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Nota di contenuto	1. Historical and theoretical coordinates of bodybuilding's trajectory -- 2. Building 'Perfect' bodies : the restorative model of the Early Period (1880s-1930s) -- 3. From 'Ideal Manhood' to 'Muscle for Muscle's Sake' : shift of paradigm to the Middle Period (1940s-1970s) -- 4. Breaking boundaries : freaky bodies and the paradigm of elite sport performance -- 5. Machine, animal, hardcore : freak as dominant approach to the embodied practice, aesthetic of representation, and group identity -- 6. A monstrous practice for producing the monstrous body : drug use for bodybuilding purposes -- 7. Extreme sport and corporate entertainment : the freaky body as commodified spectacle.
Sommario/riassunto	Bodybuilding has become an increasingly dominant part of popular gym culture within the last century. Developing muscles is now seen as essential for both general health and high performance sport. At the more extreme end, the monstrousbuilt body has become a pop icon that continues to provoke fascination. This original and engaging study explores the development of male bodybuilding culture from the nineteenth century to the present day, tracing its transformations and

offering a new perspective on its current extreme direction. Drawing on archival research, interviews, participant observation, and discourse analysis, this book presents a critical mapping of bodybuilding's trajectory. Following this trajectory through the wider sociocultural changes it has been a part of, a unique combination of historical and empirical data is used to investigate the aesthetics of bodybuilding and the shifting notions of the good body and human nature they reflect. This book will be fascinating reading for all those interested in the history and culture of bodybuilding, as well as for students and researchers of the sociology of sport, gender and the body.

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