

## Reading questions for March 6:

**1. Sandra Bartky, “Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power”** (first published 1988):

- a. What are the three categories of disciplinary practices that Bartky outlines in order to apply the Foucault of *Discipline and Punish* to the achievement of femininity? What examples are included in each?
- b. “Why aren’t all women feminists?” asks Bartky [75]. What answer does she provide? Why is this (arguably) a Foucauldian answer?
- c. “Many ‘reform’ or liberal feminists, indeed, many orthodox Marxists, are committed to the idea that the preservation of a woman’s femininity is quite compatible with her struggle for liberation. These thinkers have rejected a normative femininity based upon the notion of ‘separate spheres’ and the traditional sexual division of labor while accepting at the same time conventional standards of feminine body display. If my analysis is correct, such a feminism is incoherent...” [78]. How does Bartky reach this conclusion, what is her alternative, and what implications does this have for your own “bodily display”? (Including implications for masculine bodily display. Indeed, what implications does it have for feminine bodily display by men, or masculine bodily display by women?)

**2. Iris Marion Young, “Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment, Motility, and Spatiality.”** (First published 1980)

- a. Make sure you are clear what Young means by *ambiguous transcendence*, *inhibited intentionality*, and *discontinuous unity*.
- b. What is “femininity” on Young’s account? What is good or bad about it? What is masculinity? What is good or bad about that?
- c. Young famously says that “Women in sexist society are physically handicapped” [152]. What does she mean? (Do you agree?)
- d. Would it be fair to say that Young is describing a serious and pervasive case of what Drew Leder called “social dys-appearance”? If she is right about how serious and pervasive it is, should we rethink any parts of Leder’s analysis?

**3. Dianne Chisholm, “Climbing Like a Girl: An Exemplary Adventure in Feminist Phenomenology.”** (Published 2008)

- a. Note that “situation” and “background” are technical existential terms that Chisholm briefly defines on p. 12.
- bi. Chisholm’s case study is the climber Lynn Hill (especially as she represents herself in her autobiography *Climbing Free*). Be sure you know what Hill does, and what is remarkable about it. Chisholm asks “how...is Hill both exceptional and exemplary?” How does she answer this question?
- bii. What insights does Chisholm borrow from Merleau-Ponty and apply to Hill’s climbing? (Can you make any connections between the phenomenological part of the analysis and Leder’s analysis?)
- biii. What are the “five broad descriptive themes” that Chisholm identifies pp. 20 passim.
- c. How, overall, is the analysis Chisholm provides different from that provided by Young? Are they different only in their use of examples and in their degree of hope for women’s capacity to overcome a sexist background (or two sexist backgrounds twenty years apart)? Or are they more deeply philosophically or politically different? (Hint: look especially at pp. 34-5.)