

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

The Body in Durkheim's Sociology

by Paolo Terenzi

At the international level, in the last years, the theme of the body has become more and more relevant for those scholars who deal with the Durkheimian sociology of culture. From the sociological point of view, the body is strictly connected with the duality of human nature as it is represented in culture. This paper shows that this duality is expressed in four cultural polarities – body and soul, male and female, individual and society, sacred and profane – and that in the definition of these polarities proposed by Durkheim in his works, in particular in the description of the male and of the female, the body plays a fundamental role.

Gender As a Social Structure. Theory Wrestling with Activism

by Barbara J. Risman

In this article, the author argues that we need to conceptualize gender as a social structure, and by doing so, we can better analyze the ways in which gender is embedded in the individual, interactional, and institutional dimensions of our society. To conceptualize gender as a structure situates gender at the same level of general social significance as the economy and the polity. The author also argues that while concern with intersectionality must continue to be paramount, different structures of inequality have different constructions and perhaps different influential causal mechanisms at any given historical moment. We need to follow a both/and strategy to understand gender structure, race structure, and other structures of inequality as they currently operate while also systematically paying attention to how these axes of domination intersect. Finally, the author suggests we pay more attention to doing research and writing theory with explicit attention to how our work can indeed help transform as well as inform society.

Sex, Gender and Identity. The Contribution of the Gender Studies

by Isabella Crespi

Sex, gender and identity are the core issues of this paper. The relationship among these concepts is analyzed by the author in the light of the wide and multidisciplinary paramount of those approaches collected in the tradition of the so-called “gender studies”. The author illustrates the main theoretical approaches to the sex/gender debate. Finally she suggests to pay attention to the need for a new relational approach to gender issues and to its potentialities for further developments in gender studies.

The Fragile Man. Ways of Male Identity Construction in the Contemporary Society
by Mario Salisci

Contemporary society crisis has recently put into light male identity fragility - and it happens for the first time indeed. This process can be defined as a conscience trouble into self-constructing within complex societal structures: a difficulty that might reveal at the same time a socialising models inefficiency and a highly complex demand for change in Western societies. In this context gender-oriented identity formation might be at risk, constrained between uncertain parenthood roles and more broaden de-structuralising social processes. Within this context the body appears to become a relevant and distinctive element in a gender oriented perspective. In this respect sport, as one of its social expression, can be investigated as a privileged domain for male identity construction and expression process. The aim of this paper is to revel and analyse in-deep emerging conceptual connections and expressions between social change, body male identity and sport.

Body and Youth in the French Sociology

by Bernard Andrieu e Vincenzo Cicchelli

The aim of this article is to give a better understanding of the way in which French sociologists have studied the cultural relevance of body among young people. The paper starts by taking into account some epistemological limits and difficulties due to the nature of this object. Then it offers a historical account of the encounter between body and youth in sociological researches. Finally, it underlines three major paradoxes concerning the relevance of the body in French society (i.e., the tension between individual freedom and social conformity, the quest for performance and intimacy, the idea that body is becoming socially tougher and more malleable at the same time) and discusses the most important topics concerning the representations of body among young people as they are dealt with by current French works.