

POLICING THE WOMB

Policing the Womb brings to life the chilling ways in which women have become the targets of secretive state surveillance of their pregnancies. Michele Goodwin expands the reproductive health and rights debate beyond abortion to include how legislators increasingly turn to criminalizing women for miscarriages, stillbirths, and threatening the health of their pregnancies. The horrific results include women giving birth while shackled in leg irons, in solitary confinement, and even delivering in prison toilets. In some states, pregnancy has become a bargaining chip, with prosecutors offering reduced sentences in exchange for women agreeing to be sterilized. The author shows how prosecutors may abuse laws and infringe women's rights in the process, sometimes with the complicity of medical providers who disclose private patient information to law enforcement. Often the women most affected are poor and of color. Goodwin warns, however, poor women are simply the canaries in the coal mine, as some legislators now claim that women's constitutional rights equal those of embryos and fetuses. In this timely book, Michele Goodwin brings to light how the unrestrained efforts to punish and police women's reproduction has led to the United States being the deadliest country in the developed world for pregnant women.

Michele Goodwin is an Executive Committee member of the American Civil Liberties Union and elected member of the American Law Institute. She is also a Chancellor's Professor at the University of California, Irvine, where she teaches torts, constitutional law, and directs the Center for Biotechnology and Global Health Policy. She is an internationally recognized voice on women's rights, reproductive health, health policy, and constitutional law and lectures worldwide on matters relating to the exploitation of women and girls and the rising regulation of pregnancy and criminalization of women.

Policing the Womb

INVISIBLE WOMEN AND THE CRIMINALIZATION
OF MOTHERHOOD

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