

Making the Australian Male: Middle-Class Masculinity 1870–1920. By Martin Crotty. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001. 301 pp. Aus. price: \$38.45. ISBN 0-522-84956-3.

ON THE COVER of *Making the Australian Male* is a picture of Max, the senior prefect and cricketing hero of Lillian Pyke's 1916 public boys' school novel, *Max the Sport*. Wearing his school blazer and cap, cricket bat under arm, Max stands tall and stares off into the distance. At his side, a smaller boy gazes up at Max. Despite the fact that his side-kick has his hands on Max's shoulder, there is no sense that our hero is aware of his presence. The illustration is reminiscent of a still from Rudall Hayward's 1930s movie, *On the Friendly Road*, reproduced in Jock Phillips's, *A Man's Country*. In that photograph the male hero stares off into the distance as his wife clasps him. He is as unaware of her, as Max is of his cricketing friend. What is it about Antipodean men and the desire to stare stoically ahead?

Reading Martin Crotty's *Making the Australian Male* provides some insightful answers to that question. Crotty's focus, like Phillips's, is on the production of the masculine ideal rather than the lived experiences of boys and men. Australian historians have written about larrikins, diggers and bushmen, but how middle-class masculine ideals were defined and disseminated has received little attention until now. Crotty's book is a welcome addition to the literature on the history of masculinities. Based on an impressive range of primary research — unlike so many histories supposedly about Australia, he actually writes about what happened in more than one state — he offers a compelling discussion of the ways masculine ideals changed over the period. In the 1870s, religion and the calming influences of femininity heavily influenced hegemonic masculinity. By the time of the Great War, sport, militarism and nationalism were defining forces in middle-class Australian manliness.

In order to show this change, explain why it came about, and discuss its consequences, Crotty explores three main areas where middle-class masculinity was constructed and contested. First are private secondary schools, where men trained in the English public school tradition of educated boys. The rise of prefects, school uniforms, cadets and sports teams is the focus here. Crotty is prepared to acknowledge that this sporty model did not go unchallenged. Indeed, throughout the book he does not shy away from dissenting views. But he argues that although some challenged the rise of athleticism, it survived their critique in large part because it redirected itself into national defence and a concern with military preparedness. This section of the book has strong parallels with the New Zealand work of Phillips and Greg Ryan. It is a pity that Crotty seems unaware of any New Zealand work on masculinity, as some useful parallels could have been drawn here.

Next are two chapters on literature. In the first, 20 stories that featured the public school boy as a manly figure are examined. Written between 1875 and the end of World War I, each offered an Australian spin on the British genre, with the bush, lean, muscular figures and school sports featuring prominently. In some, such as *Max the Sport*, the schoolboy grew up to become a military hero, prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice. In the second, boys' adventure stories set in Australia are examined. Both chapters are fascinating, and point to a neglected area in the writing of gender in New Zealand. We also need to explore how adults wrote for children, what ideals they stressed, and how these changed over time.

The final section of *Making the Australian Male* looks at youth organizations, ranging from boy-rescue societies like the Try Society (encouraging working-class boys to try harder to become like their middle-class counterparts) to the Boy Scouts. The nineteenth-

century rescue societies aimed to dilute the masculinity of larrikins, while twentieth-century organizations like the Scouts tried to suppress feminine influences on all boys. The public school model of masculinity lay at the heart of the Scouts. Now all boys could learn the middle-class ideals, although the working-class lads were taught to follow their middle-class betters.

Max the Sport was too busy being his school's champion athlete and senior prefect to be a Scout. He also had a war to fight and a Victoria Cross to win. No wonder he stared into the distance. Even as a young man, he knew that being the ideal Aussie bloke was a big ask. Thanks to Martin Crotty's book, the rest of us can now also learn why boys like Max were written into the history of Australia.

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On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849–1871. By Adele Perry. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Buffalo, London, 2001. 286 pp. Canadian price: \$24.95. ISBN 0-802-08336-6.

INFLUENCED by feminist, Marxist, postcolonial, and poststructural theories, Adele Perry reveals the mid-nineteenth century history of a part of the Pacific North-West that she designates as located at 'the edge of Empire'. The terminology is part of her important intervention to review Canadian history as colonial history — something that is not emphasized in recent Canadian historiography. The boundaries of the study are defined by 'a specific moment in state formation', the year 1849, when British Columbia became a colony of the British Empire, until it entered Canadian Confederation in 1871.

On the Edge of Empire has a clever overarching structure that focuses upon contemporary critiques of the two major groups of inhabitants of the time: indigenous peoples and the invading European white settlers. The discourses for these groups are analysed to reveal the attempts by various white colonizers to reconstruct British Columbia as a white society. The study is infused with the concerns of gender and race analysis, revisiting established themes in women's history such as assisted female migration, and also intervening in the newer areas of the influences of mixed-race relationships, miscegenation, homosocial culture, and women and imperialism.

The book has a forthright and serious tone; in one sweep, revising British Columbian history and sketching out an alternative. There are some quirky theoretical interventions. 'Deracinated' white men who married First Nations' women and the 'nuclear' family appear. In an interesting, but tenuous connection, after Foucault's study of surveillance, a map of a rectangular female barracks is compared to a panopticon.

Amidst the use of discourses, doses of local lore are also welcome. Particularly enjoyable are the professional dancers known as 'hurdy-gurdies', cast by Perry as 'icons of regional identity', performing the energetic 'mazy dance' to the tune of a fiddle. The 'bride ships' of 1862 and 1863, bringing single white women settlers to British Columbia, also appear. The Norwegian using the British flag as a tea towel, and the excellent use of photographs, sketches and newspaper excerpts also contribute to a thoroughly and diversely researched book.

The time-period, colonizing power, and theories of settlement all bear resemblance to another edge of empire, New Zealand. The tales of homosocial cultural behaviour in British Columbia are familiar, with Perry making light reference to Jock Phillips's path-