

powerful new tool for those who advocate for women in conflict with the law. The legislation also helps to alleviate some of the most serious burdens that women face in the correctional system: inability to serve their sentences close to their communities, loss of their children, and potential access to a greater variety of programs and counselling.

The book contains some obvious gaps that could be filled in future editions. *In Conflict with the Law* purports to be a work about women and the Canadian justice system, but in truth it focuses almost exclusively on federally sentenced women (i.e. women serving sentences of two years or longer). This focus is unusual when one considers that 99 per cent of the women who serve time do so in provincial institutions and that only one in ten women who comes into conflict with the law receives a jail sentence. This is not to say that the consequences that women experience are fleeting: for many, they include increased disadvantage in the workplace, the entrenchment of poverty, increased dependence on sometimes abusive partners, and the possible loss of their children. Given that the experience of the vast majority of women is limited to treatment by police, the court, and probation services, a chapter on the experience of women who do not receive custodial dispositions would be a welcome addition to this varied and interesting work.

BREAKING THE RULES: WOMEN IN PRISON AND FEMINIST THERAPY

Judy Harden and Marcia Hill, eds.
New York: Haworth Press, 1998.

BY SANDRA E. THRONESS

The purpose of this collection of essays is to identify and discuss

gender-related issues arising from a patriarchal prison system. In what the editors approvingly describe as "feminist, unruly behaviour," it questions the assumptions associated with the existence of prisons and the very definitions of what a prisoner is. Harden and Hill conclude that a feminist view of the treatment of women prisoners is required.

The prison system is yet another societal institution where one size does not fit all. Punishment and rehabilitation programs developed for men who are the majority of the prison population continue to miss the mark by ignoring the increasing level of diversity in the prison population.

Although women comprise only 5.7 per cent of the total prison population in the United States, their rate of imprisonment has exploded. From 1980 to 1994 the number of women inmates increased by 386 per cent compared to an increase in male inmates of 214 per cent. This increase coincided with the escalation of the war on drugs. Most women inmates are mothers with dependent children on the outside while few male inmates are primary caregivers. In addition male inmates tend to have been incarcerated for mostly violent crimes while female inmates tend to have been arrested for drug-related and status crimes (those activities that are illegal due to age). Clearly the programs developed for male prisoners will have little relevance when applied to women prisoners.

A number of essays examine the impact of a patriarchal prison system on women inmates. First, incarcerated women are more likely than the general population to have been abused in childhood. Prison recreates that experience through a culture that often involves traumatic sexualization and powerlessness.

Second, retraining programs tend to focus on gender-stereotyped skills. Such programs give the impression that successful rehabilitation for women means knowing your place and

not making waves. In addition, drug treatment programs that focus on submission as a requirement for fighting addiction contradict feminist ideals of empowerment.

Third, the boot camp approach to rehabilitation is based on certain assumptions about criminal motivations garnered from research on male inmates. This research determined a direct correlation between criminal activity and the lack of discipline and responsibility. Boot camps are intended to teach this missing discipline and responsibility by breaking down and building up male inmates. However, the relevance of this research to women inmates has not been proven—partly because women tend to commit crimes for reasons unrelated to gender stereotypes or control theories. In addition, boot camps are less likely to successfully rehabilitate women prisoners due to their greater need for connection and relationship.

Although this book does not fully address those issues specific to women from equity-seeking groups, it is generally effective in identifying a range of important concerns relating to gender and prisons.

INVENTING THE SAVAGE: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF NATIVE AMERICAN CRIMINALITY

Luana Ross. Austin, University of Texas Press, 1998.

BY KIM ANDERSON

Many of us are aware that the prosperity of the Americas has been achieved through the colonization of Native peoples. In her book, *Inventing the Savage: The Social Construction of Native American Criminality*, Luana Ross now shows us how this prosperity has involved the criminalization of Native peoples.