

Abstract

Punitive gynaecology is a set of healthcare-related attitudes and practices that aim to take control of a woman's body, sexuality and reproductive system in order to produce a reformed body. This thesis scrutinizes the phenomenon of punitive gynaecology in modern Russia. Narrative inquiry was conducted to provide an understanding of the ways punitive gynaecology works on the female body, restructures it and inscribes meanings. Autobiographical narratives are analysed and located within a wider socio-political context to concretize the dimensions of punitive practices in gynaecology. The main foci of analysis are the medical gaze, the spatial organization of the gynaecological clinic, pastoral power and agency in the gynaecological examination, the sexuality of the examination, the contingencies of shame, pain and embarrassment. The research uses a Foucauldian framework to uncover power relations permeating the doctor-patient interaction in the gynaecological examination. This thesis thus offers a reflection on the preferred modes of embodiment and docility that punitive gynaecology attempts to instil in its' subject.

Keywords: punitive gynaecology, discipline, power, gaze, agency, body, hegemonic femininity, clinic, doctor-patient interaction, docility