



When Women Kill: Questions of Agency and Subjectivity (Transformations)

Belinda Morrissey

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Why are we so reluctant to believe that women can mean to kill? Based on case-studies from the US, UK and Australia, this book looks at the ways in which female killers are constructed in the media, in law and in feminist discourse almost invariably as victims rather than actors in the crimes they commit. Morrissey argues that by denying the possibility of female agency in crimes of torture, rape and murder, feminist theorists are, with the best of intentions, actually denying women the full freedom to be human. Case studies cover among others the battered wife, Pamela Sainsbury, who garrotted her husband as he slept, the serial killer, Aileen Wournos, who killed seven middle-aged men in Florida between 1989 and 1990, Tracey Wiggington, the so-called "lesbian vampire killer", and Karla Homolka who helped her husband kill two teenage girls in St. Catherines Ontario in 1993.

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