

Within the Confines

Women and the Law in Canada



Subjects

Criminology and Gender
Criminology/Police Studies
Criminology/Police Studies
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Western feminists have long treated the rule of law as an essential ingredient of social justice; however, as the contributors to this collection remind us, meaningful justice remains out of reach for many women and racialized minorities precisely because the law turns a blind eye to the inequities that structure their daily lives. In fourteen chapters that open vital debates about the erosion of the welfare state and the media's complicity in concealing political injustice, *Within the Confines* details the brutal ironies of a society that criminalizes the vulnerable while absolving the elite. Distinctive in its focus on Canada, the book traces the linkages among racial, ethnic, sexual, and economic vulnerability and reveals the inadequacies of legislative approaches to socio-historical problems such as drug trafficking, homelessness, infanticide, and the legacies of settler colonial violence. In accessible prose, the authors dismantle the myths behind topics that are often sensationalized in the media—pornography, single motherhood, sex work, filicide, gangs, domestic abuse, prison conditions, HIV nondisclosure—and present alternative arguments that expose the justice system's role in widening the gap between the rich and the poor. What emerges is a poignant challenge to the neoliberal fable that women and minorities in Western democracies now enjoy full equality and an urgent call to action for those who seek to shift institutional norms in more equitable directions. A valuable resource for a wide range of fields, including criminology, sociology, social anthropology, gender studies, political science, social work, and legal history, this multidisciplinary volume offers a fresh perspective on the disturbingly predictable judgments that criminalized women face in Canada.

Author Information

Jennifer M. Kilty

Jennifer M. Kilty is Associate Professor of Criminology at the University of Ottawa. The author of numerous articles and chapters, Dr. Kilty is co-editor of *Demarginalizing Voices: Commitment, Emotion, and Action in Qualitative Research* (2014).

Reviews

A much-needed collection of cutting-edge scholarship that draws on, as well as reframes, key debates involving women and the law in the contemporary Canadian context. Importantly, the authors provide an intersectional feminist analysis of how law shapes gendered issues of violence, imprisonment, poverty, sexualities, reproduction, and disease.— *Hijin Park, Department of Sociology, Brock University*

Within the Confines offers a stimulating law-as-social-process approach to understanding women's contact and conflicts with law, especially criminal law. The contributors paint nuanced pictures of how various aspects of law entail a social process of constructing (and sometimes reconstructing) gender norms. This book is theoretically and methodologically diverse, providing readers with insightful and complementary alternatives to standard social science approaches to women and criminal law.— *Rachel Ariss, Legal Studies Program, University of Ontario Institute of Technology*

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements Introduction **Part 1: Institutional and Intersectional Oppressions** Chapter 1: Inalienable, Universal, and the Right to Punish: Women, Prison, and Practices of Freedom, *Vicki Chartrand* Chapter 2: Resisting Colonial Violence(s) Together: Stories of Loss, Renewal, and Friendship from Algonquin Territory, *Colleen Cardinal* and *Kristen Gilchrist* Chapter 3: "I Would Like Us to Unite and Fight for Our Rights Together Because We Haven't Been Able to Do It Alone": Women's Homelessness, Disenfranchisement, and Self-Determination, *Emily K. Paradis* Chapter 4: Women, Drugs, and the Law, *Rebecca Jesseman* and *Florence Kellner* Chapter 5: Sentencing Aboriginal Women to Prison, *Gillian Balfour* **Part 2: Facets of Families, Motherhood, and Violence** Chapter 6: Agency and Choice: Gendered Constructions of Victim Worthiness in Domestic Violence Court, *Holly Johnson* and *Ashley McConnell* Chapter 7: "If I Can't Have You, No One Can," and Other Gendered Constructions of Criminal Harassment, *Sheryl C. Fabian* Chapter 8: Peddling the Margins of Gender-Based Violence: Canadian Media Coverage of Honour Killings, *Mythili Rajiva* and *Amar Khoday* Chapter 9: Unwanted Motherhood and the Canadian Law of Infanticide, *Kirsten Kramar* Chapter 10: Women and Child Homicide: Exploring the Role of Stereotypes about Gender, Race, and Poverty in Contemporary Canadian Cases, *Emma Cunliffe* **Part 3: Sex and the Social Context** Chapter 11: A Chip Off the Old (Ice) Block? Women-Led Families, Sperm Donors, and Family Law, *Angela Cameron* Chapter 12: Dangerous Liaisons, a Tale of Two Cases: Constructing Women Accused of HIV/AIDS Nondisclosure as Threats to the (Inter)national Body Politic, *Jennifer M. Kilty* Chapter 13: "Flattening Our Opposition": Neoliberal Governance and the (De)regulation of Adult Pornography in Canada, *Camilla A. Sears* Chapter 14: Legal Moralism, Feminist Rhetoric, and the Criminalization of Consensual Sex in Canada, *Stacey Hannem* and *Chris Bruckert* Contributor Biographies

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