:
Aleksandra Żuraw—motivating vlog for young women, the author is a former participant of the Polish edition of "Top Model" TV show.	
Banshee—a 20-year-old woman, 35th position on the list of Polish most subscribed Youtube channels.	
Iwona Malinowska (MojeMalinoveLove)—describes herself as a "plus size woman," currently residing in the UK, posts motivating videos concerning dieting and fitness exercises.	
LilyChannel—make-up artist, interested in beautifying the body, tattoos, and piercing, she lost 20kgs of weight.	
Natalia K—a 30-year-old mother of two boys, vlog addressed to young mums.	
Nissiax 83—cosmetologist, currently living in NYC, posts videos concerning doing yoga and running, beautifying the body, popularizing vegan diet.	
Odwaga—he lost 20kgs of weight, motivating vlog. Instagram: grzegorz_dakann_baranski	
Partycja Perline—young woman, daily and lifestyle vlog.	
Red Lipstick Monster—31st position on the list of Polish most subscribed Youtube channels, specializing in make-up techniques, she has published her own book. redlipstickmonster.pl	
RoKoGym—he lost 50kgs of weight, motivating vlog.	
Simplybypola—young woman, daily and lifestyle vlog.	
Smesz—she lost 18kgs of weight, interested in power lifting.	
Sylwia Gracjas—she lost 50kgs of weight, motivating vlog.	
Ssarusska—19-year-old student, currently residing in the USA, interested in fashion.	
"Trenuj z Krzychem"—Football freestyler, specializing in football tricks, he has published his own book, 42nd on the list of the most subscribed Youtube channels.	
VlogLOLA—journalist and copywriter, PR specialist. Enjoys posting motivating videos and daily vlogs.	

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Body on the Plate. On the Relation between the Carnality and Food (on the example of meat in advertising)

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Abstract Do we own our bodies? Do we control them during the meal, or does the meal control us? In this paper, we aim to examine the complex nexus of social and physical practices embedded in eating habits. During the examination of selected culinary advertisements, we will attempt to explain how food stabilizes, catalyzes, separates, and mediates social relations, as well as social and individual bodies. The paper merges the perspective of cultural anthropology, sociology of the body, and food studies.

Keywords Food; Body; Social Practices; Media; Consumption

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Food consumption is not a simple phenomenon which is easy to describe. Depending on the cultural background, intentions and motivations of the actors, social processes, the influence of things, it may shape individuals and their bodies in various ways. It may train or liberate, connect or divide, strengthen or weaken. An analysis of becoming body through food may say a lot about the construction of connections between the individual, the society, and culture. In the article, we seek oppressive and emancipating contents pertaining to the body which are present in purposively selected advertisements of meat. The aim of the article is to answer the question on the nature of particular relations between the cultural and social construction of the body and food consumption represented by media advertisements.

Examination of Eating Body: Between Anthropology and Food Studies

Most of all, the title of the article is to point out the connections between the social constructions of the body and the meanings ascribed to food. It is also to emphasize the physical-social implications of the body and food, not always directly expressed by sociologists. This relation should be understood both as the supply of nutrients to the organism, and as social and cultural influences, such as the issue of obtaining food, expectations and ideas of it, or ethical and political disputes around food production and consumption.

Even though part of our narration will refer to food in general, the reader may certainly wonder why the choice is, in the context of the analyses pertaining to the body, the somewhat controversial product—meat. As stressed by Maguelonne Toussaint-Samat (2002:93), livestock farming was one of the first forms of ownership, in fact of robbing the nature. The transition to the sedentary lifestyle and the conditions connected with plants cultivation and livestock breeding were the foundation for the formation of the human social organization (Mazoyer and Roudart 2006:71; Diamond 2010). Therefore, animal meat in its multiple varieties is treated as a product which is known and consumed for thousands of years in all parts of the world, valuable both due to its physical qualities (source of protein and fats) and as generating a series of social connotations. On the other hand, sociologists of the body incessantly struggle with threads which, for the purposes of these considerations, may be referred to as meat-related: relating to the human physicality. In order to only outline the issue, it is worth mentioning the attempts at explaining the relations between the material body and the soul/mind, the search for the space within the material (meat-related) body in which the soul would hide, undertaken since the times of Plato. The human body has been referred to in various ways by philosophers and philosophical anthropologists. Descartes, whose idea is the starting point for the contemporary considerations on the body in social sciences, made comparisons with the machine and the vessel, Edmund Husserl wrote about experiencing the body as the *Leib* (the living body) and the *Körper* (the physical solid figure), while Helmuth Plessner, who argued that the human being has the body and is the body and at the same time, was convinced that animals do not possess the ability to relate to their bodies (lack of emotions or capabilities to form bonds). This misconception, which even in the times of Plessner was possible to be verified based on the works by Charles Darwin, is still today one of the common justifications in the ethical dispute on meat consumption (Wójtewicz 2014:23-43). In the 20th century, the issue of the duality of the human body has slowly been giving way to the issues connected with identity shaping, gender, race, sexuality, or health and the relevant body has been considered as a crucial element of the system of social and cultural meanings, a realized object of control and indispensable element of cultural consumption. And in this context of having control over the body within the somatic society, that is the one whose most political and personal problems relate to the body and are expressed by it,[1]

[1] The notion introduced by Bryan S. Turner (1996:1).

at the same time based on consumption, our considerations should include food.

Studies on food and eating have a specific status in social sciences. On the one hand, the review of literature shows a wide range of researchers' interests in the issue. The most classic are the neo-Marxist studies deriving from the critical analyses of commodity production systems (e.g., Buttel 1980; 2006; Friedland 1997). They focus on the criticism of the industrial society, distribution of power inside of the food chain. In these studies, food is one of the commodities and the consumers are rather passive participants of the game. Searching for a model of development alternative to capitalism, the studies have been evolving towards analyses of alternative systems and new patterns of production (e.g., Goodman, DuPuis, and Goodman 2014). Although it is an essential one, this trend in food studies suffers from two basic disadvantages. One of them is the distrustful attitude to culture and its significance. The other complex problem refers to the highly simplified vision of consumer behaviors and roles. These studies fail to describe the complexity of relations between the body, identity, and consumption (Lockie 2002).

Anthropology has determined the rhythm of food studies differently. Let us consider the famous concept of the culinary triangle by Claude Levi-Strauss. Through the processes of food processing, the border between the culture and the nature, between what is cooked, raw, or rotted becomes visible (Levi-Strauss 2013:46). Food draws a line which divides structures and functions. The issue of food was approached in a similar way by Mary Douglas (1996:34) who, fighting the simplified, functionalist definition of bans connected with food, pointed out that their main function was to draw symbolic borders rooted in the culture of the society. At present, anthropology adds to this composition the research into the body, identity, sexuality, ethnicity (e.g., Probyn 2001; Counihan and Kaplan 2005; DeSoucey 2016). In the anthropologists' perspective on food, the ritual and magic context is extremely important. The product, chosen for this analysis, thanks to its qualities and origin like perhaps no other, is a pretext to search for the cultural essence of the relation between the body and what feeds the body. Jolanta Brach-Czaina calls this relation the metaphysics of meat.

> The meat provides us with its essence, it demonstrates it to us, although we fail to make any effort to think about it. Its hidden sense emanates from it and we yield to it unconscious of our submissiveness. And taking into account the fact that we ourselves are slowly becoming meat, and we may already even be it, we should attempt to analyze out the hidden being-related essence of meatness since it pertains to our fate. [Brach-Czaina 2008:81]

Even if one is deeply reluctant to consume this product, they need to bear in mind that contact with the meat of slaughtered animals allowed humans to discover the physical characteristics of their bodies, but also helped them realize their own meatiness and similarity to what we eat. Eating animals makes us members of the bloodthirsty community, as stated by Brach-Czaina. "The community of creatures is governed by the law of food: we consume one another, irrevocably doomed to be consumed ourselves…We take part in the cosmic cannibals feast"

(Brach-Czaina:83). All attempts to symbolically exclude oneself from this community emphasize even more the cultural ambivalence in the approach to the human body and the animal bodies, as well as to death. We are sure not to say that a lamb chop comes from the carcass. Admiring the cook's talent we will savor it rhapsodizing about the qualities of the meat. What is it then that makes us commonly accept the objective act of cruelty which is eating animals? Starting with the assumption that all food is our builder, the status of meat is a special one, though. The consumption of meat involves extreme mutual sacrifice whose meaning consists in one being sacrificed for the other so that in the future the other one (the human being, or rather what they become) would become food for the animal (Brach-Czaina:87).

In the context analyzed, one needs to consider the perception of the meal as a code on the basis of which it is possible to draw conclusions about social relations, as proposed by Mary Douglas (2007). As evidently manifested by the example of meat, the act of eating consists of the biological and social components, while the consumed meat is obviously assigned social meanings such as the mentioned example of the sacrifice of animals. The consumption of meals is accompanied by patterns which translate into the body—from the need to be present in a place and at a time through the embodied competences connected with taking seats at the shared table. Food turns out to be an activity which is accompanied by greater intimacy than drinking. It is most often that we eat in the company of people who we know or to whom we are related by blood, and the rules derived from culture and religion have influence on what we actually feed our bodies with.

We would also like to touch upon the issue of lack of food studies in the mainstream of the social sciences. As Warren Belasco (2008) notes, in spite of their importance, the studies on the rituals linked with food, the composition of cookbooks, consumer practices are still on the margin of the mainstream scientific research. It seems that it is possible to indicate three reasons for such a situation. One of them is connected with the dualism of the body and the mind, already mentioned in this work. Food is treated as something which is stereotypically linked with satisfying the basic needs. Belasco stresses that the whole Victorian ritual linked with food relates to the deep suspiciousness of the "civilized" human as regards the apparently physical act. An interesting trace is also the gender thread—food is connected with consumption, perceived as a female sphere, which in contrast to the male public sphere does not deserve the attention of the serious science (Belasco 2008:3). This would explain the discrepancy between the advanced studies on the technical and political aspects of food and the insecure attempts to break through in the case of studies on cultural, identity-, and body-related aspects of eating and food. The last reason for the reluctance of the mainstream social sciences representatives towards food studies may be the nature of the sub-discipline which is deeply rooted in the everyday life. What is essential to food studies happens on a daily basis, in the everyday rituals maintaining or upsetting the social order. In cookbooks and on cook blogs, in the material kitchen equipment and the divisions which result from that. Meanwhile, it seems that

the important trends in sociology like to deal with the traumatic change theory of systems or transformation. The food studies which are focused on the present fail to completely fall within this model.

The Body and Food Consumption

As has been signaled in the introduction to the article, in the 20th century the socially constructed body has begun to experience a revival of interest of social scientists who sought not so much to again consider the Cartesian dilemma on the human duality, as to look at the body and the society through the prism of the mutual influences. One of the most frequently discussed discourses referring to the body is the so-called dietetic discourse. In the times of the reflectively built project of the individual identity in which the body is one of the key elements, it is simply not proper that the self-aware individual would cut off from the discourse. Eating manuals, cookbooks, and handbooks on healthy lifestyle are among the publications which disappear from bookshop shelves the fastest. The media triumphs are celebrated by cooks, dieticians, and nutritionists.

Although dietetics is as old as medicine, new social conditions mean new rules of the game for the embodied actors.

> In the society in which famine and poverty disappear, standing out may depend on showing a slim figure, which refers first of all to the classes in power and middle classes; the very liberation from being addicted to eating leads the members of this society, who are employed more and more often—in a factory or office—in positions requiring less and less physical effort…to excessive consumption of protein, carbohydrates, and fats. [Ory 2014:127]

The modern society has a specific attitude to food and the impact that the food exerts on the body. As Warren Belasco (2016:167) states, the culture normalizes the body by managing its boundaries. Taking account of transformations in the modes of food production, distribution and consumption styles, the development of information technologies and manners of governing, there are four ideal types of embodiment: the efficient body, the authentic body, the busy body, and the responsible body. The efficient body is a body which is conscientiously managed or even controlled by the individual and the society. This is the type which is the closest to the Cartesian vision of the body as a machine. "Moreover, dieting assumed a mechanistic view of the body: its caloric inputs and outputs could be closely measured, and its parts could be tuned up with ultra specialized, shiny exercise equipment" (Belasco 2016:172). The individual who manages the efficient body is ready to support their body with the available technologies and pharmaceuticals in order to be able to, for example, work longer and more efficiently.

The authentic body is not so methodically managed as regards the intake of calories and the nutrients supplied. This is a socialized body participating in the consumption of local products; the action of eating is a source of pleasure for it. As an example of the busy body Belasco points out to the working mother who does not have time to reflect on every calorie consumed. She would eat quickly and anyhow: "Bodies fed by quick-and-easy foods were less likely to be faithful and grateful" (Belasco 2016:176).

The last one, the responsible body, is inhabited by an individual who is familiar with thinking of the social consequences of the eating behaviors they decide on. The responsible body eats in the ethical, healthy, and usually expensive way. "In food terms, caring meant being willing to pay the full cost of a meal" (Belasco 2016:179).

Social construction of body in case of food is inevitably connected to patterns of consumption. However, Alan Aldridge (2006) argues that the subject matter of the role and importance of consumption is easy to reduce to the issue of duality. Consumer ideas in the Western discourse are limited by the notions of: the rational actor, the victim, the naive one, the message sender. The consumer is treated as a discoverer, an identity seeker, a hedonist, a rebel, an activist, a citizen, a puppet (Aldridge 2006:26). In a sense, this division takes into account the two axes: of the authority and of the rational action. In this perspective, while consuming, we yield to compulsion or regain agency, we satisfy our needs or participate in the consumption race. We shape our body or we make it undergo the shaping processes. This Manichaean approach is also visible in the studies on the role and function of food. On the one hand, in the literature, there are dry descriptions of consumer practices, treated as the rational way of satisfying one's needs (e.g., Oosterveer, Guivant, and Spaargaren 2007). The complexity of consumers' behaviors, aims, and motivations is reduced to the percentage describing the way they consume and buy. Consumer decisions are in this case the result of connecting the needs, fears, consumer awareness, the system, and policies of development (Marsden 2006:7). On the other hand, there is a sensitive description of consumer experiences, convictions and activities, and values rooted in anthropology (e.g., Belasco 2007). Treated as the active subject, the eating citizen (Lyson 2007), or the victim of the system, is forced to excessive consumption (Pollan 2006:100). Today, researchers attempt to slightly depart from this division, even by using the concept of social practices and analyses of the individual and social subjectivity of consumers (Dean, Sharkey, and Jonson 2016). However, it still exerts impact on thinking about consumption, leading to the dominance of typologies which are mostly based on the far too simple clash between the enslaved and the citizen consumption (e.g., Dagevos and Hansman 2001:143-150; Oosterveer et al. 2007).

It brings us to crucial question about more complex relations between consumption patterns and construction of body. In this article, we intend to approach the issue of consumption and its relations with the social body in a slightly different way proposed by Belasco or Dagevos and Hansman. We treat food as **a stabilizer**, **a catalyst**, **a moderator**, or **a separator** of both: social processes and social bodies. Depending on the cultural and political context, the nature of the product itself, the customer expectations and needs, the relations in which they function, it is food that may modify or consolidate the social world surrounding them and their own bodies. Food may also be treated as the platform connecting different actors, different worlds or separating them. Let us now consider elements of our analytical frames:

Food as a stabilizer: in her bright study on foie gras, Michaela DeSoucey (2016) describes the connection

between food and the symbolic field of a society. The food codes and is coded by values and norms characteristic of a group. The peasant cuisine, mum's cooking, the Mediterranean cuisine—each of these notions refers to a specific idyllic vision of the world which is strengthened among other things in culinary habits. If one considers the Italian cuisine, as Fabio Parasecoli (2014:260) describes it, the vision of the Italian provinces and Italian taste which appear in our heads are in fact an ephemeral image, an illusion based on evanescent symbols connected with the national identity. The question here is the feedback effect. Food consolidates our vision and culturally constructs the surrounding world. For example, an interesting phenomenon, typical of Poland, is a strong valorization of the past—the so-called "taste of childhood," based on referring to the non-existent, to the spirit of the time gone by, to the idyll of the wonderful childhood years. It is our desires that influence the reality. Italian Tuscany, French province, pseudo-peasant inn by a highway—they are physical manifestations of our images connected with food. This way the symbolic field is being stabilized. Referring to the body, we would like to stress how its constructions are maintained through food. The female body, in particular gender roles, for example, cooking in the kitchen, struggling with products while processing them, the references to sexuality in food advertising, the training role of food and its connection with keeping the desired shape of the body in demand at a given historical moment—this is the way food serves as an indicator and one of the tools to stabilize the socially consolidated constructions of the body.

Food as a catalyst: in a different political and social context food may be a factor to symbolize or initiate changes. Warren Belasco (2007) in his book, *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*, describes how the counterculture groups were formed around food. Around the controversies linked with food, the citizen, and consumer movements fighting for the well-being of animals, state of the environment, activation of local communities, a new construction of the global world are being formed. At their conception the most important movements such as fair trade, Via Campesina, the organic movement focused on food. Fighting for the elimination of cage rearing, ban of catches of cetaceans, rejecting the shark fin soup have become the keystones connecting the politically engaged citizens. At the same time, the catalyzing function of food has also a more individual nature. Our research has shown that for a share of consumers food and diet are a significant element in identity reconstruction. The change of eating habits marks the beginning of changes. Let us consider the controversial but scientifically fascinating issue of the role of food in the treatment of critically ill patients. Changes of diet, "miraculous" herbs and products are used to regain control over the body and what is happening with it. Food is also treated as a tool to fight the oppressive total system (e.g., the medical one). In this sense, food may be a symbol of change or its catalyst both at the individual and social levels. It is a weapon in the fight for the new world or for one's body and health. Changing one's diet, joining a food cooperative, buying fair trade products, opposing force-feeding we try to accelerate, change the surrounding world.

Food as a mediator and separator: in their study of the *oscypek*,[2] the team of Krzysztof Gorlach used an interesting notion of food as a platform connecting different types of knowledge, various actors, and institutions (Gorlach and Nowak 2011). In fact, in its essence food may be a powerful mediator connecting dissimilar people. This occurs in at least two manners. First of all, due to its very essence, food is also a social act. The bonds characteristic of a group are re-established and strengthened through a shared meal. Food, and actually its reflection in the symbolic field are used to build communities. DeSoucey is the author of the term gastronationalism. It assumes that food production, processing, and consumption may create and maintain emotional attachment to the idea of the nation forming the fundamentals of collective identity (DeSoucey 2012). Food may form a set of symbols linking us with the community and separating us from strangers. The mediating role of food is approached in a slightly different way by the classic food studies (e.g., Lockie 2002; Goodman 2004; Fonte 2008; Goodman, DuPuis, and Goodman 2014). They stress the networking nature of the processes of food production and distribution. In this sense, buying coffee from a popular coffeehouse chain, we complement the complex system of connections which for a short time links us with an American plantation owner, a Brazilian worker, a coffee processor, a seller, a barista, but also with non-human actors: for example, the systems of legal regulations that influence coffee trading. Depending on the type of this network, its openness, transparency, industrial integration, the mediating function may be exposed or disclosed. Nevertheless, food may unite, from the obvious function of a shared meal that builds the family (Carrington 2013:187), through the symbolic meaning of new consumer movements building depersonalized relations of the engaged citizens.

A more evident function of food is its **separative** potential. This is stressed by Pierre Bourdieu (2013) who focuses on the class and gender dimension of divisions connected with food. The most obvious is the one connected with the division into the upper, middle, and working classes. Each of them had their own distinct set of acceptable and unacceptable meals, flavors, and behaviors. These combined and formed a system of distinctive features serving class separation. The upper classes are characterized by a limited freedom of consumption, of what to consume and how to consume. Food is one of the mechanisms of class control and one of the indicators of affiliation to a particular position within the social structure. This is why the protagonists of *La Grande Bouffe* accomplish a specific class liberation by means of suicide by overeating. The separative nature of food is not limited only and exclusively to the quite obvious issue of social class. Psyche Williams-Forson (2006), in her brilliant study, describes how food and food-related symbols were/are used to consolidate ethnic divisions. The anthropologist analyzed the role played by chicken legs in the case of the Afro-American inhabitants of the U.S. This dish had a special role at the same time being a symbol and a tool of class divisions and an essential element of the Afro-American political and ethnic identity which was emerging (Williams--Forson 2013:108). Food is also very clearly divisive for genders. As Rebecca Swenson (2009:36) argues

[2] *Oscypek* (Polish) is a smoked cheese made of salted sheep milk exclusively in the Tatra Mountains region of Poland.

in her studies on the relations between masculinity, femininity, food, and TV programs, food and its presentation are media for the gender-dividing stereotypes. The competitive male chefs are contrasted with the everyday kitchen activities of women. Very clear traces of gender stereotypes are to be found also in food itself. There is the ethereality, whiteness, and lightness of construction of products such as diet yoghurts, while the same product packaged by marketing specialists for men strikes with the black color of the packaging, functional description, reference to body training (Parasecoli 2013a:291).

Food in the Media

Here, there emerges the question on how to unveil the intimate relation between the body and food. How to reach the disclosed sense of a particular form of consumption? How to analyze the mechanisms of the co-construction of the body and meat? In this article, we have decided to analyze selected TV commercials, or more broadly—media representations. This is a technique frequently used in food studies, and there is a purpose underlying. Most of all, the second half of the 20th century is characterized by a genuine explosion of media representations of food in commercials, newspapers, magazines, films (Rousseau 2012). Our intention is to draw the reader's attention to how the meanings connected with food are constructed. The media constructs of food tie them with our bodies. On a daily basis, we marvel at an article on the healthy impact of mango, or quiver with horror facing another permutation of the mad cows disease, or the swine flu, read/hear about exceptional qualities of the Brazilian acai berries, or with disgust witness the fight with pork. The dense pop-cultural web woven by the media exposes us to the excess of knowledge, emotions, sensations (Parasecoli 2013b:6). Describing this process, Fabio Parasecoli uses the concept of cultural commands, borrowed from Jean Baudrillard—assuming that, among other things, in the media, there is a specific repeated and encoded core—*the matrix, memories, and the command models* (Parasecoli 2013b:6). In the media, some repeated, but differently understood symbols capable to instantly travel in time, space, and society appear. The essence of this type of post-modernist journey of symbols seems to be commercials. Most of all, they are currently the key texts of culture. Allowing for certain controversy, it may be assumed that they are one of the more important institutions of socialization of the post-modern society (Jhally 1990). To some degree, they have an impact on gender and ethnic identities, family relations, the visions of one's body (Jhally 1990). Through the power of symbols and the authority connected with it, there emerges a Baudrillard algorithm of actions and commands. In this article, the dualism of advertisements will be significant—they are coded by the cultural context and they code the context themselves. Here emerge some interesting questions on how the body is presented in the specific media form; what symbols appear and what is their impact / how they are perceived in the different contexts shaping our bodies. The analysis pattern assumes a description of the creation of the commercial and what it presents, denotations connected with the construction and presentation of the body and materiality, connotations pertaining to the cultural contexts of a specific presentation, reference to the processes of cata-

lyzing, stabilization, separation, or mediation. The accepted analytical pattern assumes that the ways of presenting the body and food in advertisements reflect and strengthen social relations, illustrate and influence the way in which the society defines and re-defines **ethnicity**, **cultural gender**, **and gender roles**, as well as **citizenship** and **class divisions**. In the advertisements of meat products selected for the analysis, the reader will thus find exemplifications of female and male bodies entangled in the above mentioned contexts. These are multiple and multidimensional entanglements described by both theoreticians and researchers of the social dimensions of the embodiment, typical of the contemporary culture (Buczkowski 2005; Jakubowska 2009; Shilling 2010). To sum up, our assumption is that by investigating into advertisements, we are able to reach the fragments of codes constituting the cultural and social algorithms of stabilization, catalyzation, mediation, or separation of the body. In the following sections of the article, we shall attempt to analyze this combination by investing in purposively selected TV commercials of food. The selection was made taking into account the division into the stabilizing, catalyzing, mediating, and separative functions of consumption.

The Body and Meat in Advertising

Stabilization—The Erotic Body

Photo 1. Carl's JR burgers commercial.[3]



The commercial is described by its authors as presenting a traditional American product in a new sexy form. For the first time it was shown in 2015 during the Super Bowl. The model and actress Charlotte McKinney, visible in the picture, was promoted as a totally natural body advertising totally natural burgers (tasty, healthy, and obviously made in

[3] Picture available at: http://www.hngn.com/articles/143301/20151023/charlotte-mckinney-makes-carls-jr-history-with-sexy-new-commercial-photos-video.htm. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

accordance with a unique recipe). The body which advertises them meets all the criteria stereotypically viewed as "appetizing" femininity—the model is young, white, blonde with smooth complexion without visible imperfections, despite a very slim figure she has full breasts. Thus, the image of the female body presented in the commercial unites two current standards of the female look—leanness with muscularity and proper curves (bust and buttocks), that is, shapes that are practically impossible to achieve for the majority of women (Kimmel 2015:449). Considering the fact that the standards of the physical beauty are strongly marked by gender—the presented commercial aggravates the cultural inequality between women and men, reducing the woman to the role of "a natural body," at the same time consolidating the schizophrenic standards related to leanness and selective abundance. This is the more so interesting that in some commercials realized within the discussed campaign, the model is heartily eating the burgers dripping with grease, which cannot be an activity to help achieve the ideal body embodied by the model.

It is worth noting that in this case the eroticized body helps maintain the culinary tradition (or rather the image of tradition). Jean Baudrillard stresses that the thing which drives the cultural consumption of the body, especially the female one, is sexuality. "The imperative of beauty being the exploitation of the body by means of narcissistic re-casting and investment requires eroticism as the sexual manifestation" (Baudrillard 2006:176). Therefore, the natural burgers strengthen the culturally constructed oppressive model of female physicality based on eroticism and sexuality. Additionally, there is, using the words by Baudrillard, the so-called consumption of the body and by the body. The culturally relevant and socially desired body of the model allows her to gain media popularity, become successful and thus consume by means of the body. The same body which allows for the model's social and economic participation is metaphorically consumed by the advertising message recipients. Hence, this is a highly gendered body reduced to the level of erotic-aesthetic and economic value, which consolidates the image of the female body as apparently liberated sexual object, preserving the social practices oppressive to women.

The discussed commercial is an example of a specific feedback occurring between the meat/food and the body which advertises it. The social ways of constructing the female body promote its use in the meat-related contexts. The meat product becomes much more appetizing if associated with a body that is a desired object.

Stabilization—The Ethnic Body

The second of the analyzed advertisements reaches the history of relation between meat and the body. This is an American advertisement of a range from General Electric. The marketing aim of the campaign, the target group were Afro-Americans. In this case, the question is the consolidation, solidification of ethnic identity and stereotypes connected with it. We shall begin with the choice of food presented in the picture. Chicken legs have had a long and rather infamous history in the culinary and cultural history of the U.S. (Williams-Forson 2006). It was the cheapest and the most commonly

Photo 2. Advertisement of General Electric's range—1935.[4]



available food, unequivocally associated with the ethnic group of Afro-Americans. Symbolically, the chicken meat was treated as a coarse one. What is visible here are the race and class mechanisms of consolidating a low social position of Afro-Americans in the U.S. in the first half of the 20th century. The food has been linked with the construction of race, ethnic identity, subjugation, but also with attempts to discover one's identification. Doris Witt (2004:220), a researcher into the connections between famine, gender, and race, uses the term *chicken stories* for the orally transmitted narrations pertaining to cooking, struggle for food, joint food preparation. They stabilized the social practices connected with eating, but also with race—its place in the social structure, cultural universe of values and symbols, political awareness—either in a negative way (racism) or positive one (building identity). The subject matter of relations between food and race is in fact still significant today. The lack of food security, dependence on the state's assistance, diet which deforms the body are characteristic of the ethnic and the poorest groups of citizens of the highly developed countries (Caparros 2017:405). Individuals, groups pushed into the cultural and social margin eat badly, cheaply. There occurs the feedback—ethnic groups and social classes are economically and culturally forced to fast and cheap diet which influences their bodies. The same bodies in the post-modern world worsen the exclusion of communities and individuals, fuelling the processes of marginalization.

Coming back to the advertisement, it strengthens the stereotypical behaviors and appearance of Afro-Americans. We shall begin with the description of the hyperbolization of the physical traits of the ethnic group. Shiny white teeth, the presentation of

[4] Picture available at: https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/378654281143240151/. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

lips and ears, emotions expressed with the face—these are to build the image of "a good black guy." A person who is not especially bright but generally happy and content with simple things. This is strengthened by the model's behavior. The way he holds the food, the simple construction of the food itself (fried chicken leg) form an image of a person who needs little to be happy, apart from the General Electric range, of course. The unequivocal imagery of the picture is consolidated by the language. Both the message sent by the main character, connected with his satisfaction with eating food ("um.m.m!") and the symbols used in communication between the company and the recipients ("Yo' next range should be") are supposed to preserve the race stereotype of the Afro-American.

Therefore, food intertwined with ethnicity consolidates the imagery that refers to ethnicity. This situation involves two basic dimensions. One, the ideological one, pertains to the social construction of particular groups of people. It determines their physicality, behavior, everyday habits. Food plays the role of strengthening stereotypes. Food is already used in the cultural war for domination. We would like to point out how often food is used, for example, in the conflicts with the imagined Islamic threat. Pork buried on construction sites of mosques, or sent in letters to the Polish Board of Muslims may be examples of it.[5] Symbols carried by processed food may thus serve the dominant group to promote expected behaviors and attitudes in the dominated group. Also, cooking may be used by an ethnic group to maintain the continuity of the symbolic field, the patrimony from which the patterns constructing group identities are derived. The chicken stories together with the political movement to build the awareness of Afro-Americans led to the emergence of soul kitchen. This is a cultural practice whose simplified construction was to refer to and promote the ethnic awareness of Afro-Americans. In this sense, meat, or more generally food, through its cultural imagery, the potential to strengthen the positive or negative community, is a powerful tool to stabilize the construction of the body, identity, group.

Catalization—The De-Gendered Body

The above commercial spot is described by YouTube users as a sexy message addressed to women. The commercial visible in the picture is part of a series of films in which an actor is busy in the kitchen making Italian dishes. However, in his case, to call it cooking seems an exaggeration, since the protagonist takes a ready chicken from the stove at most, or meaningfully pats a ball of pizza dough, the actual cooking actions are limited to pouring a ready sauce onto every dish. After watching the video for several seconds, the viewers realize that the cook is playing an erotic game with the viewers (the female viewers—addressing them directly: "Hey ladies!"), and the kitchen gets transformed into a scene from a Chippendales' show. In the presented spot, the protagonist starts to "cook" in a male apron put on the naked torso, and after a while he blinks

[5] From *Gazeta Wyborcza*, article "Polscy islamofobii mają nowy genialny pomysł" by Łukasz Woźnicki. See: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,16020932Polscy_islamofobi_maja_nowy__genialny__pomysl___Wysylamy.html. Retrieved April 18, 2018.
From news portal (www.natemat.pl), article "Podłożyć świnię muzułmaninowi" by Janusz Wójcik. See: http://janwojcik.natemat.pl/86007,podlozyc-swinie-muzulmaninowi. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

Photo 3. Commercial of the Italian meat sauce from Kraft.[6]



flirtatiously and puts on a female apron with frills. However, he is not satisfied with the result because the frills do not match his hairy legs. Therefore, he decides on the third variation—an apron with an image of a naked torso... and then he decides that being completely natural, he is definitely the best, and taking off his clothes, he is smiling while pouring the advertised sauce onto the baked chicken.

The advertised product is, not surprisingly, presented as natural and, interestingly, it has been shown as a tool for even partial emancipation of the busy body (Belasco 2016). The commercial persuades us to bake the chicken, but not to bother about making the sauce—the one from the shop is also good. Similarly to the case of the commercial of burgers, the message is that naturalness of the product goes hand in hand with the naturalness and the appetizing quality of the body that advertises it. This is yet a male body. Obviously—white, fulfilling the culturally defined norms of attractiveness. Although the requirements pertaining to the appropriate body refer to men as well, they do not constitute the most important component of the male status. The protagonist is overflowing with sex appeal, but from the beginning the viewers are aware that they are taking part in a game using physicality, that the female apron and the naked torso are tongue-in-cheek. The functional eroticism which was explicitly used in the commercial of burgers starring a women, in this case has been accompanied by humor and the very way of conducting the narration. The protagonist cannot handle cooking, but he enjoys it very much and persuades women to be less critical about themselves. Thus, the analyzed spot sends the message that liberates from the hegemonic masculinity, on the one hand, treating femininity ironically, but, on the other hand, questioning the thinking about home cooking as a women's activity, exhausting, demanding perfection and at the same time unmanly—almost castrating.

Catalization—The Post-Productivist Body

The next advertisement touches upon the phenomenon of the post-productivism in consumer behaviors, the modern changes in the relation between

[6] Picture available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uH-1dEWhutm8. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

Photo 4. Excerpt from the advertisement of organic beef by Applegate.[7]



meat and the body. This is an advertisement of one of the most popular companies producing organic, functional food, referring to the idea of concern for the well-being of breeding animals. Thus, it refers to one of the most interesting trends in food consumption in the well-developed countries. David Goodman (2003) called this phenomenon quality turn. He assumes that for part of the consumers, a more and more important role is played by the functions of food not connected directly with production, number of calories, simple reception of the taste. Fears connected with the growing complexity and the declining transparency of the industrial, long networks of production and the pro-ecological orientation, as well as the civic part of citizens, even more intensified by the impact of social movements (Marsden 2006:7) and the consumer ones have led to modifications in the perception of food, but also the body. There appeared new waves of consumer social practices referring to the idea of environmental protection, sustainable development, local democracy, but also seeking slow food, or new tastes. As Fabio Parasecoli (2014:7) neatly articulated it, in the new context, the hygienically sliced cheese and sterilely packed cheese loses to the one we buy directly from the farmer and which is stylized to look like a natural one, from the countryside. This has been intensified by the growing fears of modernity—consumers unable to estimate the risk, longing to regain empowerment have started to create individual or community-based safety bubbles around themselves. This is quite a typical thread often appearing during the interviews with the "radically consuming" members of food cooperatives, short networks, shopping groups. These are people whose motivation is strengthened by the fear of the mythical E, the industrial food processing, the laboratory where today's industrial food is produced. In this sense, there is a fundamental break, the dichotomization of the modern consumers living in the developed countries. On the one hand, there is a growing market of mass consumers, looking for cheap and eas-

[7] Picture available at: http://www.digitalvariant.com. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

ily available food; on the other hand, there emerge groups and movements of people trying to change the world surrounding them.

Returning to the advertisement, it is built on the basis of oppositions. The bodybuilder imitating a cow, representing industrial, modified, and artificial food, is contrasted with the ecological, "natural" female consumers using the Applegate products. The degenerated, exaggerated, turgid body is here a symbol, a metaphor of the contemporary times coded by lack of moderation, degeneration, scientific support. This is a body which by its construction inspires anthropological disgust. It is contrasted with the natural body, defining quality by moderation rather than size. Paradoxically, the change occurs by rejection, reference to the "normality." The body of the post-productivist consumer is not eccentric, does not refer to extravagance, avoids exaggeration; it stand out thanks to its naturalness, imperfection. In this sense, the change consists in rejecting the post-modern hyperbolization of physicality.

Food may be a powerful symbol, a metaphor, but also a tool of change. The counter-cultural movements of the 1960's concentrated around food (Belasco 2007); food is also capable of uniting new social movements (DeSoucey 2016); in an appropriate context, food may have a thoroughly political character. Here, we shall use the notion of gastropolitics, coined by Michaela DeSoucey (2016:17). It assumes that food is one of the tools in the fight for the right to define the symbolic field by particular groups of actors. Thus, the ecological movements, fighting for animal rights, referring to the idea of global justice, but also basing on tradition and patrimony, use food in their attempts to take control over the symbolic field of a society. The body seems to locate in the very center of this idea of the process of catalyzing social change.

Mediation—The National Body

Photo 5. The commercial of sausages and ham from the Chrzanowska Manufaktura Wędlin (The Chrzanów Sausage Manufactory).[8]



Another case to analyze is the commercial spot of sausages and ham—the line is called Kruche z Chrzanowa (The Tender from Chrzanów). The

[8] Picture available at: http://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artykul/tak-to-sie-robi-chrzanowska-manufaktura-wedlin-reklamuje-kruche-z-chrzanowa-wideo#. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

commercial is a 15- to 30-second-long TV spot prepared in collaboration with an advertising agency and a media house (which the company does not hide, and even takes pride in hiring specialists to create the image of the traditional sausage and ham). The campaign is conducted under the slogan "This is how you do it!" ("Tak to się robi!"). The key idea to the plot of the spot is a journey back in time to the Chrzanów manufactory which a father and son go on when they stand in front of their refrigerator door wondering in what mysterious way the magnificent sausages are made. Dressed in historical outfits, the two protagonists are shown around the workshop by the sausage master himself who passionately explains how the sausages are made and how the key tenderness is achieved. In the workshop, there is a wood burning smokehouse, there are rings of garlic and other dried spices hanging, there are pots with fresh herbs almost everywhere. At the huge wooden tables the master's assistants are rushing around—they are only men. The young boy does not hide his delight, he is smelling things, tasting them, and asking questions. After a while, both protagonists are standing again in front of their fridge and, obviously, they reach for the ham, the secret of which they have just learned.

The presented commercial is a typical example of using food as a mediator. The production mode shown in the spot refers to the best national culinary traditions (it is known that no one can make sausages like Poles) and unique skills handed down in the sausage maker families from father to son. The fact that the family of the young traveler in time consumes the advertised sausages means that they respect tradition and contribute to its transmission in time, thanks to which they feel part of the community (DeSoucey 2012). Eating sausages and ham is connected with the individual and social identity and is an element of the project of the patrimony, described by Michaela DeSoucey—namely, an idealized vision of the community, attachment to the place and frequently also the national-patriotic myth.

In the analyzed case, the myth perfectly corresponds with the iconic physicality of the sausage maker master—the overweight, older man with a big moustache carrying an old book with recipes. The master's assistants are young men, even boys of thinner figures, without visible growth. The master represents the hegemonic type of masculinity which subordinates other types (Skoczylas 2011:4). The only woman in the analyzed spot is the boy's mother who does not move in time yet. She does not experience the adventure. She stays at home and serves ham to her husband and son when they come back to their times. The national body is the men's body. The source of the bodily separation of women from the process of preparing sausages and ham may be sought in the quality assigned to pork (traditionally, sausages or ham were a festive food, and not an element of the everyday menu), as well as in the division into the so-called female and male farm, which was applicable in the Polish families of the landed gentry until the 20th century—women could have and manage the meat of the smaller and more mediocre animals, such as poultry, or what had grown in the vegetable garden (Ciechomska 1996:122).

Separation—The Class Body

Photo 6. Excerpt from a culinary guidebook of Marseille, issued for the guests of the Radisson Blu hotel.[9]



The last example analyzed is the advertisement of the Radisson Blu hotel in Marseille. The photo shows an excerpt from a culinary guidebook offered to the guests. It advertises the restaurants in Marseille which have been awarded the famous Michelin stars. As for the merit, the guidebook touches upon one of the more obvious functions of food consumption—its class and distinction nature. Pierre Bourdieu argues that food, and more precisely the taste, is part of the habitus and it is firmly connected with the cultural capital and the position in the social structure. Physical workers eat and shape their bodies in a different way than managers, and the upper class does it even more differently (Bourdieu 2013). Together with the advancement in the hierarchy, contemporarily there is interest in healthier, more interesting, more eclectic food which provides emotions (Flemmen, Hjellbrekke, and Jarness 2017:18). At the same time, as these authors point out, the class meaning of food is of a dynamic nature. It is continuously being renegotiated because of the emerging new patterns and fashions (Flemmen et al. 2017:19). The mechanism of distinction connected with food is changing. This is not only the access to sophisticated cuisine that forms the demarcation line any more. What begins to be important is the division into "healthy" and "unhealthy" food available for the masses. Admitting to eating at fast food restaurants may result in a clear affiliation to a particular social class. For example, one of the famous, Polish, highly well-paid breakfast TV presenters encourages us on her blog to properly hydrate our organisms and replace water with Rooibos punch.[10] In a different interview, she mentions in a specific way the problems with encouraging children to eat healthy food and avoid fat, as well as fast cheap dishes.[11] In the class perspective, consumer practices, enforced

[9] Picture available at: http://blog.radissonblu.com/michelin-star-restaurants-marseille/. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

[10] Text available at: http://www.tvn.pl/showbiz/zdrowe-odzywianie-wedlug-kingi-rusin,123787,0,0.html. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

[11] Text available at: http://polki.pl/zycie-gwiazd/newsy,kinga-rusin-staram-sie-byc-blisko-natury,10023368,artykul.html. Retrieved April 18, 2018.

upon many people by difficult economic situations (Caparros 2017:405), are pushed into the domain of childhood, immaturity, inability to make the right reasonable choices.

Returning to the analyzed advertisement, we would like to stress that it is based on the highly simplified and rather stereotypical construction of the class body. Both the body and the physicality of the models refers to sophistication and moderation. The range of colors, lightness of the body, classy packaging, and the entire image which is composed of the decoration, glasses with wine, the size and construction of the food, all these are to emphasize the social refinement. By means of food and body, the advertisement builds the illusion of uniqueness and exceptionality, in which we can be immersed for a while. Here, there is no place for physical hyperbolas, artificiality, or lack of elegance. The class nature of the body and food clearly suggests that this is not a place for everyone. Social distinctiveness, in which food plays a significant and symbolic role, progresses in this symbolic way.

Food may play the role of a strong separator dividing various social worlds. The process does not have to be based only and exclusively on the reference to social class. Food and food processing are used to separate the "civilized" world from the world of the "wild." They separate ethnic groups, races, and genders. The female consumption which pushes into the world of the light, functional, ephemeral food is shaped differently. Men are united by means of the tough body demanding meat and calories. This strengthens the stereotypical gender-based divisions of the shape and functionality of bodies. Food is also used to create cultural and political lines of division. Coming back to the works by Michaela DeSoucey—she uses the interesting notion of gastronationalism. At the macro level it defines the sets of symbols connected with the community, and at the micro level draws the division lines that separate us from others (DeSoucey 2016:68). The connections between meat, or more broadly food, and the body have their own gloomy history. They may code very strong divisions rooted in the culture and social structure. Paradoxically, the decision about belonging to a food cooperative may have more in common with the declaration of class affiliation than with the declared concern for one's health and the environment.

Conclusions: Food and the Body—Between Oppression and Emancipation

The body representations in the analyzed advertisements of meat primarily perpetuate social divisions and inequalities (gender, ethnic, class). The meat products advertisements which have been studied fail to be neutral and they are not solely a simple encouragement to purchase a product prepared in line with marketing guidelines. Our analyses show that there are various mechanisms of the social constructing of physicality which underlie meat advertisements. They are oppressive to a large extent. The examples are the race stereotypes (the advertisement of General Electric's range), the apparent emancipated female sexuality (the Carl's JR burgers commercial), the simplified vision of the national community based on patriarchal patterns (the commercial of sausages and ham from the Chrzanowska Manufaktura). Cer-

tain insignificant emancipating potential may be found in the advertisement which in a humorous way inverses gender relations (the commercial of the Italian meat sauce from Kraft) or the one ridiculing the artificial and "pumped-up" body of the bodybuilder (the advertisement of organic beef by Applegate).

In our opinion, food exceeds the intimate barriers, shapes us, and builds our organisms. Analyzing the advertisements of food products like meat, it is impossible to set aside the meatness, the physical properties of the human body. The way of presenting the actors' physicality nearly imposes the meaty interpretation—naked bodies which fulfill the culturally defined norms of physical attractiveness are clearly associated with the advertised product—the juicy beef or firm and well-flavored chicken. In this kind of media representations, the individual is thus more of an object, a commodity, a physical form of capital than the embodied subject. There is a fine line between the advertised product and the body that advertises it. At the same time, we influence the social construction of meat and the body, the way it is packaged and what it looks like, or what values it codes.

Last but not least, looking at the connections between the body and meat, we should think about interdependence. For example—making class choices we choose light, interesting, healthy food. This transforms our bodies, assigns them specific class qualities which must be maintained by proper food. This way the described relation deepens—the cultural and physical construction of food is more and more strongly coupled with the cultural and physical construction of the body. The media, including advertising, play the function of the medium to transmit the message, shaping the nature of the relation. They form the matrix of memory and a set of commands to determine the manner of transforming the body. The last conclusion directly refers to the consumers themselves and their bodies. Our analysis suggests that today we are torn between the oppression of culture, economy, and society and the rather naive attempts at emancipation. We are buying at discount stores and hypermarkets, we are undergoing physical and cultural unification.

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Sociology of the Body—Teaching Embodied Approach through Autoethnography

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Abstract The article presents and discusses the way of teaching sociology of the body whose aim is to allow students to become familiar with embodied methodology and make them methodologically sensitive. The research tasks given to the students are based on analytic autoethnography which influences the students' methodological development. Examples of the students' works are presented and discussed, particularly in terms of the advantages they might bring in the educational process and difficulties that they may cause to both the student and the teacher. As the most valuable benefits deriving from this way of teaching the authors indicate: raising methodological sensitivity, the ability to link embodied experience and knowledge with theoretical concepts, self-understanding in terms of social processes, but also putting into practice the perspective of embodiment in the social sciences. The courses of the sociology of the body in Poland and their status at Polish universities are presented as the context. The authors claim that the skills learnt during this course are crucial for students of sociology and for their methodological competencies, not only in the field of sociology of the body.

Keywords Sociology of the Body; Teaching Research Methods; Autoethnography; Embodied Approach

"The somatic turn" in sociology can be observed not only in the sociological fields of interests and theoretical dimensions, but also in the discipline's methodology. As a result, the embodied approach has been developed in the last few years. This approach can be understood as "an orientation to research that reveals the significance of maintaining an awareness of the embodied aspects within any form of investigation in order to reveal questions that can be explained through theory (or theories) considered appropriate" (Wellard 2015:197-198). Following Wacquant (2011) and his understanding of body as both a tool and a research subject, we want to consider "embodied approach" as a methodological perspective that, on the one hand, is focused on embodiment

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and its experience (embodied experiences as a research subject) and, on the other hand, on body as a tool of sociological exploration which allows the gathering of data on these aspects of social life that go beyond verbal cognition.

In Poland, students of sociology have several courses related to methodology and research methods. They usually have separate courses on quantitative and qualitative methods and a course whose aim is to prepare and conduct a research project. The courses of qualitative methods are dominated by "external," disembodied techniques and methods of data collection, such as interviews, external observation, and discourse (or content) analysis. The awareness and significance of embodiment in the research process in not taught during these courses, in spite of the increasing number of publications on body and embodiment in sociology.

The skills related to embodied approach can and should be learnt, as we argue in this paper, during courses of sociology of the body. Their aim should not only be a presentation of the most important social theories and an analysis of body images, but also the teaching of research methods which allows the students to become more reflexive towards their own and the respondents' embodiment during the research process. Therefore, the article is focused on the methodological dimension of the courses of the sociology of the body and the students' research tasks. Its aim is to show how students can be taught the embodied approach by conducting their own autoethnographical studies,

during which one's body is used as both a research tool and a site of inquiry.

The article starts with a brief description of teaching sociology of the body in Poland. In the following part, it presents the research tasks, that is, conducting autoethnography, proposed by the first author to her students. Then, examples of the students' works are presented and discussed, particularly in terms of the possible ethical, analytical, technical, and methodological difficulties they may cause to both the student and the teacher. The last part puts emphasis on the usefulness of this way of teaching in terms of a student's methodological knowledge and research practice.

Sociology of the Body Courses in Poland

In the last few years, growing interest on the body within Polish sociology can be observed, which is confirmed by a significantly larger number of publications on different aspects of the body/embodiment, conferences, and theses (Jakubowska 2012). On the one hand, there is a significant number of quantitative studies on physical appearance or physical activities, but, on the other hand, the number of qualitative studies is growing and they concern such different aspects as, for example, dance (Byczkowska 2009; 2012), disability (Kowal 2012; Niedbalski 2015), prostitution (Ślęzak 2012; Wojciechowska 2015), yoga practice (Konecki 2016), climbing (Kacperczyk 2016), female sport (Jakubowska 2014), and tacit knowledge (Jakubowska 2017). Polish sociologists who choose the body and embodiment as their main research area have become recently interested in sharing their knowledge and introduced courses of sociology of the body at Polish universities.

The courses of the sociology of the body are taught at several Polish universities. In the academic year of 2015/2016, they were offered to sociology students at four universities (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, University of Lodz, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, and University of Gdańsk). These courses are not obligatory for all students and have an elective character. This means that they can be chosen by students among other lectures that are offered by particular institutes (in Lodz and Torun) or take place only in the frameworks of a particular specialization or teaching module. In Poznan, they are taught in the framework of the culture studies module, and in Gdansk in the framework of sociology and anthropology of culture. They take on the form of lectures and seminars and consist of 15 or 30 hours. However, some issues related to the body appear during other courses offered to sociology students, such as gender studies, sociology of medicine, social psychology, or sociology of sport, although very often these courses are also elective.

The syllabi of sociology of the body courses are based on "classical" theories related to the body, which present it as a subject of discipline practices, stigmatization, body as capital, source of individual and collective identity, et cetera. As a consequence, they reproduce, to a large extent, both during classes and via exams, a perception of the body through discourse and representation. Significantly more rarely are these courses focused on embodiment, make students familiar with the

phenomenological approach, and raise issues such as embodied experiences, embodied knowledge, or perception of the body as both a research topic and a tool (Wacquant 2011).

In the teaching of embodied approach, it is substantial to deliver the relationship between understanding of embodied self and understanding of other people and their (bodily) experiences. In this context, it should be mentioned that sociology of the body is taught mainly by the younger generation of academics, and usually by female lecturers. One can indicate several factors that explain the domination of young female researchers-lecturers. First, the younger generation is more interested in the sociology of everyday life, microsociology, and the "new" subdisciplines related to them, such as sociology of the body, but also sociology of emotions, leisure studies, sociology of sport, et cetera. Second, sociology of the body/embodiment is closely related to feminism and gender studies, which are also dominated by young female researchers. Third, one should also mention personal reasons, for example, the fact of being pregnant that changes the female researcher's perspective on seeing and experiencing the body or the growing popularity of semi-professional sport activity (serious leisure).

This domination of young female scientists, as we supposed, can influence a way of teaching embodied approach and the manner in which the students describe their embodied experiences. Both of the authors belong to the category described above and share, to a large extent, similar teaching experiences. However, we are convinced that it would be valuable to collect the experiences of other lecturers (men, people of different ages, etc.) in further studies when discussing the ways, possibilities, and constraints in teaching embodied approach.

In the following part, courses conducted by the first author will be described and discussed. These courses, focused on embodiment and methodology, are presented as a way of teaching sociology of the body and embodiment whose aim is to give students the possibility of becoming familiar with embodied approach in social research.

Sociology, Body, and Dance—The Methodological Practice

To describe the course of Sociology of the Body (and the related Dance and Body—Sociological Perspective), some of the most important features need to be presented. At the University of Lodz, Faculty of Economics and Sociology, this course is elective and consists of 15 hours of exercises. First, it was held during the IV and later III year of sociology in a group of circa 20 students. Classes are held in Polish. During the classes the students discuss texts on sociology of the body/embodiment which include both classic and less popular articles on theory and research in this area. Active participation in classes and reading the texts is the basis for a positive mark at the end of the semester. The student may choose to complete a methodological task in order to receive the highest mark.

During the course, the students receive a lecture on the qualitative methods such as interview,

observation, visual data, and analytic autoethnography[1] (hereinafter referred to as AA, which will be explained in the subsequent section).

In 2010, the first author conducted classes for her students on the "Dance and Body—Sociological Perspective." The course presented the most significant, both classic and modern, sociological concepts concerning the body and methodological problems in embodiment research (also concerning dance). Students were offered a lesson of a belly dance (where the first author was the teacher, having practiced the genre for 5 years at that time). They could, but were not obliged to, prepare an autoethnographic report on this experience. Among the fifteen students who participated in this exercise, the majority of them were female; there were only two men. The lesson took place in a dance hall equipped with large mirrors, which are very useful when teaching or learning dance. The group had a short warm up, then exercised belly dance steps and moves, and at the end of the lesson they did some stretching. After this lesson the students had two weeks to hand in their reports from this autoethnographic exercise. In later years, during the "Sociology of the Body" course, students were supposed to choose either an interview or autoethnography on any chosen topic concerning embodied experiences.

The Analytic Autoethnography

The method that the first author proposed to her students to get familiar with embodied approach was autoethnography. Its main characteristic is that the researcher acts as an element of the phenomenon being researched, sometimes the main one (Wall 2008:39). It focuses on understanding oneself instead of or additionally understanding others (Gobo 2008:62-63). As the method itself has various versions and definitions (Denzin 1972), it is important to clarify the exact type of autoethnography that is taught and used during the course. Leon Anderson (2006:373-378) distinguishes two kinds of autoethnography. The first one, referred to as *evocative autoethnography*, is rooted in the postmodern tradition and requires mainly a description of the researcher's own experiences and feelings. The second type, *analytic autoethnography*, is rooted in the ethnographic tradition (Anderson 2006:373). During the classes, the analytic version has been introduced, due to its ethnographic roots and its correspondence with qualitative methods presented in the lecture.

Autoethnography has been chosen as the most appropriate technique to teach the students on embodied methodology, as it makes use of the researcher's body in the most profound and sensible way. One of the crucial issues in autoethnography is its emphasis on the researcher's body. Although it is not possible to exclude the researcher's body from the research process, in autoethnography, the body is located in its center, which is particularly visible in the studies focused on skills acquisition, for example, in the fields of sport (Downey 2005; Allen-Collinson 2008; Stephens and Delamont 2009). A researcher gathers data through and in the body, but also describes his/her own embodiment experiences. There are many examples of AA studies in

[1] The students had various methodological courses earlier in the curriculum. The lecture is only supposed to explain the specificity of use of qualitative methods in embodiment research.

the field of embodiment approach. These concern medical procedures (Hoffman-Riem 1994), therapeutic relations with one's body (Lussier-Ley 2010), ballroom dancing (Picard 2002), or adoption issues (Wall 2008). One of the most popular examples of research on dance and embodiment is Carol Rambo Ronai's strip dance study. The researcher was an erotic dancer herself, analyzed the data collected in the interviews with other dancers, and wrote down field notes.

During the courses with students, the most important features of AA, presented below, are lectured on and later discussed. The discussion is based on a few articles concerning the use of AA in embodiment research, the teacher's practice, and the students' own methodological experiences derived from the use of other methods.

The first feature is complete member researcher (hereinafter referred to as CMR) status (see also: Rambo Ronai 1992:310), which means that the researcher must be a full member of the group under study. Analytic reflexivity is the second important feature of a well-conducted AA. It implies the researcher's awareness of his/her relatedness to the research field, to the phenomenon, and to the group under study. The researcher is able to understand the experiences and actions of others because he/she is a part of them. The third feature, narrative visibility of the researcher's self, is considered necessary because data generated using this method have a great influence on the researcher's self. The fourth feature, dialogue with informants beyond the self, points to another feature of AA (Anderson 2006:386), namely, the data are only a set of the researcher's impressions, but the researcher can reach outside his/her own self, which makes the results more possible to extrapolate on the experiences of other actors. In autoethnography, a researcher combines field notes with "headnotes" (Sanjek 1990), that is, being engaged in the studied practices, he/she describes subjective experiences and the experiences of other social actors. Commitment to theoretical analysis (Anderson 2006:378) is the fifth feature of AA. It is important to bear in mind our main aim, which is gaining scientific knowledge and analyzing the data in order to construct a theory and understand the phenomenon researched as thoroughly as possible.

Autoethnography as a technique roots a researcher in the bodily experience of a social action or phenomenon. As presented above, these bodily aspects of embodiment take various forms and refer to numerous research areas, as any human activity is embodied.

Examples of the Students' Autoethnographies

This section consists of samples of the students' work. We decided to include only some parts of their transcriptions to present different topics. We chose work which presents deep sociological (self) understanding, a good research workshop, and ethical sensitivity. All authors agreed to publicize their work anonymously. The citations from the AA reports are an example of what students may learn about embodied approach in its two dimensions that have been distinguished. First, as the cited data illustrate, it gives a large amount of information

about embodiment. Second, it reveals the body roles in the research process. In the beginning of each section, there is a whole citation from the student's autoethnography, to present the described situation, the student's way of expressing. It is followed by a table, depicting three elements: an analytical code, a fragment of the citation, and autoethnographic skill represented by the student.

Autoethnography after Group Belly Dance Class 1

> Distraction—observing my own body in the mirror and the effort to concentrate on exercising positions in a proper way. I think none of the steps was executed properly. Embarrassing movements which made me concentrate on the parts of my body which I mostly refuse to accept, that is, breasts, thighs, butt. Finally, I tied my sweatshirt around my hips to cover my backside.
>
> Looking for an ally in my friend (joking, laughing, commenting) to reduce the tension and show a false distance to my body and figure.
>
> Lack of control over my body. I tried to copy a pose that was showed, but unsuccessfully. I felt pain in my arms.
>
> Feeling jelly-like when shaking my hips, I stopped very quickly. I was very ashamed observing myself in the mirror.
>
> Bum warm-up I exercised this way for the first time, I was astonished that one can exercise the body this way. [June 2010, 3rd-year female student who had never tried a belly dance before]

Table 1. Analysis of *Autoethnography after group belly dance class 1.*

	Codes	Citation	Autoethnographic skill
1.	social actors' attitudes towards their own body, followed by emotions	*Embarrassing movements which made me concentrate on the parts of my body which I mostly refuse to accept, that is, breasts, thighs, butt.*	self-perception visibility of self in the narration
2.	embodied strategies of coping with certain problems; shame due to exhibiting one's body	*Finally, I tied my sweatshirt around my hips to cover my backside.*	visibility of self in the narration
3.	embodied strategies of coping with certain problems	*Looking for an ally in my friend (joking, laughing, commenting) to reduce the tension and show a false distance to my body and figure.*	becoming aware of own emotions and practices dialogue with informants beyond self
4.	comparison to other bodies or a hypothetically perfect body	*Lack of control over my body. I tried to copy a pose that was showed, but unsuccessfully. I felt pain in my arms.*	analytic reflexivity
5.	lack of acceptance of one's own body	*Feeling jelly-like when shaking my hips. I stopped very quickly. I was very ashamed observing myself in the mirror.*	becoming aware and description of self-perspective
6.	discovering new ways to use one's body	*Bum warm-up I exercised this way for the first time, I was astonished that one can exercise the body this way.*	visibility of self in the narration

Autoethnography 1

It was my fate, one of those "things" I have inherited from my mother, the only one I'm not happy with is migraine headaches. Anyone who has ever had to deal with migraine headaches knows that this is not just "bam!" and suddenly your head hurts. It is often accompanied by other ailments, after which it is easy to see what is evolving. In my case, the ailment that precedes a migraine are vision problems and photophobia. This time too. The strange feeling of haze and fatigue in my eyes signaled to me that in the coming days it would not be too interesting [recognition of bodily signals]. In the course of preparations for Christmas, I tried to ignore problems with my sight and focus on what I was doing because this is often my way of coping with various ailments, just to be occupied with something else and not think about it. However, this did not last long because of this distinct one-sided headache. First, it is a fairly moderate pain which generally allows one to function normally, only later does it begin to "play out." And that's what part of my yesterday was like. Fighting and trying to ignore the initial pain. Later it was worse, the pain, as my mom says, "fired up." I wanted to curl up into a ball and not move. I was irritated by the light, all the more distinct sounds, and the slightest movement of my head caused an irritating and characteristic pulsation of pain on one side of my head, specifically on my forehead. With all this pain I always have this strange feeling that all of one side of my face is becoming sore. At the worst moment the migraine made me nauseous. And so, I sat there and suffered until the evening. Curled up in a ball, under the blanket, trying not to move. [December 2012, 3rd-year sociology female student, migraine experience]

Table 2. Analysis of *Autoethnography 1.*

	Code	Citation	Autoethnographic skill
1.	referring to other persons' bodily experiences, socially shared knowledge	*Anyone who has ever had to deal with migraine headaches knows that this is not just "bam!" and suddenly your head hurts.*	analytic reflexivity complete member researcher
2.	recognition of bodily signals	*It is often accompanied by other ailments, after which it is easy to see what is evolving.*	self-consciousness and self-knowledge
3.	embodiment management; distancing oneself from the body	*In the course of preparations for Christmas, I tried to ignore problems with my sight and focus on what I was doing because this is often my way of coping with various ailments, just to be occupied with something else and not think about it.*	visibility of self in the narration
4.	socialization of bodily experience	*Later it was worse, the pain, as my mom says, "fired up."*	dialogue with informants beyond self
5.	embodiment management	*And so I sat there and suffered until the evening. Curled up in a ball, under the blanket, trying not to move.*	complete member researcher

Autoethnography 2

The selection was made based on the question, "What I don't want to do the most?" The answer was "dance," which, in my opinion, represents what I am the worst at: movement, spontaneity, energy. Of course, such associations have been worked out in the course of quite a number of "slips" associated with dance rehearsals in the past. Dancing in the company of others requires giving up control of the situation, "rejection of the reins," and simply having fun. Self-distance seems to me to be crucial here. Feelings that immediately handicap my dancing attempts are shame and fear. The excessive fear of ridicule and impeded ability to "relax" result from being a textbook example of a person suffering from ACoA[2] (confirmed by a therapist). It may be that it was an attempt to "relax," try a momentary, drastic change in the perception of myself, and my body in particular. The session was conducted for 5 songs with the lowest difficulty level. I decided on the lowest of the three possible difficulty levels because I was aware of being a bad dancer and perhaps not fully aware at the time of the choice, hoping to "cope" with the task and consequently experience a positive change in perceiving my own motor abilities. By the start of the song I had automatically begun to move, as if communicating to my body that "we will be dancing now." [January 2013, 3rd-year sociology male student, the "Just Dance" game on the Wii platform]

[2] Adult Child of Alcoholic.

Table 3. Analysis of *Autoethnography 2*.

	Code	Citation	Autoethnographic skill
1.	recalling past bodily skills	*"dance," which, in my opinion, represents what I am the worst at: movement, spontaneity, energy. Of course, such associations have been worked out in the course of quite a number of "slips" associated with dance rehearsals in the past.*	self-perception and self-knowledge
2.	attitude towards their own body, followed by emotions	*Dancing in the company of others requires giving up control of the situation, "rejection of the reins," and simply having fun. Self-distance seems to me to be crucial here. Feelings that immediately handicap my dancing attempts are shame and fear.*	analytic reflexivity
3.	change in perception of the body	*It may be that it was an attempt to "relax," try a momentary, drastic change in the perception of myself, and my body in particular.*	self-observation
4.	perception of bodily abilities	*I decided on the lowest of the three possible difficulty levels because I was aware of being a bad dancer…*	visibility of self in the narration self-knowledge
5.	communication with own body	*By the start of the song I had automatically begun to move, as if communicating to my body that "we will be dancing now."*	visibility of self in the narration

The examples taken from the students' notes reveal a wide range of issues related to body and embodied experiences. One can observe that appeals to social norms concerning the body appear in the texts, along with embodied strategies of coping with certain problems, issues of shame and shyness concerning bodily issues or socialization as a process of gaining a perspective on one's own body perception. They also present some of the actions taken because of these experiences and, what is important, they show the causes and effects. The language is also important, as it shows emotions, restraint towards one's own body, and lack of control.

Thanks to the conducted autoethnography, a student has the possibility of observing and feeling one's own body and embodied experiences. In this process, they learn in practice what it means to use one's body as a research tool. The body which remains "absent" (Leder 1990) during everyday life becomes visible and situated in the center of the research process. Moreover, the students have to overcome the constraints related to the non-verbal, tacit nature of embodied experiences (Jakubowska 2017) during the process of taking notes.

The aim of the students' task is also to make them aware that each individual body as a research tool has its opportunities, special abilities, and limitations. For example, researchers' inability to swim may affect his or her research on water sports, poor musical hearing may be a disadvantage when conducting research on dancers or musicians. On the contrary, if the researcher practices a certain activity like sport, art, et cetera, they may have embodied knowledge and experience in the subject, which will, in an obvious manner, influence the outcomes of the study. If one is aware of these aspects of their body, and does not treat it like if it were just an "invisible" or "objective" tool, they may search for some research and analytic solutions.

Apart from methodological knowledge, the value of self-discovery is another benefit that comes from the students' assignment. The task to observe oneself causes the bodily experience to be verbalized and thought through, which makes it less obvious and more prior to change or active acceptance in one's private life. Understanding own and other peoples' embodied experience (along the lines of Rambo Ronai's research [Rambo Ronai and Ellis 1989; Rambo Ronai 1992; Rambo Ronai and Cross 1998; Rambo, Presley, and Mynatt 2006]) is very important in the educational process of all social science students, thus autoethnographic exercises[3] were usually used in the courses that the first author taught.

The autoethnographic task stimulates students to conduct self-reflection and also sensitizes them to become a "research participant," thus increasing sociological ethical awareness. This is important in many fields of sociological activity, not only in research situations or scientific work. It is our deepest conviction that our work, that is, as academics who shape our students' ways of thinking, is not only to teach the technical issues (such as conducting interviews, observations, surveys), but also to shape their ethical perspectives as researchers,

[3] Autoethnographic exercises are not referred to as autoethnography because the students are usually not complete member researchers and they use this method only once during the course.

HR managers, social workers, or whoever they decide to become after graduation. We hand them the tools of researching and understanding social behavior, so we should also give them the necessary ethical tools, which sometimes may mean excluding them from their comfort zone.

The ethical challenges during these courses are a crucial matter, due to a sensitive character of the subject, touching personal experiences. Occasionally, students come through difficult emotions, even bursting into tears when realizing the difficulty of living with a certain body condition. When this happens, the teacher always serves with time to talk personally with the student.

Another question that we could add to the list is establishing proper and fair criteria of evaluation. The work of the students is usually quite personal and sometimes reveals more or less intimate information about the student. Therefore, the work is not presented in the classroom, even anonymously, as usually the classes are up to twenty students and some topics could be easily related to a particular person.

Also, as we have mentioned before, the methodological assignment is voluntary, and only for students who want to get the highest mark. It is therefore important to find a balance between the objectivity of the theoretical and methodological requirements towards the assignment and the sensitivity of the student when analyzing the embodied experience. The evaluation criteria which the first author has established are: open-mindedness, methodological skills (e.g., posing questions), analytical thinking, and the logic of narration (in case of AA).

The next step (done during the next course) in teaching sociology of the body and research methods should be an analysis of the collected material which will teach distancing oneself from the gathered data, changing one's perception of one's own experiences (from personal to analytical), theoretical thinking about the described phenomena, et cetera.

Conclusion

The concept of teaching sociology of the body as presented above fits into the theoretical and empirical changes that have taken place within this subdiscipline. First, it is rather focused on embodiment and embodied experience than on body representation and surveillance, which is visible also in the used research technique. Second, the representatives of the social sciences have become increasingly more interested in the body as a source of knowledge and as a tool of its acquisition, which can be observed, among others, by more common use of the notions such as "embodied knowledge," "bodily knowledge," or "somatic knowledge" (Parviainen and Aromaa 2017). And, third, the domination of the phenomenological approach has influenced research methodology (Jakubowska 2017). The majority of studies are based on ethnographic methods, which consist of different types of observations (including video observations), qualitative interviews, and, increasingly more often, apprenticeship (Downey, Dalidowicz, and Manson 2015) and autoethnography (Anderson 2006; Ellis and Bochner 2006). One of the crucial aspects of the last two methods is their emphasis on the researcher's body which fits into the methodological embod-

ied approach. In AA, the same person is being researched on and is the researcher, he/she gathers data through and in the body, but also describes his/her own embodiment experiences. This entails new challenges towards self-understanding and self-analysis in terms of one's own corporeality and social relations.

The way to teach sociology of the body as we have proposed not only fits into the current scientific trends, but has a number of advantages for the students. First, it teaches the role and influence of a researcher's body in the research process. Second, it demonstrates one's body as a tool of investigation and of inquiry. Third, it draws attention to everyday habitual embodied experiences that remain, to a large extent, non-verbalized. Fourth, it makes one sensitive to ethical issues such as taboo topics, difficulty of verbalization of certain issues, respect to any bodily differences, et cetera. We are convinced that the skills that students learn during the courses of sociology of the body are useful not only in this area of research, but also allow to develop many competencies and make them better researchers in general. Moreover, this way of teaching sociology of the body, that as subdiscipline paradoxically has remained "disembodied," allows the moving of it towards its embodiment.

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