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From Martin Luther King's articulation of black bodies as objects of beauty to Jay Z's and Kanye West's rap music, Pinn introduces the cerebral moments of the materialization of racial, religious, and cultural products among African-American communities. However, Pinn is still unable to address how his schema of humanism can undermine Oriental, colonial, and imperial narratives of humanism that amplify the plights of racialized subjects of Muslims' hue.

Amin Mansouri
University of British Columbia

Pastrami on Rye: An Overstuffed History of the Jewish Deli

Ted Merwin. New York/London: New York University Press, 2015.
256 p. \$26.95 CND (Paperback).

In his second published monograph, professor and journalist Ted Merwin uses interviews, archives, and popular representations to tell the history of the Jewish deli in America. Calling on food studies and an eclectic mix of sociological theory, he builds a narrative in which the deli starts as a "third place," but becomes a kind of "lieux de memoire": from a space of civic engagement and mutual support, it grows into a site bound up with nostalgic and un-nuanced readings of the past. Both modes feed into the formation of Jewish identity, yet the role they play in its negotiation is substantially different. Merwin organizes his material in four meaty chapters, sandwiched between a thick introduction and conclusion.

Merwin has fun with etymology in chapter one, "According to the Customer's Desire." The Latin "delicates," he tells us, means "dainty, alluring, and voluptuous;" as "pure delicates," it exclaims of the "delicate boy." Only in the Renaissance does "delicatessen" become attached to food, while the first English use appears as late as the 1880's. The original delicatessens of Europe were purveyors of fine foods, including the spiced and cured meats of the charcuterie. In this form the delicatesses were brought to America in the mid-nineteenth century, with the wave of central European immigrants. As sit-down eateries, the Jewish delis of New York grew out of kosher butcher shops, where sales of prepared foods led to the introduc-

tion of countertops on which to consume them. Katz, the first "true" Jewish deli in America, opened in 1888. Yet, the impact of these delis was limited among first generation immigrants, for whom lack of money and the traditional importance ascribed to women's domestic food preparation served as limiting factors. Only amongst the second generation would the deli take center stage in Jewish community life.

In chapter two, "From a Sandwich to a National Institution," Merwin portrays the deli in the interwar period. This is the era of Merwin's second generation Jews, for whom the deli became a kind of secular temple and "crucial gathering space" (54). Amidst the monumental pickle jars and overstuffed sandwiches, lower-middle class Jews indexed their prosperity and found a mirror for their ambitions. Amongst Jewish women, the deli was a well-used resource. The ability to take-out full complement meals meant the "deli wife" could put in a long day's work and still have dinner on the table. In the ongoing romance between Jews and popular culture, movies and musicals pondered and parodied the increasingly iconic eateries. Young Jews reciprocated by sneaking sandwiches into Saturday matinees, choosing to worship at cinemas rather than synagogues.

As WWII set in, American Jews found their access to the deli's meat-based fare curtailed. As Merwin describes in his third chapter, "Send a Salami," with 60% of the national meat supply reserved by the government, "share the meat" appeals gave way to rationing in 1943 (92-3). By the post-war period, American Jews were increasingly leaving New York for places like Los Angeles and the eastern corridor running down to Miami. Sandwiches also spread to the Catskills, as Jews took advantage of their growing recreational time. While fathers smuggled deli into their mountainside "kochaleins," astronaut John Young smuggled one onto the 1965 Gemini flight.

Chapter four, "Miss Hebrew National Salami," traces the effects of suburbanization and the renewed American interest in religion on the place of the deli in Jewish life. Rising crime in New York through the 60's and 70's led to a Jewish exodus to the growing suburbs. In this period, Jews increasingly distanced themselves from their ethnic origins. Mid-century religious renewal in America compounded this shift in identity. Marquee suburban synagogues took the place of marquee urban delis in the social life and networks of the community. For those still longing for deli fare, freeze dried and vacuum packed version could be picked up at the supermarket. Fewer did want deli, opting instead for the newly popular "healthy" diet, with its

focus on reducing meat consumption. This third generation of American Jews met at Chinese restaurants, and happily affirmed the commodification of Jewish food. Traditional delis and kosher meat suppliers were left turning to non-Jewish consumers to preserve their flagging market shares.

The title has been well received and widely reviewed, and could no doubt find a place in the right curriculum. That said, it is certainly a work aimed at a popular audience, and Merwin's more scholarly articles do a more satisfying job of articulating the crux of his thesis. There is no attempt here at a gendered reading, and women are tacked on as an afterthought in a way that will wear on the concerned academic. Simplification of central versus eastern European origin, and of the dating of "second" and "third" generation, is also in force. Issues of this kind aside, the work is thoroughly entertaining and Merwin is an easy author to grab a nosh with.

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