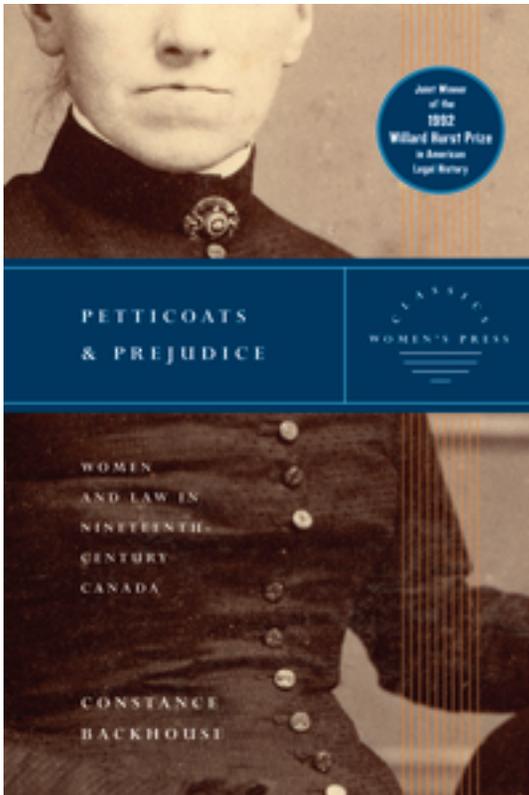


Petticoats and Prejudice - Women's Press Classics

Women and Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada



Drawing on historical records of women's varying experiences as litigants, accused criminals, or witnesses, this book offers critical insight into women's legal status in nineteenth-century Canada. In an effort to recover the social and political conditions under which women lobbied, rebelled, and in some cases influenced change, *Petticoats and Prejudice* weaves together forgotten stories of achievement and defeat in the Canadian legal system. Expanding the concept of "heroism" beyond its traditional limitations, this text gives life to some of Canada's lost heroines. Euphemia Rabbitt, who resisted an attempted rape, and Clara Brett Martin, who valiantly secured entry into the all-male legal profession, were admired by their contemporaries for their successful pursuits of justice. But Ellen Rogers, a prostitute who believed all women should be legally protected against sexual assault, and Nellie Armstrong, a battered wife and mother who sought child custody, were ostracized for their ideas and demands. Well aware of the limitations placed upon women advocating for reform in a patriarchal legal system, Constance Backhouse recreates vivid and textured snapshots of these and other women's courageous struggles against gender discrimination and oppression. Employing social history to illuminate the reproductive, sexual, racial, and occupational inequalities that continue to shape women's encounters with the law, *Petticoats and Prejudice* is an essential entry point into the gendered treatment of feminized bodies in Canadian legal institutions. This book was co-published with [The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History](<http://www.osgoodesociety.ca/>).

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Constance Backhouse is Distinguished Professor and Research Chair in the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa and co-founder of the Feminist History Society.

Reviews

"Constance Backhouse has been a courageous trailblazer for feminist legal history in Canada. *Petticoats & Prejudice* speaks to her immense talents as an extraordinarily perceptive historian, storyteller, and legal analyst. Covering an impressive range of legal issues, including reproduction, violence, familial relations and labour, she analyzes the meanings and impact of the 19th century patriarchal legal system on women, as well as women's efforts to challenge that system. She brings law to life in a compelling, compassionate, and always incisive manner." — Joan Sangster, Trent University

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