

Penfold, Steve. *The Donut: A Canadian History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008. Pp. 256. Illustrations, photographs, notes, index. ISBN: 978-0-8020-9797-2; Paper: 978-0-8020-9545-9

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Volume 37, numéro 2, printemps 2009

Downtowns, Past and Present

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/029582ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/029582ar>

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Éditeur(s)

Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine

ISSN

0703-0428 (imprimé)

1918-5138 (numérique)

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Citer ce compte rendu

Neilson, L. C. (2009). Compte rendu de [Penfold, Steve. *The Donut: A Canadian History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008. Pp. 256. Illustrations, photographs, notes, index. ISBN: 978-0-8020-9797-2; Paper: 978-0-8020-9545-9]. *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 37(2), 67–68. <https://doi.org/10.7202/029582ar>

both workers and consumers, was often understood in sexual terms by a cast of medical and legal authorities. Unchaperoned on city streets, girls engaged in a host of behaviours that parents, guardians and other adults disapproved of and frequently labelled immoral. As a result, the body and sexuality also played key roles in understanding both female delinquency and girls' individual cases. In addition to the multifaceted relationship between modern girls and the city that brought 'delinquents' to the attention of the court, Myers also discusses other issues of interest to urban historians including the geography and architecture of domesticity in two Montreal reformatories.

Lastly, Myers teases out some of the experiences of girls labelled delinquents and manages to illuminate some aspects of their lives, despite the methodological limitations of reading case files. These stories are often heartbreaking and, while the girls themselves remain elusive historical characters, Myers' sensitivity to reading these case files for the possibility of recovering aspects of their experience adds an important dimension to the book. In chapter 6, for example, Myers investigates the MJDC's, female probation officers', and medical experts' readings of the sexual histories of 'sex delinquents,' and delineates moments of agency where girls advocated for themselves in a system that sometimes saw them paradoxically as both defenceless and the problem. In regard to the sexual histories, Myers finds that the stories varied from romance narratives, to tales of seduction, to horror stories of rape and incest, but that in telling their histories, the girls sometimes found ways to defend and explain their 'delinquent' behaviour. As Myers argues however, class and gender structures as well as the court's desire to uphold patriarchal familial control meant that girls' often precarious family position was downplayed in favour of punishing "errant female sexuality" (202).

This is an excellent book. Myers has managed to tell an immensely complex tale in an engaging way. For this reason and others, the book will appeal to urban historians in the Canadian field and beyond as well as to cultural, social, and women's historians.

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**Penfold, Steve. *The Donut: A Canadian History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008. Pp. 256. Illustrations, photographs, notes, index. ISBN: 978-0-8020-9797-2; Paper: 978-0-8020-9545-9.**

This review begins with a warning: reading this book will make you hunger for a donut. And not just any donut, but those gloriously crunchy, deep fried, cinnamon-sugar coated 'old-fashioned' donuts associated with grandma's home cooking in the past and carnival donut wagons today. Not to worry; the craving recedes by Chapter 3.

In *The Donut*, Steve Penfold details the history of one of contemporary Canada's most cherished cultural icons. He weaves

the story of the donut's rise to fast food fame and fortune with an in-depth exploration of the social, cultural and economic trends which influenced donut production and consumption over the last half century in Canada. The author makes extensive use of primary evidence collected through interviews with donut shop franchisees and patrons and secondary source material gleaned from newspaper clippings, industry reports, and company promotional materials.

The history of the donut is, at least for a time, part of the story of the city: the product of industrialization and standardization processes, increasing urbanization, our infatuation with car culture, and the desire for social affiliation and 'time out' space. Early donut shops located on busy thoroughfares and in suburban strip malls, taking advantage of features of mass transportation such as bus and subway stops, and characteristics of industrialized labour such as shift workers seeking a place to decompress before heading home or truck drivers looking for a 'break along the way.' More recently, as the donut and coffee habit took hold among consumers, the donut shop has reached out into rural Canada as the small town proved itself capable of financially supporting a donut franchise.

Although the book as a whole is well-structured, the most interesting chapters are 2 to 4. In Chapter 2, Penfold relates the history of the coffee and donut shop in Canada. This discussion is nicely contextualized in terms of, first, the influence of the automobile and 'convenience culture' on the urban landscape and consumption practices, and, second, other 'drive-in' businesses of the time. For those residents of central Canada of an age to remember the era, the author's description rings true, but who of us can recall that ice cream, fried chicken, and hamburger joints vastly outnumbered the lowly donut shop in the so recent past? Penfold makes effective use of industry and government statistics to illustrate the growth of the industry from a position of relative insignificance to one where today in Canada Tim Horton franchises out number McDonald's franchises.

A discussion of the franchise as a business form takes place in Chapter 3. Here, the author paints a nuanced and well-informed picture of the tension inherent in the franchisee's position—in need of the franchisor's business expertise but resisting the control of 'head office.' The author identifies the appeal of the franchise to immigrants and blue collar workers desirous of an entrepreneurial opportunity which they hoped would lead to financial independence and upward social mobility. He takes care to note also the gendered division of labour that so often occurred. As someone familiar with the management issues of donut franchise operation throughout the 1980s, I felt the author's discussion of the 'trouble with bakers,' that is, of attracting and retaining semi-skilled labour, was only too accurate.

Chapter 4 moves closer to contemporary times, as the author discusses the national expansion of the donut chains. The donut industry appears 'recession proof' as it weathers the difficult economic times of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Key to the donut shop's expansion during the 1990s was

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management's recognition and at least partial accommodation of regional taste preferences. The author details the rise of Tim Horton's to donut 'domination' through strategic store and menu redesign and the eventual adoption of the drive-through window. 'Timmy's' junkies will have already read co-founder Ron Joyce's autobiographical work, *Always Fresh*, which provides much of the foundation for this chapter. For the rest of us, there is enough detailed analysis from an insider perspective here to sate our appetite.

Chapters 1 and 5, while containing some interesting theoretical discussion, especially with respect to the structure/agency debate, are unfortunately burdened by the author's ideological commitments which apparently necessitate a fair amount of 'business bashing.' The author's respect for and obvious fondness toward his informants as individual entrepreneurs and business people is clear. Unfortunately, he does not extend this respect toward entrepreneurs or business people in the more abstract plural. The author's tone is not only wearisome but also problematic, cutting off some useful avenues of inquiry. Although Penfold made use of the baking industry and marketing practitioner literature in his research, he shied away from an engagement with the academic marketing literature with the result that his discussion suffers from a lack of informed

analysis. In Chapter 2 the author discusses the symbolic nature of consumption—a theme in marketing and consumer research since the late 1950s. His discussion of the advertising appeals used by Tim Horton's (Chapter 5) and restructuring of the physical space or 'servicescape' of donut shops (Chapter 4) would have benefited from the theoretical insights to be gleaned from the marketing and consumer research of the last three decades or more.

To be fair, Penfold is not alone in his failure to bridge the academic divide between business historians working in history departments and those of us who ply our trade within business schools. And so this review ends with a call for rapprochement—there is much we can learn from each other. This book would be appropriate for History majors studying the history of business in Canada or urban planning students interested in elements of our changing urban environment. It would also make fascinating reading for undergraduate 'Marketing and Society' courses or business school Ph.D. courses with a focus on the history of marketing.

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