

the recent attention paid to young adult sexuality, *Hooking Up* is a welcome, empirical addition that informs *all* readers of the collegiate state of affairs—sexual and otherwise. It will be of particular interest to scholars in the fields of gender, sexuality, family, relationships, and higher education.

RACHEL KALISH
Stony Brook University

“It’s Just Easier Not to Go to School”: Adolescent Girls and Disengagement in Middle School. By Lori Olafson. New York: Peter Lang, 2006, 163 pp., \$29.95 (paper).

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No matter how long ago we attended middle school, the sentiment expressed in this book’s title may still resonate. Lori Olafson delves into the reasons why girls become “resistant” to school. Based on participant observation at two middle schools and multiple interviews and focus groups with ten adolescent girls from those schools, Olafson argues that “traditional” conceptions of resistance fail to explain adequately the experiences of the girls in her study. She proposes using a poststructuralist perspective that centers on agency and the social construction of resistance. Cautioning against seeing “agency” as isolated individual actions, Olafson aims to shift attention from the individual adolescent to adolescents’ interactions with and relationships to their school and peers.

Although her initial interest centered on “school resistance,” Olafson explains that the conceptual frame of “resistance” did not adequately explain the attitudes and actions of the girls in her study. Olafson argues that the girls are “disengaging” from the characteristics of the school environment, rather than resisting school itself. She argues that “resistance to school” is really resistance to identities imposed by teachers, peers, and the larger school culture. This argument is most convincing in chapter 7, “Schooling the Body in Physical Education.” The fierce determination of many middle-school girls to avoid gym class perplexes teachers and school administrators, but Olafson makes sense of it by explaining and illustrating the structural and interactional factors that contribute to this avoidance, such as the exclusive use of military-style exercises and sports that the girls did not enjoy, and the practice of requiring girls to demonstrate activities in front of the class. Contextualizing this struggle in terms

of gender and regimes of the body, she successfully weaves together theory and the experiences of her participants.

In other chapters, however, the strength of the argument is obscured by an overreliance on other scholars and a heavy-handed application of Foucault. Quotes are used more than once, and only a few of her ten participants are included as examples in the text. Despite the variety of data sources that Olafson reports using, there is very little explicit discussion of these sources in the analysis. For example, although document analysis is described as “the third component of the research method” (p. 17), it is not clear what documents were analyzed or how their analysis informed the research. Similarly, although focus groups were conducted, the information gleaned from these focus groups was not explicitly discussed in the book. For example, one of the stated purposes of the focus groups was to have the students collectively construct a “social hierarchy” of the school, something Olafson noticed the girls frequently referred to in their individual interviews. The use of focus groups to elaborate and validate the social organization schemas reported individually is an astute use of this method, but the reader only learns that it was done and not what was learned from it.

Olafson presents her participants’ stories primarily as illustrative examples and “reconstructed life stories” and, thus, avoids a problem in many qualitative studies of fracturing narratives into disembodied themes. Olafson created these reconstructed life stories by selecting what she determined were the salient parts of the transcripts and then reassembling those parts into narratives for each participant. The stories were “further narrow[ed] . . . to illustrate only one or two themes from the multitude of themes that were generated” (p. 29). The result is a set of narratives in which the participants’ words are used, but the linguistic features, silences, difficulties in articulation, and sequence of telling have been removed. This may explain why, despite using material from the transcripts, the narratives all have a similar “voice.” Readers will vary in their evaluation of and satisfaction with this mode of representation, but we found it distanced us from the data and impeded the ability to evaluate the credibility of the analysis.

“It’s Just Easier Not to Go to School” addresses important questions, but its success in addressing these questions is uneven. The first two chapters, in which Olafson writes about her approach to the topic and her experiences in the field, are good examples of researcher reflexivity and of how the focus of a topic can change in the midst of research; graduate students and those teaching qualitative methods classes may find these chapters particularly useful. The more theory-centered chapters, particularly chapter 5, “Theoretical Framework: Bodies, Relationships of Power, and

Regimes of Truth,” will be over the heads of most undergraduates, but the remainder of the book is written in an accessible style for a college-level audience. The lack of an index, however, limits the usefulness of the book to scholars and graduate students. As mentioned above, Olafson is most successful in the chapter on physical education, and this chapter will lend itself well to being reprinted in collections on adolescents, embodiment, women’s studies, and education/schooling.

SARA K. JOHNSON
ANITA ILTA GAREY
University of Connecticut

Revisioning Women and Drug Use: Gender, Power and the Body. By Elizabeth Ettorre. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007, 166 pp., \$74.95 (cloth).

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Revisioning Women and Drug Use encourages readers to let go of previous perceptions of women drug users in favor of a feminist embodiment perspective. Ettorre views women’s drug use as a form of embodied deviance involving tasks of restraint (the self-control of bodily functions and inner needs), reproduction, representation (self-presentation), and the regulation of behavior and inner drives. Each of these embodied endeavors is shaped by race, class, and culture as well as by gender. Much previous theorizing about women’s substance use is critiqued as representing privileged, white, Eurocentric, male perspectives. Initial chapters of the book outline embodiment theory and contrast this perspective to classical positivist approaches and also to other postmodern and feminist perspectives such as Tammy Anderson’s work on core activities of women drug users. Subsequent topical chapters develop a feminist-embodiment perspective on drug consumption, reproduction, and HIV/AIDS. A final chapter explores the role of emotions in gendered drug use.

This book will appeal to embodiment theorists interested in how the perspective may provide insights into the specific substantive context of women’s drug use. It may also be useful to sociologists specializing in substance abuse, gender, and deviance. These researchers will be reminded of the value of understanding substance use from the perspective of women drug users and the ways in which race, class, gender, and culture inequality shape the stigmatization of women drug users.