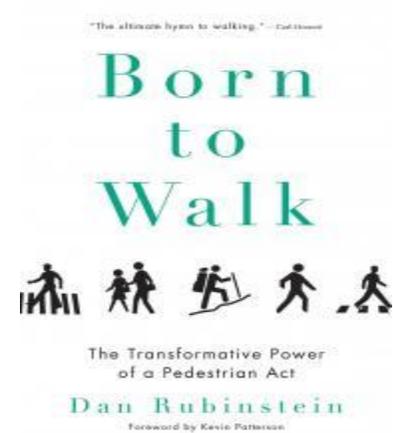


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Spotlight on Books:

Born to Walk: The Transformative Power of a Pedestrian Walk by Dan Rubinstein

Can Hippocrates be wrong in his belief that “*Walking is the Best Medicine*”? Ottawa journalist Dan Rubinstein thinks not and indeed considers walking the foundation for healthy lives on a variety of levels including combatting obesity, anxiety, alienation and even climate change.



In *Born to Walk* Dan Rubinstein looks at walking from multiple perspectives and his magazine reportage style is very effective in ensuring readers are actively engaged. He introduces us to a cast of walkers all of whom are passionate about this seemingly simple activity. A number of the places that Rubinstein visits (North Philadelphia, Glasgow plus reserves in Quebec) are facing serious socio-economic and/or health challenges and see walking as a way to work towards positive change.

The author of *Born to Walk* draws on science to illustrate how perilous is society’s current overuse of the automobile at the expense of walking and shares such alarming facts as that inactive adults who sit much of the day have a 147% greater risk of heart attack or stroke than do active adults. Rubinstein informs us as well of another sobering fact - the average Canadian adult spends 50 to 70 percent of their daily lives sitting and roughly thirty percent sleeping.

Fascinating as well is the author’s thesis around the significance of where we walk and the spotlight he shines on the imperative of ensuring our cities are walkable. Rubinstein believes that walking is poised for a comeback and he cites the way urban planner Jane Jacobs’ ideas, once considered radical, are now being embraced by many large cities and encourages his readership to check out the walkability of the cities in which they reside. (www.walkscore.com) Criteria include *was it easy to walk safely* and *did drivers behave well?*

Born to Walk is a passionate and beautifully written book that is essentially a call to action. Rubinstein urges us to make this lovely activity part of our daily rhythms rather than something we go out of our way to do, encouraging his readers by means of inspirational quotes including this one by Robert Walser from his book *The Walk* – “*Walk, I definitely must, to invigorate myself and maintain contact with the living world ...*” Check out this book or another on the subject currently available from Yellowknife Public Library’s *Joy of Walking* display.

- Review prepared by Deborah Bruser.

