



# Bodies of Subversion

*Margot Mifflin*

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## **Bodies of Subversion** Margot Mifflin

"In this provocative work full of intriguing female characters from tattoo history, Margot Mifflin makes a persuasive case for the tattooed woman as an emblem of female self-expression."

—Susan Faludi

*Bodies of Subversion* is the first history of women's tattoo art, providing a fascinating excursion to a subculture that dates back into the nineteenth-century and includes many never-before-seen photos of tattooed women from the last century. Author Margot Mifflin notes that women's interest in tattoos surged in the suffragist 20s and the feminist 70s. She chronicles:

- \* Breast cancer survivors of the 90s who tattoo their mastectomy scars as an alternative to reconstructive surgery or prosthetics.
- \* The parallel rise of tattooing and cosmetic surgery during the 80s when women tattooists became soul doctors to a nation afflicted with body anxieties.
- \* Maud Wagner, the first known woman tattooist, who in 1904 traded a date with her tattooist husband-to-be for an apprenticeship.
- \* Victorian society women who wore tattoos as custom couture, including Winston Churchill's mother, who wore a serpent on her wrist.
- \* Nineteenth-century sideshow attractions who created fantastic abduction tales in which they claimed to have been forcibly tattooed.

"In *Bodies of Subversion*, Margot Mifflin insightfully chronicles the saga of skin as signage. Through compelling anecdotes and cleverly astute analysis, she shows and tells us new histories about women, tattoos, public pictures, and private parts. It's an indelible account of an indelible piece of cultural history."

—Barbara Kruger, artist

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