

Runaway Wives and Rogue Feminists: The Origins of the Women's Shelter Movement in Canada by Margo Goodhand

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put, a reordering of religion in society). Finally, chapter 6 confronts the assumption that Canada has long been in a state of religious decline and argues instead that this phenomenon is recent. The formativeness of this process of de-Christianization has contributed and continues to contribute to a reordering of people's participation in civic life. While the authors do not argue for religious revival, they do point to the vacuum of social power created by the decline in religious life, and wonder at the consequences of such a vacuum. It would not be hard to make an argument for the growth of political populism as by-product of this vacuum. But that's a thought for another study.

Leaving Christianity demonstrates secularization to be a process of religious re-ordering. Clarke and Macdonald acknowledge that the growth of world religions within Canada's cultural plurality has had an effect on the changes to reli-

gious culture. However, they also conclude that Christianity itself has "undergone an unprecedented development" (200). Canadians have left the church. They have left because they oppose "organized expressions of Christianity;" they have left because they have found meaning outside of the structure and institution of Christian churches; and they have left as a result of generational shifts in religious identity. This book is an important contribution to our understanding of the extent of religious change in the latter twentieth century. Clarke and Macdonald call attention to the importance of the 1960s as a decade of change, and situate their work within broader scholarship on religious and social history that point to the way the monumental cultural changes (or fallout) reverberated across social institutions and especially organized religion.

Julia Rady-Shaw

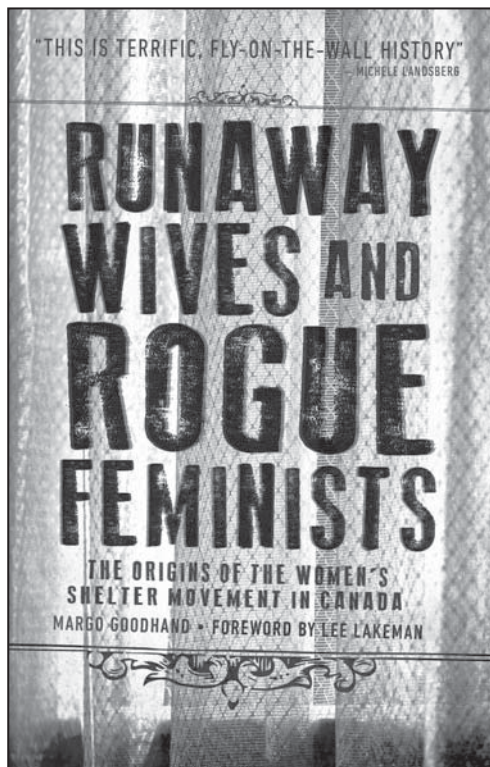
Runaway Wives and Rogue Feminists
The Origins of the Women's Shelter Movement in Canada

By Margo Goodhand

Halifax & Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2017. 168 pages. \$20.00 Paperback. ISBN: 9781552669990. \$19.99
Kindle. ISBN: 9781773630014. (www.fernwoodpublishing.ca)

Margo Goodhand's *Runaway Wives and Rogue Feminists*, a history of the women's shelter movement in Canada, is engaging, powerful, and touching. Relying heavily on oral testimonies, she puts the spotlight on the creation of five shelters in 1973: Interval House in Toronto; Ishtar Transition House in Aldergrove, B.C.; the Edmonton Women's Shelter (with a detour to the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter); Saskatoon Interval House; and Vancouver Transition House. Much like

the women she profiles, Goodhand's history recognizes the importance of the political and the personal. Her book situates the shelters and transition houses in the politics of the women's movement of the 1970s, but she also gives careful attention to those often invisible and grassroots labours that propelled their creation, including, in the most compelling sections of the book, the emotional support women provided each other during some of the hardest times of their lives.



This is a trim book—only 168 pages—yet it is packed with details and anecdotes that will be of interest to historians of Canadian feminism. Goodhand’s interviewees grapple with many of the issues and themes that appear, for example, in academic studies like Nancy Janovicek’s *No Place to Go: Local Histories of the Battered Women’s Shelter Movement* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007). Take the issue of public funding. Virtually all of Goodhand’s interviewees identified the importance of Local Initiatives Program (LIP) and Opportunities for Youth (OFY) grants, federal job-creation programs that ran for a short time during the early 1970s and allowed women to pay themselves during the shelters’ founding years. They also, however, point to the trade-offs involved in accepting government money. In more recent years, for

example, women in the shelter movement worry that the “feminist, collaborative advocacy role” of the 1970s has been lost in favour of the “client and employee” structure demanded of government-supported programs, and that a “cone of silence” has descended on shelters and transition houses who must agree to curtail their advocacy work as a condition of public funding (135-136). The local variations of this story will be important to scholars who grapple with the relationship between feminism and the state.

A related tension between ideology and action also runs throughout the book. Many of the women Goodhand interviews, especially those in Toronto and Vancouver, were concerned with the silence on domestic violence in much of the mainstream feminism of the 1960s and 1970s (violence against women was not addressed, for example, in the Royal Commission on the Status of Women). They urged recognition of wife battering as a societal rather than a private family issue, and considered their interventions as part of the political work of feminism. They also, though, had to balance their politics with meeting the daily, urgent, on-the-ground needs of abused women and their children. Occasionally, this meant collaborating with those who were indifferent or even hostile to feminism. In the chapter about Alberta’s shelters, Goodhand tells us about women who came to shelter work not through the women’s movement but through church-based community services. Members of the Catholic Women’s League, for example, did not identify as feminist and instead considered their shelter work (and, importantly, their financial donations to shelters) as charitable and missionary service. These kinds of adaptations, compromises, and forging creative paths forward is an important part of feminist history, and Goodhand captures

these complexities wonderfully.

Again and again throughout this book, Goodhand's interviewees assert that their biggest barrier to confronting violence against women was the failure to recognize the "scope and nature of the problem" (141). Reading this book, one can't help but reflect on the similarities with our present moment and the almost-daily revelations of entrenched violence that have come to light because of the #MeToo movement. Feminists still battle against an assumption that violence against women is the result of the individual pathology of a bad man, rather than a manifestation of patriarchy and the oppression rooted in colonialism, racism, disability, and other kinds of inequality. There was widespread reluctance, for example, to identify the ten murders and sixteen injuries that resulted from the so-called Toronto van attack of

April 2018 as patriarchal violence, despite the fact that it was perpetrated by a young man who was reportedly motivated by rage at being spurned by women and considered himself "involuntarily celibate." Today, as in the early 1970s, "it's a lot easier to pretend it isn't a problem" (141) if we don't recognize the "scope and nature" of gender-based violence. Goodhand's history captures both the ongoing need for feminist activism at the level of society and state, and, equally importantly, it reminds us of the need to recognize and support the women who do the fundraising, write the grants, organize the meetings, buy the groceries, and clean the houses, doing the daily work of caring for the victims and survivors of violence.

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***Tax, Order, and Good
Government***
***A New Political History of
Canada, 1867-1917***

By E.A. Heaman

Montreal and Kingston: McGill University Press, 2017. xiv, 582 pages. \$39.95 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-7735-4962-3.

In *Tax, Order, and Good Government* Elsbeth Heaman makes a compelling case that it is time to write taxes and poverty into Canadian history. Framed as an example of the "new political history," the book studies Canada's tax history as a social history of politics for the period 1867 to 1917. It does so from both the top-down perspective of the state and the bottom-up perspective of the people. Of

