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Tamara Myers

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**Deutsch, Sarah. *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870–1940*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. 387.**

The prescription and metaphor of separate spheres has long held a fascination for historians of American women. From the early years of women's history in the 1960s, historians recognized gender's important spatial dynamic, identifying the bourgeois cult of true womanhood in antebellum and Gilded Age America that prescribed a proper, separate, and domestic space for women. This gendered division shaping industrializing America was both critiqued as constraining women and embraced as providing the necessary conditions for an emergent female culture. In the 1980s and 1990s, historians proved the usefulness of deconstructing the spheres motif. As the old dichotomy of a world divided into male (public) and female (private) spheres crumbled, in its place has come a nuanced understandings of the interplay of gender and space. Sarah Deutsch's *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870–1940* makes an important contribution to this literature, featuring a city that has a rich urban historiographical tradition but one that has not paid enough attention to women and the civic enterprise. In offering this correction, she broadens our understanding of women's relationships to the city of Boston specifically and to urban space more generally. Importantly, we see in this book an evolution of these relationships over time and across class and racial lines.

In focusing on the transformation of women's place in Boston between 1870 and 1940, Deutsch ventures into two main areas of gender history: women's use and perception of the city and its spaces; and the evolution of women's civic involvement. The book can be divided along these lines: the first chapters examine the private lives of working- and middle-class, and elite women, while the latter chapters focus on the organizational and largely public efforts of women to affect the political landscape of Boston. In the former, the book resembles the work of Christine Stansell and others, which present women's cities as constructions dictated by generation, class, gender, and race. In the latter she tends to space in the Habermasian sense, where the public sphere becomes a place where protest, debate, and citizenship are forged.

In the first two chapters, Deutsch examines the varied ways working-class and middle-class matrons, respectively, defined their place within the city. In the case of working-class mothers and wives it is the story of daily lives filled with a constant struggle for legitimacy. Middle-class matrons had a different sort of challenge: to assert their place in the moral hierarchy of the city. They did this, Deutsch argues, by boasting of their homes as "desexualized spaces" (in distinction to working-class women's sexualized and dangerous ones that included the streets, factories, and department stores).

In the third chapter we venture into the mixed-race areas and emergent communities of working "girls" and new women. These independent but largely marginal women experienced and shaped a different Boston by where they chose to live

(boarding houses), eat (in commercial establishments) and socialize (in the "dangerous" neighbourhoods of downtown).

The fourth chapter introduces us to the "intermediate spaces" occupied by businesswomen. Female shopkeepers demonstrate how interrelated and overlapping home and work, private life and professional standing were for women. This chapter also contains a fascinating biography of Amelia Baldwin, an interior decorator of note. Here we see the potential and the frustration of women who wanted full access to male privilege. Baldwin's career focused largely on "feminine" projects but she also felt capable of redesigning public spaces such as factories; yet these attempts at stepping out of her gender-appropriate world was denied by factory owners.

The last three chapters focus on women's organizational efforts. We are introduced to three mainly bourgeois, Protestant women's organizations in chapter 5, where Deutsch takes us from the origins of 19th-century female voluntary associations to their transformation into important vehicles of municipal change in the early 20th century. Some, like the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, involved "class-bridging" activism and challenged spatial boundaries of Boston by making their presence felt in the city centre, typically a male-dominated area. The following chapter examines the working-class women's desire and struggle to improve employment opportunities and working conditions, highlighting the tenacity of ethnic divisions in women's occupations. Then we move to the political arena for a retelling of the suffrage battle and the emergence of the new female politician.

Deutsch puts striking female workers, suffragists, charity workers of different classes, ethnicities, and races on the streets of Boston and argues their agency in changing the "geography of civic virtue" (284). The result of this female foray into the streets and politics was the eventual opening of new urban spaces and the broadening citizenship for women. As stated in the conclusion, a presence in public was not necessarily unambiguous and empowering, but this book helps us to see the important progress toward female citizenship. And yet, even though women are placed firmly in public, Deutsch reminds us that women's experience of the city and the meaning they derived from their place in it took into account family, neighbourhood, and community.

Deutsch's bringing to the fore of women's work, organizational behaviour, civic politics, and power means space becomes at times engaged only in a minor way in this book, though perhaps more than it would have been 20 years ago. In the latter chapters of the book we have an excellent social and political history of Bostonian women's associational and political contributions but are given little insight into the geography of this story. Space as a category of analysis is complex, involving the mind and the body, and systems of language that evoke both metaphor and the bricks and mortar of the built environment. That space is socially constructed is well evidenced here, though it leaves the reader wanting more. When, for example, did women, as architects and urban planners shape Boston's

private homes and popular spaces? It is hoped that Deutsch's work will occupy the first step along a road toward a feminist geography of Boston.

Tamara Myers  
Department of History  
University of Winnipeg

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**High, Steven. *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969–1984*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. Pp. xi, 306. \$55.00 cloth, \$27.95 paper.**

A casual Internet search for the term *rust belt* produces almost 75,000 separate references, such is the extent to which that phrase has entered popular discourse. Yet detailed definitions, beyond the mere descriptive, of the phenomenon are harder to come by. Steven High's *Industrial Sunset* is, therefore, a welcome addition to the literature on "deindustrialization" in North America. In his own words, it offers "a regional analysis of the economic and cultural devastation of the Great Lakes region and a study of how mill and factory workers made sense of their own displacement" (4). More than that, however, *Industrial Sunset* also explains how and why Americans and Canadians differed in their interpretation of and response to plant closures and mass layoffs, through their contrasting employment of the notion of community.

National differences are rooted in the very concept of the rust belt itself. High opens his book with a meticulous and often fascinating review of the term's origins and etymology, with its obvious echoes of the 1930s dust bowl imagery. The significance is much more than semantic, High argues, for once established, the idea of the rust belt "produced a stigma that attached itself to the once mighty industrial heartland, and hastened its decline" (34). Yet while *rust belt* soon became the accepted metaphor to describe the American Midwest, in Canada it never supplanted established labels such as *Golden Horseshoe* characterizing the industrial cities of southern Ontario. In part, as High shows, this was because the economic recessions that blighted the entire region between 1969 and 1984 were never as severe in Canada as they were south of the border. For example, not a single steel mill or auto assembly plant closed in Canada during these years.

But more importantly, the degree to which *rust belt* became embedded in the public lexicon reflected national differences in interpreting those recessions. In America, journalists and economists viewed "deindustrialization" as a desirable restructuring of the nation's economy, moving it away from reliance on heavy manufacturing. Indeed, there was an air of inevitability to the whole process, with long-term benefits outweighing any short-term suffering. In Canada, however, the closure of factories in the textile, clothing, footwear, and electronic industries was seen as an undesirable function of the branch-plant economy, with American firms closing Canadian operations ahead of their own. This, plus a greater legacy of government intervention in the post-war economy, led Canadian workers to believe that shutdowns were "not part of the natural order but

rather a foreign virus that could be suppressed without killing the host" (38).

High builds his comparative study carefully and convincingly. In successive chapters, he examines the response of workers to the impact of closures and displacement, the aesthetics of the new post-industrial order, and the underlying logic and ambition of those firms that led the drive to "deindustrialize." This is largely preliminary, however, to the book's final two chapters, which analyze, respectively, the efforts of American and Canadian workers and their trade unions to resist and fight back. By the late 1960s, High contends, "American nationalism had been tarnished by the Vietnam War and McCarthyism, making it unattractive as a symbolic weapon to fight plant shutdowns" (133). Instead, unions appealed to the ideal of community in their struggle to build wider support against the closures. It was a policy that ultimately failed, however, for "community identity acted to confirm state and regional difference and did little to dampen the hyper-competitive atmosphere that existed among the fifty states within the breadth of America" (164).

In Canada, the situation was both similar and different. Here unions and workers appealed to the broader community of nation, portraying their plight as part of a national struggle against the post-war rise in foreign (i.e., American) ownership, investment, and control. Accordingly, Canadian trade unionists "literally wrapped themselves in the flag to defy foreign-owned companies that wished to abandon workers with little or no compensation" (191). Plant shutdowns continued, certainly, but much so than in the U.S. Governments in Canada responded to political pressure and intervened to slow down, if not reverse, the process.

Within its own frame of reference, *Industrial Sunset* is an excellent book. It joins the like of Ruth Milkman's *Farewell to the Factory* and David Sobel and Susan Meurer's *Working at Inglis* as a crucial look at the death of industrial America in the 1970s. High overcomes the not inconsiderable obstacle of being denied access to official records of all the major corporations he approached, making intelligent and often ingenious use of other archival and published material. His insights on contemporary pop culture's response to deindustrialization are especially sharp, while his own interviews with victims of plant closures are timely reminders of the ultimate human cost of corporate decisions.

Any reservations I do have about this book have to do with its frame of reference itself. In building his thesis on the potential of economic nationalism, High acknowledges, in passing, the contemporary Marxist critique that "plant closings and job losses were part of a worldwide trend in capitalism that had little to do with nationality," but does not pursue this line of thought (179). Yet surely it is crucial, for if North American corporate bosses were making decisions about plant relocation or closure in response to transnational considerations, then would any amount of community-based protest have been effective in the long run?

It is not without significance that High's study ends with the recession of 1984, four years prior to the U.S.–Canada Free