

# Within the Confines

## Women and the Law in Canada



### Subjects

Criminology and Gender  
Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies  
Criminology and Police Studies  
Criminology and 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*

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