

MEN WRITING
EATING DISORDERS

‘I read this fascinating study in a single sitting. Heike Bartel’s *Men Writing Eating Disorders* probes a little-known but devastating issue with superlative care: illuminating the link between autobiographical writing in English and German, and attempts by men to chart their experiences of eating disorders; but also showing the vital role that literature can play in uncovering this largely taboo illness. This text brings to our attention a striking modern literary corpus and shows what a powerful tool literary research can be in the growing field of Medical Humanities.’ -

Karen Leeder, Professor of Modern German Literature, Fellow of New College, University of Oxford, UK

‘This important book challenges typical perspectives on eating disorders. It reveals the traps and opportunities in literature and language to represent or misrepresent those who suffer this distressing condition—men as well as women. *Men Writing Eating Disorders* unlocks an important door to a more inclusive gender perception.’ - **Professor Paul Crawford, Institute of Mental Health at the University of Nottingham, UK**

‘As an area often neglected and under-recognised, this book provides an in-depth look at male eating disorders in a way that blends psychology, arts and the voice of those who have lived with an eating disorder. A truly unique gem that captures a part of the eating disorder experience that is missing from many accounts already out there. ‘ - **Dr Una Foye, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience at King’s College London, UK**

‘This important book brings a transdisciplinary gaze to understanding eating disorders in men. The exploration of these experiences through the lens of 21 personal narratives illuminates the cultural, social and clinical implications of this neglected area. The gendered construction of eating disorders, the process of autobiographical writing and the links with illness narratives are all expertly discussed. The book advances the field of medical and health humanities, and will be of interest to literary scholars, narrative and identity researchers, and clinicians working with eating disorders.’ - **Mike Slade, Professor of Mental Health Recovery & Social Inclusion at the University of Nottingham, UK**

‘Heike Bartel’s *Men Writing Eating Disorders: Autobiographical Writing and Illness Experience in English and German Narratives* offers an exemplary model how the humanities - I prefer the term “the human sciences” - can engage with and, indeed, teach the nomological (“law-like”) sciences and the practical pedagogy of biomedicine... [The book] will go a long way in teaching physicians, healthcare systems, and - perhaps most importantly - “individuals who are living with an eating disorder”

and “also [their] brothers, fathers, friends, and lovers” that the pain and suffering that imbues their lives are real, command acknowledgment, and mandate therapies and treatment... I can think of no better achievement for the humanities than to contribute to our general well-being in the way that *Men Writing Eating Disorders* does with such mastery. It is a book that has the potential to enlarge our compassion, to learn from the suffering and joy of others, and to discover strategies to alleviate pain and foster a good life (the work of *phronesis*). It is a book that will make our world better.’ - **Ronald Schleifer, George Lynn Cross Research Professor of English and Adjunct Professor in Medicine, University of Oklahoma, USA**

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MEN WRITING EATING DISORDERS

Autobiographical Writing and
Illness Experience in English and
German Narratives

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the staff of the eating disorders charity FirstStepsED (<https://firststepsed.co.uk/>) whose admirable dedication, knowledge and creativity is encouraging more and more people of all genders, ages and backgrounds to voice their experiences of eating disorders.

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CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>About the Author</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>xvi</i>
Introduction	1
1. Eating Disorders and Men	9
1.1. The Corpus	9
1.2. Classifications of Eating Disorders	14
1.2.1. Anorexia Nervosa	15
1.2.2. Bulimia Nervosa	17
1.2.3. Binge Eating Disorder	19
1.2.4. Muscle Dysmorphia	20
1.3. Eating Disorders in Men	21
2. Constructing Eating Disorders	25
2.1. A 'Girls' Illness'	25
2.2. Language Matters	28
2.3. Gendering Illness	31
2.4. Feminist Scholarship and Eating Disorders	32

3.	Written on the Body	35
3.1.	Sport and Exercise	40
3.1.1.	'Real Sport for Real Men'	40
3.1.2.	Shirts and Skins	43
3.1.3.	Excessive Exercise	48
3.1.4.	Positive Elements of Exercise	51
3.2.	Sex and Intimacy	52
3.2.1.	'Slim = Attractive'	53
3.2.2.	Relationships with 'Anna' and 'Wendy'	59
3.2.3.	'Sins of the Flesh'	65
3.2.4.	Pleasure and Fulfilment	68
4.	Autobiographical Writing	69
4.1.	Writing the Self: Through the Lens of Literary Scholarship	69
4.1.1.	'Autobiographical Writing' Versus 'Autobiography'	71
4.1.2.	'Memoir Boom'	74
4.1.3.	Memory	77
4.1.4.	Food Memories	80
4.1.5.	Family Food Histories	81
4.2.	Ventures Outside Autobiographical Writing	87
4.3.	Paratexts	93
4.3.1.	Images	96
4.3.2.	A Hunger Artist?	105
4.3.3.	Forewords, Afterwords and Interjections	110

Contents	xi
5. Writing for Healthcare	115
5.1. Illness Narrative	115
5.2. Narratives and Healthcare	118
5.3. Narratives in Healthcare Education and Training	121
5.4. New Additions to the Corpus of Narrative Medicine	124
5.5. Men Writing Experiences of Treatment	128
<i>Conclusion</i>	141
<i>Bibliography</i>	145
<i>Index</i>	163

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LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1. Cover: 'Panic Heart' (<i>Panikherz</i> ; Stuckrad-Barre, 2016).	97
Fig. 2. Cover: <i>Skinny Boy. A Young Man's Battle and Triumph over Anorexia</i> (Grahl, 2007).	100
Fig. 3. Cover: <i>Luft nach unten. Wie ich mit meiner Magersucht zusammenkam und mit ihr lebte.</i> ('Room For Less. 'How I Got Together With My Anorexia and Lived With Her') (Boks, 2019).	102
Fig. 4. 'Florian': <i>A Story to Tell, or: Regarding Male Eating Disorders</i> (Rakoš & de Theije, 2020).	124
Fig. 5. 'Ramon': <i>A Story to Tell, or: Regarding Male Eating Disorders</i> (Rakoš & de Theije, 2020).	125

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Heike Bartel is Associate Professor in German in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at The University of Nottingham (UK). She has published extensively on eighteenth-century and contemporary literature and poetry, women's writing and narrative perspectives. Her interdisciplinary research focusses on gender and narratives of trauma and illness. She has led several AHRC- and Wellcome-funded interdisciplinary projects on eating disorders in men in collaboration with clinicians, researchers, artists and male experts by experience and supported by the Health Humanities research group and the Institute of Mental Health at The University of Nottingham.

A literary and cultural scholar by training, she is also well informed in clinical research in the field of eating disorders in men and experienced in developing and delivering arts-based training on the topic for charities, clinicians and students of Medicine and Healthcare Sciences. Outcomes of her projects include creative training material and tools for primary care, accredited and endorsed by the Royal Colleges of General Practitioners and Nursing and supported by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the charities Mental Health First Aid England, FirstStepsED, MaleVoiceED and the German Consulting Centre for Eating Disorders in Cologne ('Landesfachstelle für Essstörungen NRW').

Website: <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/hungry-for-words/index.aspx>

Twitter: @ConsiderMaleEDs

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Triggers: Some people may find passages about eating disorders and self-harm quoted in this book triggering.

Translations: None of the German narratives cited in this book have been translated into English yet. All translations are by the author. The translated titles of German books that are not published in English are given in inverted commas, not italics.