



# Unruly Women: Essays on Confinement and Resistance

*Karlene Faith*

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## **Unruly Women: Essays on Confinement and Resistance** Karlene Faith

Winner of the VanCity Book Prize, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Confinement & Resistance* is the seminal book about women's imprisonment that helped spark examinations around the world into the special circumstances women face in prison, as well as the sex and gender crimes that get them there. Most women who are incarcerated do not pose a danger to society but transgress patriarchal, capitalist norms that seek to control their bodies and choices, as seen in the case of prostitution and prosecutions of pregnant women for risky behaviors. Further, the majority of women who enter the criminal justice system have been victims of violence, which raises questions about the continuum from victimization to criminalization. *Unruly Women* explores patterns of female crimes and punishments, from the witch hunts to the present; institutionalized violence and sexual abuse against incarcerated women; women loving women in prison; motherhood inside prison; battered woman syndrome; Hollywood's formulaic women-in-prison films; political education in prisons; and acts of resistance, inside and out. Karlene Faith challenges misconceptions of "deviant" women, and celebrates the unruly woman: the unmanageable woman who claims her own body, and who cannot be silenced. As the "drug war" wages on, riddled with excessive and inequitable prison sentences; the incarcerated population skyrockets toward 2.5 million (up from less than 200,000 nationwide in 1970); and private prisons burgeon around the coasts, now is a critical moment to educate ourselves about what is at stake with our prison system. Faith's incisive work causes us to question the usefulness of the forced confinement and surveillance of mostly nonviolent people.

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