THE MEANING OF THE BEAUTIFUL BODY IN GRAHAM SWIFT'S FICTIONAL WORLD

Alexandra Roxana Marginean*, *Teaching assistant, PhD
Romanian-American University, Romania

Abstract:
As Bachelard, Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau, Bourdieu and others have contended, by the production of space and by relating to it in the world, the individual is constructing her/his identity. Spatial interaction builds who one is, and, if we consider the fact that the body is the closest "space" or circumscribed reality one has to symbolically produce, deal and come to terms with, the way people relate to their bodies may say a lot about their conception of self in the world, self image, and therefore identity and identity construction and presentation before the others. The body is also indispensable for inhabitation and dwelling in an environment. As the tool used to shape one's surroundings, it is involved not only in the physical mapping of the world, but also in what has come to be called its symbolical, conceptual or "cognitive mapping" (Shields 2002: 265) which refers to how space reflects mentalities, practices and emotions. The interest in the body is all the more poignant against the background of twentieth-century events and consumerism, an aspect that is tackled in the introduction of the paper. This part also delineates the direction of this study, namely the manner in which Swift's characters (ab)use their bodies in various ways, which is presented in the main part of our scrutiny. The approach is cultural studies. The conclusions draw on Arthur Frank's work, the central idea being that the bodies we have analysed could be interpreted as plural and ambivalent.

Key Words: Identity, Body, *Habitus*

Introduction:

In this paper, our interest is the way in which characters in Graham Swift's novelistic world relate to their bodies, as part of Bourdieu's *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977) and of Lefebvre's outlook that the production of space and interaction with it – which entail one's body – are revelatory of identity (Lefebvre 2007). We concur with the idea that the body is the first "space" on which identity markers appear, such as the way the body is shaped, the choice of clothing, attitudes and mannerisms, etiquette etc. Our analysis is based on the logic that society and mentalities condition one's perspective on one's own body. In its turn, the individual reacts to the environment and shapes one's appearance and reality.

We will start by looking at the reasons for the interest in the body in the twentieth century, at what is specific about the way people conceptualise their bodies in this particular time frame. The second half of the twentieth century was marked by major changes: the war and post-war periods, the consumerist culture, post-modern movements both in arts and mentalities (feminism, post colonialism), the menace of chemical weapons, massive destruction of nature and the habitat, the ageing of populations, overpopulation or "lack of space", too much proxemics (but decrease in birth rate), pollution, AIDS (Turner 1995: 24). These factors led to an increasing attention to the body (*Ibidem*: 24), from two perspectives. On the one hand, realising its frailty, people took excessive care of the body, in an attempt to maintain health and prolong life expectancy (*Ibidem*: 19). On the other hand, they were interested in its beautification (*Ibidem*: 19).

The human body is paradoxically both frail and empowered in the age of technologisation. These aspects are so exacerbated in everyday life that the harmony of psychic life is menaced. The amount of pressure put on the individual by reality engenders more awareness of the body, and this awareness puts even more strain on the psyche. Turner calls this *angst* a "politics of anxiety" (*Ibidem*: 24), to highlight its urgency. In a dangerous and competitive world, people feared both literal and

figurative effacement. They were also afraid of loss of guidance, with the demise of "Christian puritanical orthodoxy" (*Ibidem*: 19), and of their inability to find a place.

Turner contends that the reduction of work hours per week meant a relaxation in "ascetic values" (*Ibidem*: 19) associated with work, which used to be considered a virtue. Attention granted to entertainment brought about a new type of asceticism, namely that of abstinence from food in the pursuit of beauty (Featherstone 1995). Asceticism was encouraged to the purpose of enjoyment, desirability, sensuousness, for the sake of image, self-esteem, and identity creation (Featherstone 1995: 183). Standards of exaggerated slimness for women appeared (*Ibidem*: 184). As various sociologists noted, the side effects were conditions such as anorexia, accompanied by changes in the perception of the self (Featherstone 1995 and Turner 2007).

Swift's characters refuse givens, be they ideas, mindsets, manners of doing things, prescriptions about one's role in the world etc. Their own body makes no exception. In this spirit, they cannot relate to it harmoniously. There is rejection involved, as well as discontent and negotiation. Consequently, the body will be both used, in building identity, and abused – subverted, excessively (dis)empowered.

For the sake of the propriety of terms, we need to understand what the term "abuse" denotes here. By "abuse" we mean: misuse, ill treatment, any type of damage, defilement, impairment, exploitation, offence, perversion, castigation, or censure applied to the body. Nevertheless, the terms use and abuse are hybrid. The use almost always implies an abuse, be it just in the form of an alteration of previous manners of usage, which is yet another meaning of the term "abuse". Characters are often both users and abusers of their bodies simultaneously, symbolical executioners and victims.

The Dynamics of Interaction for Beautiful Bodies

The beautiful body entails several types of use and abuse. Firstly, there is the (ab)use performed by the possessor over her or his own body: a beautiful physique implies sacrifices made to keep fit. The sacrifices range from easily done tasks of self-care, to more complex or even painful ones. Secondly, this care also presupposes being, to a greater or smaller extent, the slave of your body, a body that may, in this respect, be seen as symbolically performing an abuse of its possessor. At times, having an attractive body may feel like a burden, in various ways. For instance, beauty functions as a limitation – when the others fail to see the person behind it – and leads to objectification. It may also "invite" to abuse as severe and extreme as rape. Thirdly, a beautiful body can be capitalised upon as a figurative weapon. In *The Sweet-Shop Owner*, sassy Sandra is well-aware of her sex-appeal and uses it in order to extract undeserved advantages at her job, particularly from her employer, Will Chapman. Irene, Will's wife, uses it as leverage, to hide the absence of love and to avoid real emotional commitment. The three situations above only set broad lines of analysis, as the cases are almost always complex and hybrid.

To her family, Irene is a "rare plant" (Swift 1993: 50), "a little emblem", and a "banner". She feels that it is her duty to "look [her] best" for them (*Ibidem*: 50). Her other duty is to keep her "purity" (*Ibidem*: 51) (the family laundry business being figurative of their obsession with immaculate appearances). When Irene tells her parents that she has been raped by Frank Hancock, they remain unimpressed, so she becomes repressed and asthmatic. Her family perceive the incident as a tragedy – not because they care for her, but because they lose their emblem, as Irene declares: the illness "spoilt my looks" (*Ibidem*: 53). As a consequence, she chooses to offer herself, and the beauty she has always felt as a burden, to Will Chapman. By giving away to a plain man what is desired by so many, Irene believes that she is both unjust and ironic, which somehow redeems what has been done to her. Even as a very young girl, she stood out among her friends, who had "thankful little marks of plainness […] which relieved them of responsibility" (*Ibidem*: 50). Even then, she could not behave freely – "laugh out loud, giggle and squeal like them" (*Ibidem*: 50) – because her beauty came in disagreement with such manifestations, and required composure. The self-containment expected of Irene made people attach other labels to her as well. She was seen as conceited: "beautiful and proud" (*Ibidem*: 50). Will remembers that she always felt aggressed by too blatantly admiring glances, when she changed into her swimming suit, while they were away on holiday at the seaside (*Ibidem*: 118).

Consequently, Irene is abused by her own beauty in multiple ways. She feels punished for an asset that she has never wanted or enjoyed: "How you pay, Willy, even for the things you never own."

(*Ibidem*: 53) Her looks are the cause of her rape and objectification. In her case, beauty bars self-expression, because of the responsibility Irene bears as a symbol for her family. In a sense, beauty prevents her parents, (and presumably other people as well), from truly loving and appreciating her; it sometimes is the only reason for being appreciated. Beauty brings about self-alienation. It is also an instrument of manipulation. Furthermore, it gives Irene a false identity – the label of being proud – representing therefore the foundation for further abuse.

Dorothy, (Irene's daughter), relates to her body in a different way. Will remembers how Dorry "stood apart" (*Ibidem*: 139) among her school friends as "the prettiest, the one who most deserved to be to the fore", just like her mother. Even as a child, she had a gravity that resembled Irene's. During a visit to her father's shop, little Dorothea frowned on his childish lack of dignity in arranging toys. Will remembers her "long, delicate hands", and her "black and glossy" (*Ibidem*: 117) hair, which she used to "toss" "from side to side" as a teenager. She had "that lightness and deftness of step" (*Ibidem*: 117), which showed her boldness, stubbornness, self-assuredness, and *penchant* to challenge the others. Will and Irene bought her beautiful dresses, but she always preferred "white school blouses and navy skirts or that shapeless brown sweater and slacks" (*Ibidem*: 148).

As a young woman, she shows the brashness of one who knows herself to be beautiful, but does not care about it, because it is an incontestable asset. Like her mother, she seems to be bothered by her beauty, but, unlike Irene, she refuses to be a victim of it. In this respect, Dorothea is stronger. She either disguises her appearance, or shows it in triumph, as if it were a trophy, but she is never its prisoner. Dorothy wants to be appreciated for her intelligence, so she rejects the normal life of her teenage friends, who waste their time going to parties. She is interested in war, history and politics instead. Driven by a belief in the existence of meaning, she is in quest of it, in opposition to all the other people around her, from both the older and younger generations. While Irene's relationship with her body is more similar to the second type of use and abuse of the beautiful body described above, Dorothea's bears similarities with the third.

In *Caribbean Dawn*, people who reside in the islands share a cult for physical appearance, which is linked with their life style, and with Caribbean identity. In an existence that lays great emphasis on entertainment and relaxation, physical beauty is common, and it appears as a must. People like to put themselves on display, to be admired for their pleasant physique and wealth, which are the ingredients of success. Count Giuseppi owns a luxurious motor yacht, and is always "immaculately dressed for what ever occasion and […] rarely seen without an attractive young lady on his arm" (Swift 2006: 103). Among the protagonist's friends, there is a Brazilian couple – Rico "tall and slim with a devil my care attitude, while Carmen [his wife] was beautiful to say the least with long jet black hair and sparkling eyes" (*Ibidem*: 103). Some of the characters benefit from a physical description made as early as the beginning of the story. Sometimes their portrait is only physical. These aspects contribute to the general feeling that appearance is important. Sally Moran, Graham's first Caribbean love, is a "very attractive lady" (*Ibidem*: 28), height five feet nine, "slim with dark brown curly hair". Beth Leverson admires her husband's "powerful shoulders" (*Ibidem*: 79) while he is diving into the swimming-pool. Moreover, most of the characters' occupations are meant to improve health, beautify the body, and satisfy the senses. Some of them work in entertainment, having yachts or ranches and organising activities for tourists, some others in body care, hair dressing, spa or the make-up industry.

The body is part of Bourdieu's physical capital (Bourdieu qtd. in Crossley 2001: 96-7), and in *Caribbean Dawn* people enter social "games" (*Ibidem*: 100) (or social contexts in which they act strategically) envisaging their bodies as capital, which is part of their mentality. In this novel, three aspects are relevant in connection with the body. Firstly, enjoyment brought by (ab)using the body has a hidden, darker aspect that is omitted. Beauty is taken for granted, which leaves unmentioned the fact that it most often requires work, sacrifice, and pain. Secondly, Western culture has been commented upon as scopophiliac and male, privileging sight and gaze. In such a discussion, feminist critique is pertinent. Thirdly, the individual's relation to the body takes place within a consumerist culture, which encourages greater attention to bodily needs.

In relation to the first two issues announced above, feminists claimed that "western society disciplines women's bodies within a heterosexual economy" (Brook 1999: 66). More to the point, women are under an imaginary male gaze, known as the "ghost" (Bruch qtd. in Bordo 1997: 238), or

"the male in the head" (Holland *et al.* qtd. in Brook 1999: 66), which compel them to meet certain beauty standards. In order to reach these, women end up having eating disorders and surgery. One may definitely say that "there is a clear, if not always totally articulated, nexus between their body size and appearance, heterosexual availability, and their sense of self." (*Ibidem*: 66) The "male in the head" may be defined as interiorised masculinity and heterosexual compulsion, which determine women to examine themselves with male eyes (*Ibidem*: 67). A sort of "disassociation" ensues, the result being two bodies: one is repressed, a mirror of the symbolic requirements of the "male in the head"; the other is abject, a body that resists repression – "material, hairy, discharging, emitting noises, and susceptible to pleasure and pain" (*Ibidem*: 67). The latter is potentially threatening to male presence, as it can erupt "into men's space"; consequently, it "has to be carefully regulated" (*Ibidem*: 67). Feminist conclusions would be that, "given the powers invested in masculinity" (*Ibidem*: 69), abuse is likely to emerge. In other words, the (ab)use performed by women on their own body is due to this interiorised prototypical masculinity, which comes to be part of them.

Within a discussion of beautiful bodies, eating habits are implicit. Eating disorders unavoidably appear due to pressing and progressively unrealistic standards of slimness imposed by modern society. There is no mention of such a disorder in the novel. However, the novel's unrealistic tone, which shuns all unpleasantness of life with suspicious serenity of approach, would consequently also avoid any hint at such unsavoury subjects. The reader only "sees" the repressed body, which results from the taming effect of the symbolic gaze of the "male in the head", a body that is slim. This slimness, we notice, while reading the novel, is an obsessively recurrent feature. On the other hand, body beauty taken for granted leads to the idea of self-disciplining practices.

What is interesting is the double standard functioning in the approach to body weight in general. In 1992, Matra Robertson noticed that being overweight in women's case is proof of psychiatric problems, whereas with men it is a life-style issue of negligence (Robertson qtd. in Brook 1999: 74). We witness an "identification and cordoning off of eating disorder as a female psychiatric problem, as distinct from 'life-style' physical problems attributed to male bodies" (*Ibidem*: 74). Thus, this matter becomes a gendered issue. Indeed, with the one exception above, in *Caribbean Dawn* we do not find comments referring to the bodily shape of men, whereas those introducing women abound. Also, women are described as slim or thin, rather than in shape or fit – an important, though subtle distinction. After having managed to avoid a negative characterisation in relation to potentially untamed overweight bodies, anorexic women are seen as pray to disorder as well (Brook 1999: 70). Besides the abuse to which they are subjected by impossible standards of beauty, women reach self-aggression, in a relation of mutual abuse with their own bodies, which they see as "Another who must be punished and distanced" (*Ibidem*: 77). Consequently, in this context, all three types of abuse announced at the beginning of this section are present.

Hybrid and Ambivalent Bodies

All the bodies discussed in this paper may be included in the classification made by Arthur Frank. His types are ambivalently hybrid, as their characteristics overlap. Also, the (ab)used bodies in our analysis do not pertain to just one of Frank's types.

Following Mead, Frank supports the idea that the body reaches self-awareness "when it encounters resistance" (Frank 1995: 51). The body turns upon itself, according to various dimensions, producing "types of body usage" (*Ibidem*: 51). These are relevant to the study and construction of identity.

The first type is the "disciplined body" (*Ibidem*: 54), whose dimension is control (*Ibidem*: 51) and whose "medium" (*Ibidem*: 54) of activity (or enabling context) is "*regimentation*". "Domination of self" (*Ibidem*: 56) proceeds through the intermediary of Foucault's "truth games" (Foucault qtd. in Frank 1995: 56). These are discourses "related to specific techniques that human beings use to understand themselves" (Martin et al. qtd. in Frank 1995: 56). One relevant example to the discussion of beautiful bodies above is diet, with its facets of fasting, or asceticism. At some points in history, these practices opened for women an oppositional space against patriarchal norm, which nevertheless had its side effects (Frank 1995: 59-60). Women's fasting and asceticism were made to look like "heresy" (*Ibidem*: 60), as diabolical and unclean, because institutions like the church and patriarchy were not ready to grant women the power allowed by this truth game. Frank notices the outcome of

these practices, which brought a reinforcement of the patriarchy that women initially sought to counter. In other words, in the pursuit of individual ends, the body sometimes only manages to reproduce existing structures.

The same pattern may be considered to function in the way women in modern times approach anorexic practices. Initially, women start by pursuing the ideal of the independent working woman functioning in the public sphere, who needs to align her figure to the practicality of a dynamic life. In this, women rebel against patriarchal order. However, they also display conformity to this order, by adapting to the slender ideal imposed by the "male in the head". This ideal entails sacrifice and rigorous discipline over one's body – a situation that is itself ambivalent, as it proves both strength and weakness on women's part. These aspects are discussed at length by Brian Turner (Turner 2007: 181). In *Caribbean Dawn*, the independent women with successful careers conform to excessive slimness, which constitutes, as we have seen, both liberation and encroachment. In the case of anorexia, one can speak of women for whom the "discipline of the body becomes its care" (Frank 1995: 61), when the body is both a disciplined one, and one of desire or lack. This situation brings us to the second type of body usage, and demonstrates that one body may be the site of more than one usage.

Under the "dimension of desire" (*Ibidem*: 51), the body can be either "producing" or "lacking". These possibilities result in two body sub-types: one of "plenitude" and fulfillment, and the other of "limitation" and "incompleteness". Frank points out that, against the background of consumerism, in which the medium of activity is consumption, the problem of desire gets intensified. The consequence is the immediacy of the consciousness of lack. The body of desire and lack is a "*mirroring* body" (*Ibidem*: 61), which shows how the environment is. As a defense strategy, "the mirroring body is endlessly *producing* desires in order to keep its lack unconscious" (*Ibidem*: 62). Desire is, therefore, a type of compensation. There is also consumption by gaze only, in which "the object need not be purchased" (*Ibidem*: 63) or physically appropriated, "because it has already been consumed in the initial gaze". *Caribbean Dawn* illustrates both types of consumption, as it is a paradise of both luxury and body beauty put on display. Also, intensified desire, or hedonism, may mask (and at the same time subversively point to) either lack of deeper meaning in people's lives, as in Sandra's case (Chapman's assistant), or trauma that has incapacitated the individual in various ways, as in Irene's situation.

The mirroring body is discussed by Frank with references to Jean Baudrillard and Pierre Bourdieu. Jean Baudrillard considered that objects destined to consumption are like "hysterical symptoms" (Baudrillard qtd. in Frank 1995: 64), in the sense that they reflect the existence of unexpressed needs. These needs are projected onto a set of "floating signifiers", also referred to as "sites of pleasure" (*Ibidem*: 64). Baudrillard draws attention to the meaning of being "into" something, (into one's desire), as "fetishistic" (*Ibidem*: 65) and "mania"-like. Frank points out that Baudrillard assimilates his theory of bodies to the broader condition of hyperreality. Under this umbrella, the body can only be a "schizo" (*Ibidem*: 66), or a "screen" for various "networks of influence", meaning that it loses agency. Thus, it "can no longer play nor stage himself, can no longer produce himself as a mirror" (*Ibidem*: 66). Frank concludes that "In hyperreality the body fades into its own simulation" (Frank 1995: 93). Thus, the beautiful bodies are ambivalent. Their possessors may pursue the "internalisation" (Bourdieu qtd. in Frank 1995: 67) of group "tastes" as empowered agents, in which case their ideal body size, posture, ways of movement and activities are proof of successful integration and exercise of *habitus* (either Caribbean, or European modern *habitus*). On the other hand, they may be Baudrillard's "screens", victims bound to emulate an image of success. In this case, their bodies are not the triumph of their will, but evidence of a depersonalising mechanism – a repeated copying of copies of an inexistent but presumed essence. These bodies may just be the manifestation of various types of lack.

The dimension of relatedness dictates a third type of usage, namely the "dominating body" (Frank 1995: 69). It can be "monadic" (*Ibidem*: 52), i.e. exist among others but not with them, or "dyadic", more open and communicative. The beautiful body seems to stand in an undecided middle. An above-average good-looking individual is self-oriented enough as to pay excessive attention to the body. However, this self-care has in view integration in the community, successful interaction, the others' approval, and perhaps domination over them. In this respect, this body is relational.

We have seen that, according to some sociologists, beautiful women's bodies are tamed and disciplined by their possessors according to standards dictated by men, which they internalise. In this respect, a beautiful woman is the dominated one in a male world in which, therefore, man is the dominant. However, this situation can be reversed, in at least two ways. Firstly, women may feel empowered by beauty and capitalise upon it to their advantage, manipulating the others. Secondly, Frank's observation, that the dominating individual has a fear of life which is "productive and contingent" (*Ibidem*: 76), has interesting ramifications. For instance, in 1989, Mary O'Brien notices that women function as a threat to males due to their "birthing potential" (an experience to which men have no access) (O'Brien qtd. in Frank 1995: 78). As possessors of uncontrollable change, women threaten stability and the existing (male) order. This explains how men tried to appropriate "birth as male" (*Ibidem*: 78), in oppressive regimes, like the Nazi's, or via reproductive technology.

In Swift's world, a lot of beautiful women are or have been pregnant as well, posing both types of threat mentioned above. In *The Sweet-Shop Owner*, William Chapman regards Irene's pregnant body with reverence and awe. In *Shuttlecock*, Marian's body inspires spite and fear to her husband, Prentis. That is why he tries to subdue her, the mother of his children, both physically and mentally. Physically, he is particularly inventive in their sexual life in finding new body postures. He confesses to his readers, as a narrator, that he is impressed with the quality of his wife's body of being like clay, and with the fact that he can consequently mould her as he wishes (Swift *Shuttlecock* 1992: 27). This detail is not as sordid as it may appear, as what Prentis actually admires and longs for in this situation is beyond the material reality. It lies in the signification of being malleable in the roles and symbolical positions adopted in one's life and in relation to other people. What he likes about Marian is the way she can symbolically juggle with being both feminine and manly, vulnerable and strong – we should not forget that she takes care of physically challenged people. It is this harmonious steely mixture of (apparent) weakness and power that Prentis almost envies, as, in opposition to his wife, he can neither hide his weaknesses nor harmoniously integrate or manage them, being a dissonant and generally weak character. In *Waterland*, Mary Metcalfe's body is almost venerated. She is the only girl growing up together with a group of boys her age, and a budding attractive one, a context that grants her the status of an "unattainable" (Swift *Waterland* 1992: 48) "madonna" (*Ibidem*: 46). When she learns that she is pregnant, there are three boys that feel emotionally connected to her and who wish the child were theirs, and her pregnancy and the question over who the father is determines a conflict between them that will lead to a murder. In a way, all three revere her for the child she is carrying even more, while trying to appropriate and control her.

The fourth dimension mentioned by Frank, of "*self-relatedness*" (Frank 1995: 52), engenders the "*communicative* body" (*Ibidem*: 53), characterised by "dissociation" (*Ibidem*: 52) from itself and "association" with others. In this respect, it is "a body *in-process*" (*Ibidem*: 79), in-the-making, for which "recognition" (*Ibidem*: 54) functions as medium. Surely all the beautiful bodies that we have discussed are recognized as such by the others, only that this recognition is not perceived as (entirely) positive by the individual – and we refer here especially to Sandra, Irene, Dorothea, or Mary. In their cases, the dissociation from oneself does not ensue as a technique to rally to the tastes of the others and manage to toil upon one's body to bring it into the desired shape that would be accepted and admired, as it happens in *Caribbean Dawn*. It is a reaction of rejection of one's own beauty that has become harmful to oneself. In these cases we may speak of a dysfunctional self-relatedness, which instead of managing to integrate the individual socially alienates her even more.

Conclusion:

In this paper we have seen that the dynamics of the beautiful body on the social stage entails various types of abuse – the possessor's over her/his body, the body's over the possessor, and the beautiful person's over the others or vice versa. For Swift's female characters, there is usually a significant downside to having a beautiful body. Besides that of the sacrifice that is implicit in maintaining this appearance (sometimes only hinted at), which can take mild or aggressive forms, there is almost always a darker aspect hidden by the glamour of image. As we have noticed, this ugly reality underneath the surface entails some kind of further abuse or trauma: having been treated like a sexual object (for Sandra, Irene Chapman, or Mary Metcalfe), having a brilliant mind that gets

neglected as beauty comes forth (for Dorothea Chapman), leading a hedonistic existence that may obscure other preoccupations in life (in *Caribbean Dawn*).

However, while various forms of abuse may seem to be valid and lurking behind a beautiful appearance in women's case, with men things are different. Swift does not present men as burdened by their attractiveness, when they are associated with it, which happens very rarely in his fictional world. For men beauty is merely an asset to which they never fall victim.

Arthur Frank's types of bodies and body usage are hybrid, almost always containing their reverse. Moreover, the bodies in our analysis are ambivalent, in more than one way. They are both empowered and vulnerable, as well as abusive and abused. Consumerism, ever-present in *Caribbean Dawn*, provides us with the perfect example to illustrate the idea of hybrid bodies and body usage. According to Frank, it can be understood as a "willingness to be appropriated" (Frank 1995: 94): "The consumer thinks he or she appropriates the commodity, while it appropriates its consumer." Thus, the dominating body is also dominated, communicative, a body of excess, and one of lack. Ambivalence is proved, along with the idea that the user is the abuser and the abused simultaneously.

References:

Bordo, Susan. "Anorexia Nervosa. Psychopathology as the Crystallization of Culture" in Counihan, Carole, and Penny Van Esterik, eds. Food and Culture. London: Routledge, 1997. pp. 226-250.
Bourdieu, Pierre. Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
Brook, Barbara. Feminist Perspectives on the Body. London: Longman, 1999.
Crossley, Nick. The Social Body. Habit, Identity and Desire. London: Sage Publications, 2001.
De Certeau, Michel. The Practice of Everyday Life. Translated by Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
Featherstone, Mike. "The Body in Consumer Culture" in Featherstone, Mike, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner, eds. The Body. Social Process and Cultural Theory. London: Sage Publications, 1995. pp. 170-196.
Frank, Arthur W. "For a Sociology of the Body: An Analytical Review" in Featherstone, Mike, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner, eds. The Body. Social Process and Cultural Theory. London: Sage Publications, 1995. pp. 36-102.
Lefebvre, Henri. The Production of Space. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.
Shields, Rob. Places on the Margin. Alternative Geographies of Modernity. London: Routledge, 2002.
Swift, Graham. Caribbean Dawn. Suffolk: Arima Publishing, 2006.
Swift, Graham. Shuttlecock. New York: Vintage Books, 1992.
Swift, Graham. The Sweet-Shop Owner. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
Swift, Graham. Waterland. London: Picador, 1992.
Turner, Brian S. "Recent Developments in the Theory of the Body" in Featherstone, Mike, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner, eds. The Body. Social Process and Cultural Theory. London: Sage Publications, 1995. pp. 1-35.
Turner, Brian S. The Body and Society. Explorations in Social Theory. Second Edition. London: Sage Publications, 2007.