USE OF THESES

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'man or the maddened beast?'
male sexuality and coming of age in australia,
1918–1938

eleanor ruth cohen
december, 1999

a thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The Australian National University.
I declare this work to be my own except where otherwise stated.

Eleanor R. Cohen
I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve (or save) the world and a desire to enjoy (or savour) the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.

E.B. WHITE

Mine is the only name on the cover of this work and yet many others should be acknowledged for having contributed to its completion. The presence of office-mates Cath, Catriona, and Kirsten prevented me from spending too much time staring out the window and I thank them for listening, questioning, and discussing innumerable thesis and non-thesis related issues with me. The collective variously known as the Women and History Reading Group, the History and Theory Reading Group, and/or the Feminist History Reading Group provided a warm introduction to Canberra, and to many of the issues with which I still grapple. The faculty and staff of the Centre for Women's Studies—Rosanne, Fiona, Rose, Liz, Jacky, Rose-Mary, Jindy, and Helen—provided generous intellect and resources, not to mention energy sustaining home-baked goodies! All my fellow students in the Graduate Program for Feminist and Cultural Studies seemed to have more interesting projects than my own and I thank them for denying it, and also for making me want to make my own work at least as interesting as theirs.

A special thank you is owed to Abi Groves, who encouraged me to take an opportunity which changed my entire non-thesis life and to Melinda Mawson who read a draft of this thesis for me without hesitation.

Ann Curthoys, Nicholas Brown, John Docker, and Sarah Lloyd scrutinised various portions of this work thoroughly and constructively. Excellent suggestions and editorial advice regarding segments of chapter 4 came from Elizabeth Graham and two anonymous readers from Australian Historical Studies. I hope that I applied their suggestions well enough throughout as to render that contribution inconspicuous.

One of the first things I was told on my arrival was to ensure that I had a life outside the academy. Thanks to community radio 2XX—staff, volunteers, listeners—and to friends for providing the necessary diversions. Jill Matthews, who not only gave me that sage advice but whose enthusiasm and belief in my ability to produce this work frequently eclipsed my own, deserves all the praise and thanks I could ever muster.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my family and to John-Paul Baker, whose encouragement has travelled oceans and whose absence has made the fingers type faster.
This thesis examines the historical and cultural construction of a process which is often credited as being beyond both body and culture. 'Coming of age', making the transition to adulthood is something we all do if we live long enough and yet the experience is not only politically contested—if one has not yet come of age does he have rights? what are our responsibilities once we pass that mark? at what point do we forgo the freedom of childhood for the responsibility of adulthood?—but historically protean. In this thesis I will be examining a range of historical evidence of cultural conversation, declaration, diagnosis and representation which, over a twenty year time period from 1918 to 1938, brought these and other questions about the getting of manhood into sharp focus.

Use of the masculine pronoun is intentional for it is the male experience of coming of age which was discursively linked to the most pressing cultural anxieties of the day. The male body was implicated in degeneration of the white race in Australia, in the decadence of modern culture, in the respectability of women, and future success of the nation culturally and politically in ways it had not been before World War One. Masculinity, the male body and sexuality were sites upon which the male subject was defined. The quality of Australian manhood was drawn into these discursive milieux by experts and professionals who defined 'man' in relation to woman and, more importantly here, to boy. The ways in which the distinction between boy and man was drawn through expert and popular knowledge in the inter-war years defined not only what it meant to be one or the other of those things, but also what it meant to be the strange, transitory creature who marked the division between the two. Adolescence, and the process of coming of age which has since become sui generis contributed substantially to understandings of bodies, subjectivities and masculinities.

Drawing upon Foucault's formulation of genealogy and the application of that theoretical standpoint by subsequent historians in the fields of sexuality and youth studies, this thesis considers a range of discourse—medical, legal, representational—that turned its attentions to the body and character of the adolescent male in the inter-war years. In doing so, these forms of discourse generated ways of knowing the corporeal self and, through a formulation of unique and volatile sexuality, the social form of that self.
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introduction

For one brief week in March of 1922 the letters page of Sydney's *Sun* newspaper contained a debate not about boardrooms or banks but of bodies. The end of another season at the beach was nearing and, on March 11, a *Sun* reader wrote to the paper to express her dismay at what she had witnessed that Summer on the strand. Men—slouching, stooped, and droopy-shouldered—inhabited Sydney's beaches. They presented, scoffed the author, an example of physicality inferior than that of the young girls and women they accompanied. The letter ended with a lament that "the only decent male stock are to be found in football and surf clubs and dead soldiers".1 Two days later a vehement response appeared: "When I want to see a fine physique I know where I can always find it—on the beaches and in the superb and beautiful development of our young men"2, proclaimed the defender of Australian masculinity. Other *Sun* readers joined in the argument over the week opining variously that seaside resort going males were necessarily smaller due to their employment as "brain workers", that men were indeed unfit, due to urbanisation and climate, and that Australian men were charmless scrawny compared to their female counterparts.3

The written exchange of late Summer *Sun* readers may be trivial and light-hearted but it aptly (albeit on an insignificant scale) demonstrates a public attention to the male body, and a concern that the male physique was not accurately, or best, embodying the nation and its potential. The concern was not new. In the historical study of normative masculinity, crises abound. The late Victorian era, the inter-war years, post World War Two; each are studied, discussed, and presented as historical moments of masculinity in crisis. Gail Bederman, in her *Manliness and Civilisation*, suggests more accurately that these historical moments are ones in which the gender process is especially active.4 Men never lost confidence, Bederman argues, that male genital anatomy and a male identity were linked both to each other and to particular arrangements of power and authority. They may have been uncertain as to how they were related, or if as individuals they could bring the arrangements together, but they did not lose confidence that their sexual anatomy was somehow entangled with a powerful subjectivity.

Anxieties about manliness and masculinity at various historical moments represent not the blow of external pressure to a fixed essence (as would constitute a

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1 *The Sun*, March 11, 1922, p. 4.
crisis) but instead make visible the process of contestation and transformation on which masculinity relies and is achieved. To remove masculinity from a linear historical narrative of stasis and crisis, as Bederman and many other historians of masculinity over the last decade have been doing is to remove masculine subjectivity from the realm of the natural and bring it into the historical. The successful achievement of manliness, manhood, or masculinity is wholly dependent on the way in which fluctuating strands of body, identity, and authority are linked at any particular historical moment.

The unHINGING of masculinity and male sexuality from their essentialist framework is the starting, and guiding, point of this thesis. Histories of masculinity and sexuality (a review of which I will be presenting more thoroughly in the first chapter) have devoted much attention to the particular sexual debates in which the Victorians and Edwardians were engaged. These were not the only debates occurring at the time in relation to proper use of the sexual self, but they are the most central to my concern. Social organisation of the sexual by feminists and social reformers is not the only thread in the fabric of sexual history, but it is one that was key in weaving together certain threads of youth, identity, and masculinity. The historiography of masculinity shows a tendency towards the social understanding of the male body; the history of social reform tended more and more in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries toward a utilisation of sexuality, particularly male sexuality. It is the point at which these histories weave together the social fabric that is central to this work. For this reason, it is the reformist, social utilisation aspect of sexual history and the history of masculinity that will be the joining thread between different social and discursive fabrics here.

Among the assumptions challenged by sexual reformists in this era was the equation of ignorance with innocence. Feminists and social reformers of all political stripes insisted that sex be held to a ‘doctrine of no secrets’ as protection against its overwhelming morbidity, arguing, in a strange historical foreshadowing, that silence equals death. In seeking the kind of sexual control that would make brothels unnecessary and bedrooms safe, Victorian and Edwardian reformers insisted that men behave as gentlemen precisely because they understood them to be primitive animals. Sexual information stressed the importance of continence, demanded semen retention and obsessed over masturbation. Although the degree to which these obsessions dominated the culture has recently been contested, it cannot be denied that

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considerable cultural purchase was given to the notion that sexual release, and particularly the fruits of male sexual release, was a dangerous proposition. Implicit here is the idea that male sexuality is naturally inclined to animalistic expression and bodily indulgence. Containment of the bestial, and the achievement of a superior culture was achievable through the enlistment of self-discipline, ability to reason, moral temperance and autonomy that characterised the manly man and made him worthy of beach going and nation bearing.

In most things sexual, the moderns made proud claims of having emancipated themselves from the oppressive sexual rules and etiquette of the Victorian era. In the nuance of sexuality that is most central to this thesis, this claim was particularly bold. The nuance in the weaving of sexuality central to this work is the positioning sexuality within a public, scrutable, and classifiable use of the individual sexual body for a socially beneficial purpose. To that aim, inter-war ‘expert’-authored advice texts by the score celebrated sexual fulfilment and the pleasures to be found in the body. A number of historians have suggested that social beliefs regarding sexuality in the 1920s represent a self conscious attempt to move beyond Victorian moralism. As Lesley Hall has convincingly argued, however, the main difference in the pleasure advocacy of the inter-war years was that it shifted substantial emphasis from continence from sexual intercourse to control of the male body within the sex act. Moral manhood was no longer measured by the absolute mastery of impulses and excesses, but by the deference, the sublimation, and the stop-gap controls one applied until the pleasures of the flesh could be ‘safely’ experienced, and the management of pleasures once one reached such a state of safe sexuality. This new found ‘freedom’, however, extended only to the edges of the conjugal bed. Sex for singles, and particularly young single people, remained a perilous act with potentially dire consequences. It is these modern men-to-be, these inheritors of modern sexual emancipation who drew the attention during the inter-war years of a range of experts and observers keen to define parameters and understandings of masculinity and sexuality within a framework of socially productive sexuality. It is the discursive fabric created to cover this subjective

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7 There is a huge body of work dedicated to the Victorian sexual debate beginning with G.J. Barker Benfield’s Horrors of the Half-Known Life: Male Attitudes Towards Women and Sexuality in Nineteenth Century America, Harper & Row, London, 1976, who coined the term ‘spermatic economy’ and more recently with works such as Michael Mason, The Making of Victorian Sexuality, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994, which challenges such a formulation.


9 Hall, Hidden Anxieties, p. 71.
gap between boyhood and manhood that this thesis will rend and unravel from its ahistoric frame.

Adolescence, and its termination in ‘coming of age’, is intrinsically a process of the body, largely defined in contemporary terms by the physiological maturation process that characterises it as a distinct stage of life. Yet it is also a cultural process and one during which the body bears most heavily “fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of the culture.”

For those past it, adolescence occupies a powerful cultural and ideological category. Crimes, sex, suicides, accomplishments, and failures of adolescents occupy a thoroughly othered cultural and legal space, a specific realm both strange and familiar to the adults who construct it. Historian Christine Griffin identifies adolescence as the focus of adult “fear and loathing, of voyeurism and longing”.

Pierre Bourdieu’s 1977 work of anthropological theory, Outline of a Theory of Practice, speaks to this discursive mystification of the body in reference to a specific field study but also in developing a theory of symbolic power applicable to any cultural study. Bourdieu’s comments on the mnemonic power of the body, in particular, bear upon the singular and tumultuous body of the adolescent:

According to the mnemonic power of the body, in particular, bear upon the singular and tumultuous body of the adolescent:

[Pr]inciples embodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, and hence cannot be touched by voluntary, deliberative transformation, cannot even be made explicit; nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and, therefore, more precious than the values given body, made body ... by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy.

The body in question in this study is not only adolescent, but male. This focus is both strategic (emerging from a desire to make men visible as gendered subjects) and, I believe, necessary. It is vital to distinguish the type of discourses that are the subject of this thesis according to the sex they address because of the ways in which the term adolescent, in both an historical and contemporary context, is already gendered. Adolescence has been seen as a cross-roads, not only on the journey to maturity but on the road to sexual maturity. As such it has been presented as crucial to the development of one’s sexual and gender identity. Not only does one become an adult through adolescence but one is also initiated more pointedly into responsible, productive manhood.

This is not to suggest that historical discourses of adolescence ignored or excluded females. It would be disingenuous to argue that concern about adolescence/its did not include a considerable amount of worry over the young

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12 Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice, p. 94. Emphasis in original.
wayward female, and an exercise in bad faith not to acknowledge that. I am, however, going to suggest that the ways in which adolescent experiences were culturally constructed (and dissected) were historically contingent on the sex of the adolescent. Indeed, to a large extent they still are. For when we talk about ‘youth’ crime problems, or suicides, youth is coded male, not exclusively, but convincingly. Recent studies of the increasing disparity in school performance between pubescent and post-pubescent boys and girls also demonstrates that sex is viewed as a primary intervening characteristic in crucial socially defined benchmarks of adolescent achievement. Young female bodies are under no more or less but simply a different type of social scrutiny from the bodies of young men, a circumstance that I will argue arose at the genesis of adolescent discourse in the inter-war years.

If society “haunts the body's sexuality”, and I would agree with Godelier that it does, then the adolescent in this century has been plagued by a poltergeist which infiltrates every aspect of our lives both within and beyond our ‘coming of age’.13 As Thomas Laqueur notes, however, the body’s sexuality also haunts society.14 It is a corporeal reminder of a culture’s ambitions and anxieties, and it makes flesh these conflicts. We remember the awkward or delightful sexual firsts of adolescence because they are the induction of our flesh into a new world, both of the flesh and of our culture, and each haunts the other. The body's sexuality, bearing the burden of the culture, is flesh around which social structure can be organised. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, whose excellent work deconstructing the heterosexual/homosexual binary demonstrates this corporeal-cultural interaction abundantly, also suggests situating the body centrally in historical and cultural analysis. Sedgwick presents a way of approaching the cultural terrain of normative definitions, and the historical contiguities which hold them aloft:

The master terms of a particular historical moment will be those that are so situated as to entangle most inextricably and at the same time most differentially the filaments of other important definitional nexuses ... through its ineffaceable marking particularly of the categories secrecy/disclosure, knowledge/ignorance, private/public ... innocence/initiation, natural/artificial ... same/different, active/passive ...15

Sedgwick applies this definition to the hetero/homosexual binary which largely defines how we live. I will be arguing that, in this century, youth has moved into a similar definitional position (although not a similar political one by any means)

as a master term of our culture, entangling, as well as the above, discursive nexus such as freedom/responsibility, save/spend, and beast/man. And so this thesis turns to the moderns in an attempt to, in Foucault's words, "identify the accidents, the minute deviations ... the reversals ... the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that ... have value for us".  

To return to the beach debate of the Sydney Sun, it is clear that contributors to the argument identified the male body as a site of nationhood, citing the body of the male beach-goer as Australia made flesh—either vigorous or degenerate as a body/nation. The debate may constitute historical minutiae but in the genealogical method presented by Foucault in his influential essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" and his subsequent research monographs Discipline and Punish and The History of Sexuality it is these micro-particulars which are exhaustive of the subject matter of history. Foucault's genealogy is primarily a framework of intellectual inquiry that informs the historian rather than determining what forms of research and which documents and historical texts to investigate. Genealogy suggests that social practices are thoroughly historical and that their actual workings are masked from their participants who see their behaviour as regulated by timeless precepts and as ongoing discernment of truth and acquisition of knowledge. Against this backdrop, historical practices, patched together by the needle of expert or professional discourse manufacture their own subjects and "entrench themselves as self-serving traditions with no greater object than survival."  

I will be following this genealogical method insofar as its aim is to expose a body imprinted by history. These traces on the body are the threads of discourse, expert talk, and idioms of science which establish verifiable truths and thereby shape subjectivity, not only a subject of a particular type but a subject believing that it is a substantial, autonomous unity. My subject matter in this genealogical inquiry is the Australian adolescent male at the historical moment in which he became such. Of course, identification of the specific moments before and after which certain young men were conceived of as adolescents, rather than workers, school goers, or apprentices, is disingenuous if not impossible. Discursive knowledge production does not work to a strict chronological schedule. There is no attempt here to suggest that at a particular historical moment a new subject position was spontaneously thrust into the sphere of the social. My choice of the years 1918 and 1938 as the chronological boundaries of this project is somewhat arbitrary and acts more as a guideline than cut

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off date. I will not be approaching the inter-war years as a discrete, consistent, and unitary historical moment. Instead, I hope to demonstrate the opposite; that it was a period of discursive contestation and contradiction within and among various professional and semi-professional disciplines concerned with the adolescent problem. By the end of the period of this study, however, some consensus had been achieved as to what constituted an adolescent and what this meant to contemporary Australian culture.

There is only one sense in which the period of this study is discrete. Between these two historical boundaries, 1918 and 1938, vast numbers of Australian men who had been away fighting wars returned, only to depart again shortly after. The inter-war years, in this sense, was a time of men; of their presence, their war-battered bodies and minds, their profound negotiation with a culture (and a nation) which had altered in their absence. Joanna Bourke (whose work on male bodies and war in Britain I will cite in the first part of this thesis) attests that the return of men to civil society affected not only the men who fought: “A generation of men who had been too young to be actively engaged in military services grew up in a world in which aspects of ‘being a man’ were believed to be threatened, and their aesthetics of the body reflected this perception.” 18 It is this ‘rising generation’ who will be the focus of this discursive investigation.

The post-structuralist turn of historians toward investigating and interrogating discourse production has informed my work not only theoretically but has steered my research toward the topical locations which will form the chapters of this thesis. To return to Foucault momentarily, in The History of Sexuality, vol. 1 Foucault argues that the proliferation of sexual discourses since the eighteenth century established various points of “implantation” for sex. This implantation was promoted by the interrelations of several discursive axes. The first of these is the sciences, particularly medicine with its attention to nervous disorders, onanism, and the aetiology of sexual perversion and mental illness. A second axis Foucault identifies as having emerged at the end of the last century comprises regulatory and pedagogical bodies—criminal justice, social welfare, and education—which “radiated discourses aimed at sex, intensifying people’s awareness of it as a context of danger and this in turn created a further incentive to talk about it” 19. A third centre of discourse production, according to Foucault, comprised social control mechanisms that undertook to, “protect, separate, and forewarn, signalling perils everywhere, awakening people’s attention”, to

themselves as subjects of sexuality.\textsuperscript{20} Prescriptive advice, popular narratives of danger and discipline, and the edification and proscription of certain behaviours through popular representation exemplify this third axis of implantation.

These three centres of discursive production comprise the main topic areas to be covered by this thesis. Psychiatry, the law, educational pedagogy, the prescriptions of advice, popular representation, and eugenics each created a unique way of knowing their adolescent subject. The juvenile delinquent of the legal system ceased to occupy an adolescent subject position at eighteen years of age. For many authors of ‘coming of age’ advice manuals, however, adolescence lingered on until the age of twenty five or later.\textsuperscript{21} The definitions and conditions of adolescence differed according to the discipline presenting the subject of the adolescent male. In creating the problem subject, various social technicians utilised the concept of adolescence to lend support to their own goals, which differed widely. In that sense the chapters of this thesis are isolated by their disciplinary realm. Yet there are two important ways in which the various social technologies I will be analysing relate to each other.

The first is characteristic of discursive production, and is particularly evident in the case of Australia because of the relatively small population of social technicians in the country during the inter-war years. It is that these various disciplines borrowed, manipulated, intervened in, and interacted with each other as an integral part of knowledge production. Physician John Bostock wrote on psychiatry in the \textit{Medical Journal of Australia} and also participated in the work of various eugenic groups in the country, judges drew on psychiatric testimony in considering cases of juvenile delinquency, and psychologists intervened in classrooms in order to test students’ potential or degeneracy. While disparate in form and goal, many of Australia’s professional and popular observers were, if not united, then similar in their concern for the subject of the man-to-be and what this generation of adolescents would or would not do to advance the nation. It is this interest in the young male body (and the sexuality of that body), an interest evident in each of the disciplinary realms, which provides a continuum between the very different subject areas that make up this project.

This study is based on the idea of a denaturalization; an undermining of the present meaning of the subjectivity of adolescence. Presently, in churches, schools, law courts, parliament and on soap boxes, the myriad failures of men ‘coming of age’ are subject to intense scrutiny. They fail to achieve in schools, we are told, they are under-

\textsuperscript{20}Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality}, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{21}While the classification of adolescence as we know it originated with G. Stanley Hall, who suggested it as a phase from fourteen to twenty four years of age, advice authors such as Margaret Sanger, Marie Stopes and others extended the age to as late as twenty-eight years, see J.E.H., \textit{True Manliness}, George Robertson & Co., Melbourne, n.d., p.5.
employed, disenchanted, and do harm to themselves and others at what is considered an astonishing rate. All these experiences are spoken of as characteristic of adolescent subjectivity. This study is a wager that there can be, and must be, other ways of looking at and interpreting, subjective states that we take for granted. In tracing back a particular conception of young men to a time when it was not fact/knowledge, my aim is to destabilise the subjectivity of the young male (constructed as internally volatile but abiding as culturally sturdy) by focusing on this body’s historicity. My objective is not polemic or prescription but, rather, a movement towards an understanding of the body as haunted by history, and haunting society. A double wager then: that this work will make visible the machinations of the ghost, and will make historical the body of the haunted. That is to say, my attention is drawn both to the process by which discourse produces knowing, and the subject that was to be known.

As such, this thesis will engage with discourse in several professional and popular locations. Chapter one will provide a literature review and will outline my methodological approach. This part of the thesis will ground this project theoretically, methodologically, and contextually. The thesis is then divided into two sections and a bridging chapter—an interlude as it were—based on the type of knowledge examined. The first section explores conceptions of ‘coming of age’ within regulatory bodies—the school, the court, the doctor’s office. The first chapter in this section will look at educational pedagogy, particularly the work of American pedagogue and psychologist G. Stanley Hall who many consider to be the modern inventor of adolescence. It will chart the application of Hall’s theories in Australian schools, and look at psychological interventions of intelligence testing and the school leaving debate, each of which placed young males in a particular analytical locus as bearers of the nation.

In the second chapter of this section I will turn to the Australian law courts and the development and implementation of a juvenile court apparatus which positioned young male offenders as both vulnerable and pathological. This classification was frequently achieved by the courts’ appointment of psychologists to assess the body and mind of the delinquent. In the third chapter of this section I will turn to the discipline of psychiatry. This chapter will focus on the ways in which adolescence was pathologised through the development of a discourse of dementia praecox (precocious dementia), a derivative of Victorian psychiatry’s masturbation insanity.

Intervening between the two distinct sections of this project will be a chapter examining one facet of the discourse of eugenics. Eugenics provides an interesting example of the convolutions of discourse and bridges the realms of the professional and the popular. This chapter will look at eugenics as both a movement and a concept during the inter-war years in Australia. As a movement, eugenics engaged with much
of the professional work that constituted the first half of this project. Yet, in isolation from other social movements and projects it was a campaign incapable of coercion, of regulation of the social or individual body. As a concept, it informed much of the work of the professional disciplines to be discussed as well as appearing in much of the representational/pedagogical literature to be examined in the second section of this work, hence its placement as a bridge between two spheres of discourse. In this interlude I will discuss more thoroughly the eugenics implications of the discourses of adolescence; of coming of age as a process both of body and, through that body, of the Australian nation.

The second half of this study will focus on popular discourses, rather than regulatory bodies of knowledge. Regulatory bodies exist to manage those subjects who breach socially productive norms. The sites along this second axis of investigation do no such thing. The role of these popular discourses is to provide incentive for the subject to accept the social incarnation of itself. They offer examples of the pleasure to be had by identifying with a socially useful subjectivity, they promote desire. The discursive intensity of these sites is more diffuse than the institutionalised knowledge sites of the first section; yet popular knowledge is no less involved in the process of constructing identities and knowledge of self. This section will engage with two of these tools of self knowledge: the sex advice text and the representation and imagery of the popular press. The former site will be the subject of a chapter analysing a series of Australian sexual advice texts written with the intention of guiding the young safely through the dangerous time of life toward modern, mature eroticism. These texts utilised knowledge created in several of the areas explored in the chapters of the first section. Texts drew on this knowledge in order to cajole readers into a particular understanding of their sexuality, to convince readers of the dangers to be avoided and the pleasures to be inherited, and to provide earnest prescriptions for organising and containing the body and sexuality which had become the adolescent male's.

The final chapter of the thesis will address popular representations of the young male body. Valorised as the boxer or swimmer, demonised as the sex maniac, the male body and its use was prominent in the pages of the daily and weekly Australian press. This chapter will analyse a range of these images in relation to an analytical framework that suggests that images of the individual body symbolically reproduce vulnerabilities/anxieties of the social body.22 It will also link images of

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adult masculinity with the younger viewers who were to grow into the useful forms of
the bodies presented in popular magazines and newspapers.

This dissertation, with its attention to the threads and tears of discursive
production, is somewhat of a patchwork itself. In many locations the chapters of this
work do not fit together easily. Yet in the borrowing, the junctures, the reiteration and
interpretation of knowledge from one discipline by another, a new contour of
sexuality, characterised as adolescence, is revealed. I have limited the scope of this
project to the twenty year moment of peace between two world wars for several
reasons. The first, which I mentioned earlier, is that these years were in many obvious
ways years of men, of concern for men and masculinity. It is also a window of time
during which subject positions were developed, debated, changed, and then accepted.
It is not the object of this dissertation to trace back from the present the development of
a sexual subjectivity. A twenty year frame of reference allows for the contestation of
discourse production but also limits the scope of the project to a moment of shift,
rather than a delineation of change.

Although it includes research on eugenics, this project has a limited
contribution to make to the understanding of race/ethnicity in this country. A study
of the production of a normative subjectivity necessarily relegates other subjectivities
to the sidelines. The discourses studied here primarily targeted white, middle class
families and young men. In many cases, the parameters of the discourse were
established in ways that purposefully excluded the possibility of any but that targeted
group from qualifying as a subject. Aboriginal peoples and immigrants appear in the
sources as control groups, 'others' by which the progress of the white middle class is
marked. Although many good historical works redress that historical and textual
imbalance I cannot make such a claim for this work. The excuse of scope has been
used many times and while I do not wish to repeat that marginalisation, it must be
admitted that, unfortunately, it is a much bigger project than this which would
examine the implications of the norms spoken of here to non-normative subjectivities.

Although this project is certainly an Australian history, it is written more as a
history of a discursive body than of a place. Melbourne and Sydney provide the
settings for most of the debates and discursive knowledge I will be examining not in
order to write of those particular places, but only because Australia's two largest cities,
with their psychiatric institutes, parliaments, universities, and large circulation
newspapers, are the sites of greatest discursive intensity for those ideas about
adolescence, sexuality, and masculinity that are the focus of this work. If this kind of
history can be said to have a place, then it is a very small and fragile one: the space
between the mouths of expert speakers in conversation, the space between eyes and
text, between notion and proclamation, between one body and another.

A tracing, or genealogy, of the male body and sexuality across the social fabric
of history contains two strategic implications that this thesis will develop. The first
addresses the nature of discourse and knowledge; the discursive apparatus is neither
inhomogeneously true nor false, but at a given historical moment becomes part of a debate on
truth and falsehood which goes on to shape conduct and behaviour. It is the task of
this project to demonstrate such an argument, to exemplify the assertion that
conditions of meaning have histories of their own and to contribute to such an
understanding of history.

The second implication of this work emerges from the body about which it is
written. Adolescence is housed in a biological domain, and its sexual subjectivity is
seen as inevitable and irrevocable. By historicising such a body I would like to
contribute to an understanding of sexuality and masculinity which is more flexible; to
envision a pliable body of surfaces and fluids, a site of potential itself rather than just a
physical housing for potential. The meaningfulness of the body cannot
just be fully understood unless the body is recognised as more than a material object. In the
modern discourse of adolescence, the importance placed on the materiality of the male
body—its machinations, physiological systems, and so on—has ranged from primary
to negligible depending on time, place, and circumstances. Certainly now, as in the
1920s, it is only with great difficulty (if at all) that we can say what adolescence and
coming of age are, whether they are different from each other, whether they happen
slowly or instantaneously, or are more inwardly or outwardly profound. I would like
to trace a history of a juncture between social and individual, represented by
adolescence, that demonstrates Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s declaration that, “my body is
made of the same flesh as the world”.23 I would add to that assertion that the flesh of
the body is, in many ways, made in the same way as the flesh of the world, through
history.

chapter 1. histories of masculinity, sexuality, and adolescence

what is fact? (f)act. the f stop of act.
a still photo in the ongoing cinerama.
Daphne Marlatt, Ana Historic

The male child becomes an adolescent subject at the genesis of sexual maturity— with the first sprouting hairs and vocal theatrics of puberty—and ceases to occupy the subjective space of the adolescent when the body reaches the ambiguous state of sexual maturity. The subjective space of the adolescent, then, is located within a biological domain and is therefore highly resistant to deconstruction. The biological certainty of pubertal change does not, however, make adolescence inevitable and irrevocable (as it is often assumed to be), nor does biology wholly comprise the experience of adolescence. On the contrary, adolescence is laden with value and meaning only tangentially associated with the biological experience that marks it as a discrete phase of life. The corporeal experience of puberty is transformed into the very different experience of adolescence (with all its cultural associations with danger, vulnerability, innocence, and initiation) when it is culturally enunciated as a subjective space. It is this space which encircles the scientific materiality of adolescence and which can be mapped, challenged, and reconsidered.

Refiguring adolescence and its sexual subjectivity as a contested/contestable site rather than an a priori state of being requires a grounding in historiographical theory and a methodology flexible enough to navigate history’s linguistic turn. This chapter will provide an outline of the historiographical and theoretical literature which precedes this contribution and which locates it in relation to existing literature of masculinity, sexuality, and youth and their respective (often discrete) historiographies. To facilitate the task of locating my own work both methodologically/theoretically and historiographically, this chapter is divided into two broad sections. The first is made up of the various critical literatures which have shaped the way that this project has been undertaken; its methodology. In the second category is the historiographical literature which addresses the subject of this work. Together these varied literatures answer the questions of how and what this thesis does. The texts used in the following discussion signpost the intellectual terrain already travelled in my chosen subject fields and expose the gaps which this thesis addresses. The division of this territory into two distinct and separate categories in no way suggests that there is no common ground between many of the texts to be discussed. Many draw on the same body of theory and stake out the same subject
areas. To reduce them to heuristic categories is somewhat disingenuous and not unproblematic. Its saving grace is that it provides a useful way of breaking up a large amount of critical literature into more manageable sections.

**Methodological literature**

In the task of refiguring adolescence as a contested (and contestable) subjectivity the work of Michel Foucault is inescapable. One contribution made by Foucault to the practice of writing history—a contribution I wish to emphasise int his work—is his 1971 essay “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, in which he repudiated the traditional tenets of the historical discipline. In this work, Foucault developed Nietzsche’s idea that history has been misconceived by its practitioners as “an attempt to capture the essence of things”.¹ Foucault insisted that instead of providing synthesis and unity with the past using grand schematics, history should be no more or less than the meticulous tracking of complexity disparity. By rejecting the notion of a guiding hand or set of principles that are the determinants of the present, Foucault conceived not only of a different way of thinking of the past, but an inversion of the historical discipline which disrupts traditionally held ideas of history, knowledge, and subjectivity.

This inverted history is what Foucault defined as genealogy, the purpose of which is not to explain the genesis of ourselves but to explain the social conditions of discourse. The genealogical method relies on Foucault’s expansion of Nietzsche’s assertion that historical events do not hold timeless and essential secrets, but that “the secret [is] that they have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in piecemeal fashion from alien forms.”²

Foucault framed this historical strategy by contrasting traditional and effective history through a three way characterisation of the uses of history which correspond to but oppose Platonic historical modalities. The aim of the researcher is to provide ‘effective’ history, by which Foucault meant a history that “will not permit itself to be transported by a voiceless obstinacy toward a millennial ending”. In other words, one which is critically and intellectually disruptive.³ The first Platonic modality is the use of history as a tool through which we recognise reality, which Foucault countered with a parodic history, as opposed to the theme of history as reminiscence or recognition. Foucault considered this first counter-modality to be a parody insofar as it reveals, and

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² Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, p. 78.
revels in, the carnival of history and the masquerade and identity play of the
performers it contains.

The second of Foucault’s uses is disassociative, and it is directed against history
‘given as continuity or representative of a tradition’. The practice of disassociative
history intentionally dissipates the roots of our identity and aims to systematically
disassociate identity and historical continuity. The third of Foucault’s oppositional
uses is a sacrificial history, as opposed to history as knowledge. The will to
knowledge, Foucault argued, is characterised by violence and injustice rather than
truth and neutrality. A sacrificial mode of history is turned towards interrogating
truth claims of the historical inquisitor rather than interpreting injustices of the past
according to an inquisitor’s claim. Through these three uses, genealogical history
achieves what Foucault called a transformation “of history into a totally different form
of time”.4 The past, in a genealogical project, ceases to be a neat sequence
of integrated, determinate events. Instead history becomes a present tense exercise,
commencing with an interest in the present configuration of a given subjectivity.
Robert Castel, in his work on Foucault’s mode of historical inquiry, explains the
present as a historian’s starting point thus:

The present bears a burden, a weight that comes from the past, and the task of the
present is to bring this burden up to date in order to understand its current
ramifications ... The past does not repeat itself in the present, but the present is
played out, and innovates, using the legacy of the past.5

Foucault’s genealogy, and the cultural history work which has followed, rejects
the untenable and tautological doctrine of disembodied objectivity. The final trait of
an effective history in the Foucaultian mode is an affirmation of knowledge as
perspective.6 Rather than obfuscate a history’s origins, Foucault urged historians to
locate them as clearly as possible in order that they can be interrogated, both internally
and by readers.7 This is not to suggest that the work of the genealogist constitutes a
confession; Foucault himself delighted in being elusive in reference to his speaking
position. The desires of the Foucaultian historian are not exposed in order that they
may be disciplined or transcended; they do not occupy such a central position.
Instead, they are made explicit in order to situate the historian, and her history, within
the discursive framework with which she plays.

4 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, pp. 93-95.
5 Robert Castel, “‘Problematisation’ as a Mode of Reading History”, Paula Wissing (trans.), J. Goldstein
6 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, p. 90.
p. 6.
The present tense concern which drives this thesis relates to the positioning of the adolescent male at the centre of a swirl of cultural fears and anxieties about masculinity, the male body, sexuality, and responsibility. The question posed is not ‘why’ is adolescent subjectivity constituted around sexual danger and bodily control, the answer to which can simply be ‘why not?’ Instead it is a question of ‘how’ the adolescent male body came to occupy such a position. Rather than searching through details of the past for overarching and future-determining continuities, crutches of ‘truth’ already present in the cultural sub-text as the historian approaches a subject, a genealogical history consists of sifting out the disparate elements that our present interests have shaped into significant episodes in an imposed progression.

The contrast between a Foucaultian conception of history—a genealogy or problematisation—and those which dominated the scholarship before it is not, however, one between attention to universal truths on one hand, and micro-particulars on the other. As Foucault noted:

Problematisation is not the representation of a pre-existing object, or the creation through discourse of an object that does not exist. It is the totality of discursive and non-discursive practices that brings something into the play of truth and falsehood and sets it up for an object of the mind.8

In other words, problematisation approaches the domain of objects—discursive propositions and regulations as well as institutional regulations, administrative directives, and all types of material arrangements—as the field of historical play. None of these apparatus have an absolute and incontestable position in relation to the contemporary discursive framework. Rather, the problematisation mode of history sees such ‘positivities’, as Foucault called them, as differentially drawn into discursive debate, to become part of a truth claim the purpose of which is to affect conduct. Foucault’s premise in this task is that cultures govern themselves by means of the production of truth. A problematisation (a term not explicitly used by Foucault, but one which has been subsequently, and appropriately, used to describe his genealogical method), is an investigation into those means of truth (and falsehood) production.

The ‘micro-particulars’ that make up history comprise what Foucault called force relationships; they are such things as “the reversal of a relationship of force, the usurpation of power, the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who once used it.”9 These relationships are not governed by destiny or historical regulation but manifest randomly in response to arbitrary and haphazard historical conflicts. Nor do they govern truths. Rather than contributing to an ongoing discernment of truth and

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knowledge acquisition, force relationships show only that the discursive practices which accentuate them serve also to "manufacture their own subjects, their own content, and entrench themselves as self-serving traditions with no greater object of survival". These force relationships are not culturally innate. They are brought into being because historical actors view them as truths. The needle by which such behaviours are sewn together into truths, according to Foucault, is expert or professional discourse, which provides the context in which practices become unconscious procedures. The means by which practice become culturally ingrained is pedagogy, referring to the realm of direct teaching but also of administration and cultural practice not explicitly coded as education in which the true and the false can be regulated and made relevant. I am referring of course to those knowledges which are understood to be true and false. In an interview published in *Power/Knowledge*, Foucault elaborated on this understanding of truth and falsehood with the statement that:

> Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.  

When Foucault defined genealogy as the ways in which discourse constitutes objects, I take discourse to mean "relatively well-bounded areas of social knowledge". According to this definition we can write, think, and speak in any given historical period about a practice, subject, or phenomenon only in certain ways. Discourse is that which both enables and constrains ways of thinking, speaking and writing within a particular historical framework. Discourse does not bring things into being but it constitutes them in a conceivable way; it is "a violence we do to things, a practice we impose on them" which makes them recognisable. As with histories, discourses are not continuous. Although discourses may coincide, overlap, or intersect to create what Foucault called an *episteme*—an historically discrete, overall view of the world—they do not do so necessarily.

Foucault's analysis of genealogy is invaluable to this project not only in a general methodological sense but more specifically because it locates a perception of the body centrally within the genealogical mode. Foucault asserted that the analysis of subjectivity applies to the corporeal as well as the social subject; the physical body is

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10 Prado, *Starting with Foucault*, p. 43.  
11 Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power", *The Foucault Reader*, p. 73.  
"the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas)."\textsuperscript{14} To expose the influences on the historical subject is to expose the body—the locus of a subject which believes itself to be a substantial, autonomous unity. These traces on the body are the traces of discourse, expert talk and/or idioms of science, which establish verifiable truths and thereby shape subjectivity.

\textit{policing subjectivities}

While this thesis will certainly bear the markings of a Foucaultian genealogy, the structure of my project owes a greater debt to the work of Jacques Donzelot. Donzelot's 1979 work \textit{The Policing of Families} draws on the work of Foucault and provides an important methodological reference for the claims I will be making. Donzelot's interpretation of historical materials formulates social categories which he argues encircle and establish subjective positions; in Donzelot's case the subject analysed is the family. Categories such as instability, vulnerability, protection, exclusion, and valorisation surround and draw the subject into the social realm and thereby into social operability, and necessity. In \textit{The Policing of Families} Donzelot meticulously tracked the ways in which the family became socially operative over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Europe. Gilles Deleuze defined Donzelot's method, in the book's preface, as "isolating pure little lines of mutation which, acting successively or simultaneously, go to form a new contour or a surface, a characteristic of the new domain".\textsuperscript{15} The 'new domain' is the social, a relatively new landscape historically, comprising institutions, problems, and personnel. The social, Deleuze suggests, exists within the intersections of these little lines.

The object of study in \textit{The Policing of Families} is the family but the subject of the history is the social surface. Unlike historical and sociological literature concerned with studying and understanding the human experience of the family in specific locations (historically and culturally), Donzelot sees the family "not as a point of departure, as a manifest reality, but as a moving resultant, an uncertain form whose intelligibility can only come from studying the system of relations it maintains with the socio-political level".\textsuperscript{16} Like Foucault, Donzelot's guiding question was not why (is the idea of family so culturally important?) but how (did the family come to occupy a position of social importance?). The answer provided by Donzelot is that such a shift occurred through the mobilisation of a field of practices, located "between the empty

\textsuperscript{14}Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", p. 83.
\textsuperscript{16}Donzelot, \textit{The Policing of Families}, p. xxv.
gesture of the voluntary and the inscrutable efficiency of the involuntary”. Such practices pulled the family into the centre of contested discourses. The discourses responsible for the family’s inclusion in the social then surround the subject, flood it with the light of social scrutiny, and make it recognisable to its members.17

The means by which such a discursive encircling was achieved is one of Donzelot’s most important and methodologically influential contributions to the writing of history. He argued that practices are inscribed on the familial body through policing. This is not to be understood in the narrow, contemporary sense of law and order maintenance (with its direct referent to a specific professional police force) but instead as a set of social technologies which encompass all the methods for developing the quality of the population and the strength of the nation. Policing, as it is used by Donzelot, is not an insidious, controlling technology. Policing agents of the family, accordingly, include pedagogues and engineers of social, educational, and religious life, physicians, and legal practitioners. Indeed, in the realm of policing developed by Donzelot, all public discursive engagement with the social body and its condition that intends to facilitate its improvement constitutes policing.

Donzelot’s work provides a more specific methodological framework then Foucault’s similar investigations. It is a methodology that matches the sophistication of his broader concepts of policing and encirclement. Policing technologies surround the subject, he argued, through the discursive modes of contract and tutelage. The system of tutelage is reserved for those categorised as unstable or vulnerable. It serves those subjects who combine a resistance to medical and/or pedagogical norms with a difficulty in supplying their own needs. Social technicians then establish a direct communication with the family subject (through welfare agents, public medicine and the like) which places the private status of the family in jeopardy. The tutelary complex etches the social onto the subject by ensuring that adherence to socially useful norms will result in continued autonomy for the subject. In this thesis the subject is a singular body, a young male. Tutelage refers to social technologies which have the authority and coercive capacity to demand from the subject a choice between subjection to norms or further social arbitration.

The primary section of my work sets educational pedagogy, legal and psychiatric discourses apart from the other discursive sites of this thesis. They comprise what Donzelot referred to as the ‘medical-hygienist pole’ of the tutelary complex, sites which “employ the state as a direct instrument, as a material means for

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averting risks of a destruction of society through the physical and moral weakening of the population”\textsuperscript{18}.

The companion form of social control to tutelage is what Donzelot termed the contract. In his analysis of the family, the contractual mode of policing corresponds to an “accelerated liberalisation of relations, both within and outside the family.”\textsuperscript{19} The norms of this liberalisation promote the drive for familial advancement. In a general sense the contract, or contractual mode, provides incentive for the subject to accept the social incarnation of itself. The means by which the contract does this is a positive coupling of individual needs and social norms, as opposed to the negative coupling of the tutelary complex. Contractual policing promotes the socially useful form of the subject as advantageous to the subject who desires a more complete realisation of him/herself. The second section of this project will analyse sex advice texts and popular representations and present them as two examples of contractual policing. Both advice and images presented self-fulfilment as achievable through the adherence to a particular construction of adolescence; a construction based on danger and control. Such contractual modes enticed and encouraged self-policing by presenting the navigation of adolescence as the necessary prerequisite to sexual pleasure and social success.

This thesis will also examine the discursive production of a third, intermediary mode that will, as discussed in the introduction, form a transitional chapter between the analysis of these two modes of policing. I have suggested that eugenic discourse is historically situated as an intermediate mode between tutelage and contract because of its unique positioning in the inter-war years as a discourse which sought tutelary status and state intervention but which remained a non-professional discourse without recourse to authority and coercion. While relying primarily on enticement (of young people into particular notions of national/sexual purity), eugenics also appealed to a (not inconsiderable) professional element and thereby effected, in some cases, judicio-legal consideration and change. Eugenic discourse also provides an excellent example of the ways in which disparate discursive modes can collude for a politically strategic purpose and effect change in other social realms as a result.

Donzelot suggests that the subject is surrounded by the machinations of the contractual and tutelary systems of policing. The subject then becomes both queen and prisoner to what he refers to as \textit{the social}. That is, the subject becomes both the agent through which the social is maintained and, at the same time, is constrained to a certain functionality by the social. Such a methodology requires reading across an

\textsuperscript{18} Donzelot, \textit{The Policing of Families}, p. 56. Emphasis in original.
\textsuperscript{19} Donzelot, \textit{The Policing of Families}, p. 92.
array of sources in order to identify the coincidence and convergence, as well as the
reversals and the disparities which result in the etching of the social onto the subject.
The sources for this analysis will be specific to the discursive site of the individual
chapters. In general, though, the source materials will be drawn from published
discourse on adolescence, sexuality, and/or masculinity.

Much of the information used here actually sourced itself: social policing
agents quoted or disputed others in related (or disparate) fields to bolster their
arguments and thereby pointed the way to further sources along the discursive thread.
It was collected in a manner that was initially somewhat scattershot and involved
archival searches of any documents that I thought may make reference to youth
and/or sexual morality. Some of these trains of thought were abandoned along the
way but many discontinuous threads remain. The result is a degree of randomness
which I will argue is as necessary to my historical interpretation as continuity. The
documents used are primarily Australian in origin, with the obvious exception of G.
Stanley Hall's work on adolescence which is the subject matter of the next chapter.

As the following review critical literature will show, the invention of
adolescence as a universal, age-specific, and biologically determined subjectivity
coincided historically with the emergence of the cult of hetero-masculinity and the
classification of homosexuality as a judicio-legal category synonymous with deviance,
evil, and sickness.20 These subjectivities—adolescent, man, homosexual—came to be
objects for the mind, and then irrefutable truths, through the workings of discourses
that brought the burden of the social to bear on several incarnations of the male body.
At present, these bodies are so naturalised as to be beyond articulation. Yet there was
a historical moment at which the male body became a specific social body, when the
burden of truth shifted in a direction which we now recognise. The concurrence of the
development of these subjectivities has implications not only for the ways in which
masculinity, sexuality, and adolescence meet at a number of discursive junctions, but
as well for the ways in which each of these subject positions may have become
historically operational in constructing, translating, or interpreting the others.

Of the triumvirate, sexuality will be given theoretical primacy. This is because
its removal from the theoretical mix most drastically alters the constitution of the
project. It is easy to conceive of a project which takes concepts of masculinity and
sexuality as its subject matter, or sexuality and adolescence. It is much harder to
propose to explore masculinity and adolescence without addressing sexuality.
Whether it is seen as an awakening of, or a struggle over, sexuality, adolescence was

20 See John Gillis, Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations, 1770–Present,
Academic Press, New York, 1974, and Jeffrey Weeks, Sex, Politics, and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality
historically constituted around the sexual transformation of the subject (or, as some would have it, the transformation of the individual into a sexual subject). Masculinity too relies heavily on the organisation of sexuality; as will become clear, sex can make or break the man.

While I see my project as impelled by a Foucaultian theoretical standpoint and genealogical methodology it should be noted that, as much as it traces lines of descent, as an orthodox genealogical inquiry would, this thesis primarily addresses a synchronic discursive terrain. That is to say that it engages several discursive modes and maps them in relation to each other as well as in their descent onto the young male body. It should also be noted that, while concepts such as 'the other' make appearances in this work, the psychoanalytic method of inquiry has not been used. While a historicised reading of psychoanalysis as part of the discursive complex under consideration can make a valuable contribution to understanding the nuances of history, much psychoanalytic work, in its approach rules out such a formulation. Despite its popularity and its ability to engage thoughtfully, and on occasion historically, with concepts of sexuality and masculinity, the reliance of psychoanalytic explanation on a universal model of Oedipal relations contradicts my argument that subjectivities are historically and culturally specific constructions. As a result, psychoanalysis may be considered part of the subject matter here but it is not part of the theoretical approach.

histories of masculinity, sexuality, and adolescence

As I embarked on this project (and well before I had a workable or coherent topic) I was advised to read—everything and anything that I thought may point to a path of inquiry I wished to follow. Very many texts that helped me to find that path will not make a direct appearance in this review. They are the texts that, while not addressing all (or any) of the three spheres discussed here directly, led me to seek out ones that did. Many texts that are absent from this discussion have been as important to the intellectual development of this work as those which are discussed. They provided me with 'go back' or 'no entry' signs on the path of inquiry. These mainly include analyses by feminist psychoanalytic theorists, but also the work of feminist

21 In general the psychoanalytic explanation of subjectivity in terms of the universal and ahistorical model of Oedipal relations is antithetical to a historical project. Some good examples of historically informed psychoanalytic work on masculinity does exist, however, in Kaja Silverman's Male Subjectivity at the Margins, Routledge, New York, 1992, and Klaus Theweleit's Male Fantasies, Stephen Conway (trans.), University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1987.
historians, and many works of Australian history which focused on the 1890s, which was the period I initially intended to research.22

In the second half of this chapter I will review the sizeable and diverse historical literature on the three general subject areas that this work intertwines: masculinity, sexuality, and adolescence. Other fields of literature beyond these three, of course, play an integral role in the themes and narratives addressed here; the literature of representation in chapter six, for example, or of the authority of texts in several earlier chapters. It seems more appropriate, however, to introduce these literatures in the chapters which specifically engage them and to address here the historiographical terrain which underlies this thesis as a whole, upon which other, more particular, literature builds.

**masculinity**

At the Berkshire Conference on Women's History in 1975, Natalie Zemon Davis urged members of the intellectual assembly to seek out new subject matter: “We should now be interested in the history of both women and men. We should not be working on the subjected sex any more than a historian of class can focus exclusively on peasants.”23 Twenty years later, in a 1995 anthology addressing the construction of masculinity, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick admonished, “when something is about masculinity, it isn’t always ‘about men’”.24 Zemon Davis did not have the first word on the subject of historicising masculinity, of course, nor has Sedgwick had the last. Their statements succinctly demonstrate, however, how vast the sweep of inquiry has become in the last twenty years that has taken men and masculinity as its primary concern.

Of course men have always been the subjects of historical inquiry. The very reason that Zemon Davis found herself addressing the Berkshire Conference on Women’s History is that any other history conference would have been about unproblematised men. These ‘men’ appeared in their histories as neutral historical

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22The psychoanalytic research which signalled a provocative, but wrong, direction for this work includes Theweleit and Silverman, along with Elizabeth Grosz and Judith Butler. Histories by Sheila Jeffreys, Jane Caputi and Rita Felski also contributed to the direction taken by me, although it was vastly different than the ones they had marked. And many fascinating Australian histories, such as John Docker, *The Nervous Nineties: Australian Cultural Life in the 1890s*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991; Jill Bavin-Mizzi, *Ravished: Sexual Violence in Victorian Australia*, University of NSW Press, Sydney, 1995; and John F. Williams, *The Quarantined Culture: Australian Reactions to Modernism 1913–1939*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995, skilfully answered some of the half formulated questions I had early on, thus demanding that I ask something different.


agents with neither sexuality/gender nor investment in their position as men. Attention to the history and construction of women as subjects configured by social, political, and cultural factors had been brought into the academy by feminist scholars in the 1960s and 1970s. Zemon Davis, and others, urged historians to do the same type of feminist analysis on men, shifting the discourse from a ‘contribution history’ of women to a history of gender interactions. The gender dialectic and its implications for both sexes was to be the subject and its practitioners resisted the neat equation of patriarchy and masculinity, and “masculinism, [as] the masculine ideology that justifies male domination”. The call was well heeded and historical narratives of men as men (rather than as Universal Man) proliferated in Australia and abroad.

Most of the early work in the study of masculinity was motivated by the explicit political motive of liberation, and was associated with the homosexual and men's activist movements. The historical documentation of gay subcultures by Jeffrey Weeks, Alan Bray and John Boswell, in the earliest wave of scholarly work on male homosexuality, by extension highlighted heterosexual masculinity as a shifting entity. It suggested that, far from being natural, homosexuality, and the framework of masculinity from which it was excluded, was consolidated in specific historical cultures. Where Alan Bray declared, “There is no linear history of homosexuality to be written at all”, scholars Michael Roper and John Tosh later added, “nor of masculinity”. The large body of work which followed that of pioneers Weeks, Bray, and Boswell is perhaps better attended to in the following section on the historiography of sexuality. Suffice it to say that the literature produced on the history of homosexuality inadvertently created a forum in which the heterosexual masculine hegemony, which represents the social order gay historians challenged, could be “propelled into a whirlwind of deconstruction”.

25 Also known to critics of the method as ‘add women and stir’, contribution history refers here to the first wave of feminist history scholarship which foregrounded women's experience without engaging critically with its definition of ‘woman’.
The deconstruction of hetero-masculinity was a task first undertaken by feminist-identifying members of the men's liberation movement who viewed patriarchy as being as dangerous and injuring to men as it is to women. Unfortunately for historians, this large body of work had its emphasis firmly on men's (more specifically heterosexual, white, middle class men's) personal experiences of emotional estrangement. The mission of these texts was to encourage men to opt out of the masculinist hegemony but rarely did they take issue with the ways in which that hegemony had been constructed over time. While declaring an allegiance to feminism, many of these journalist- and therapist-authored texts implicitly argued that feminism had threatened the bastions of masculinity. Liberationist authors attempted to 'heal' the damage by either reclaiming or refusing men's societal privilege without engaging history. Liberationist texts frame the question—what does it mean to be a man?—but their lack of historicisation makes them peripheral, at best, to any work which seeks to answer the question of how we came to both ask, and answer, such a question.

If men's liberationist writers engaged with history at all, it was to represent a resplendent age of the distant past, a pre-industrial, pre-patriarchal garden of Eden. As with the contribution history of early feminist scholarship, a premium was placed on uncovering 'good men' from the past, and history was the indispensable tool for excavating such men. It soon became apparent that the 'history as a tool' methodology of early writers on hetero-masculinity was a self-defeating one as the historical evidence of 'good men' from the past proved that concepts of masculinity were tied just as tightly to their particular historical context as to the backs of the men who bore them. As with the feminist movement, however, the self-help genre of writing on masculinity precipitated a shift to genuine historical research into the construction of masculinity. An early and influential text in this mode is Victor Seidler's *Rediscovering Masculinity: Reason, Language and Sexuality*, which locates the origins of modern masculinity in the Enlightenment, at which time men began to learn to act from

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31Patriarchy is an overly deterministic and ahistorical term that, while it has been an integral part of second wave feminist language, has also been criticised by feminist such as Sheila Rowbotham for its suggestion that male dominance is unchanging. See Rowbotham, "The Trouble with Patriarchy", R. Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory*, Routledge, London, 1981, p. 365. I use it here to refer to a particular scholarly discourse which uses patriarchy as an umbrella term for men's domination of women. See John Stoltenberg's popular *Refusing to Be a Man*, Fontana, London, 1990, and Michael Kaufman (ed.), *Beyond Patriarchy: Essays by Men on Pleasure, Power, and Change*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987.


Reason rather than emotion, and thus became estranged from themselves, and from women.\textsuperscript{34} The proliferation of work that addressed the idea of masculinity in various historical contexts made clear that masculinity was not just a personal identity nor an oppressive social structure above and beyond the individual. It was, instead, “deeply enmeshed in the history of institutions and social structures,” or in the words of Bob Connell: “It is also extended into the world, merged in organised social relations”.\textsuperscript{35}

While the Connell work from which this quote is drawn presents a meta-narrative of cultural norms for masculinity, much of the more recent, and incisive, work on masculinity has emerged from specific sites in which masculinity operates as a fundamental principle. Labour\textsuperscript{36}, the family\textsuperscript{37}, education\textsuperscript{38}, sport\textsuperscript{39}, race conflict/imperialism\textsuperscript{40}, sexual relations and the military\textsuperscript{41} have been documented as locations in which masculinity is enacted in particular forms, used for particular means, and understood in specific ways. To take the family as an example, one need not be a historian to recognise that the constitution of the family unit has changed over time. Anyone who has talked about the subject with someone a generation removed from herself has probably encountered such a concept. Michael Gilding’s \textit{The Making and Breaking of the Australian Family} goes some distance in explaining the mechanisms of change in the constitution of family and masculinity. Gilding dissects the family unit to demonstrate the historical tensions of masculinity that arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a result of the differing rates at which child rearing, sexual relations, and the division of labour were changing.

Underpinning Gilding’s work, and others in the field, is a particular theoretical concept, expressed by political theorist Christine diStefano as such:

\textsuperscript{34}Victor Seidler, \textit{Rediscovering Masculinity}, pp. 14–21.
\textsuperscript{37}Michael Gilding, \textit{The Making and Breaking of the Australian Family}, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1991 is one of the best examples.
\textsuperscript{39}Although this area of inquiry lags somewhat behind others in output, the role of sport in the construction of masculinity is discussed in several essays in Mark Carnes and Clive Griffin (eds), \textit{Meanings for Manhood}. See also Donald E. Hall (ed.), \textit{Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age}, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, for general analyses of male body aesthetics; also Michael Massner and Donald Sabo (eds), \textit{Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives}, Human Kinetics Books, Champaign, 1990.
[G]ender must be approached as simultaneously 'real' and 'fake'; that is, as a set of representations that (in conjunction and tension with other representations) creates a world of fixed, yet also unstable, meanings, relations, and identities, which simultaneously produce and do violence to specific subjects in specific ways.42

This assertion marks sites in which gender is both maintained and contested. Masculinity represents one side of what has become, in the course of modern Western history, a dualistic gender system. Its dominance is maintained by subordinating or rejecting its opposite, femininity.

While time frames and the importance accorded various factors differ, all scholars of masculinity (with the notable exception of psychoanalytic theorists) agree that the type of masculinity that is currently hegemonic in Western culture has been socially and culturally constructed over the last three centuries. By hegemonic, I mean that a certain configuration of masculinity occupies a dominant position in sex and gender relations. This position is not fixed, nor uniform, and it is always, however formidable, contestable.43 Through the gendered exercise of empire building, industrialisation, the institutionalisation of state boundaries and class orders, and the monarchical consolidation of patriarchy (referring here to rule of the father specifically, and as a result, of male power more generally) the culture we now recognise as modern Western society was established. Connell summarises this complex process as neatly as is possible:

> With the eighteenth century, in seaboard Europe and North America at least, we can speak of a gendered order in which masculinity in the modern sense — gendered individual character, defined through an opposition with femininity and institutionalised in economy and state— had been produced and stabilised. For this period we can even define a hegemonic type of masculinity and describe some of its relations to subordinated and marginalised forms.44

This is an important statement not only because it identifies a historical point at which masculinity came to be understood in ways that we currently recognise, and are troubled by, but in its mention of subordinated and marginalised forms. Modern masculinity is not a conceptually imaginable concept without an opposite. This is not to suggest that it can not be. One of the most fundamental contributions made by Foucaultian scholars is the idea that masculinity can be dispersed and decentred to the point that it may be constituted without reference to the feminine. Indeed, much of

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43 Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 76.
the work on the histories of homosexuality go directly to this reading of masculinity, contingent entirely on history and not always on the feminine body. Femininity and homosexuality, individually or in combination, provide powerful identities against which masculinity is defined, but these identities in turn are historical and so an absolute binarism can not be viable. Gilding's contribution to the understanding of modern Australian masculinity emerges from a chapter entitled "The Making of the Homosexual", wherein he argues that the increased scrutiny of sexual lives in the late nineteenth century led to a reordering of sexual meaning and experience that, in turn, sharpened sexual behaviours into identities and privileged the heterosexual male identity over that of women and homosexuals. As Jeffrey Weeks has noted it is not only femininity but homosexuality which "gnaws at the roots of male heterosexual identity".45 It is this notion — that sexuality can make or break one's masculinity — which led me to the second body of scholarly work which I will be outlining here: the history of sexuality.

sexuality

We have had sexuality since the eighteenth century and sex since the nineteenth. What we had before that was no doubt the flesh.46

The history (or histories) of sexuality (or sexualities) has played a central role in much cultural history work since the late 1970s. Regardless of their theoretical position, there has been one point of general consensus for historians of sexuality. This point has perhaps been made most explicit in the work of Thomas Laqueur on the history of sexual anatomy from the Greeks to Freud in his 1990 work Making Sex. In that text, Laqueur traces the discourse of the sexual body, positing, in a reversal of Freud, that destiny is anatomy; that our sexual bodies are a constructed artifice made knowable, and natural, to us through the machinations of doctors, political activists, scientists, and philosophers. Laqueur argued, and many other histories of modern sexuality take as a given, that modern sexuality is distinguishable by its insistence on biological diversity between men and women; what Laqueur called 'radical dimorphism' of the human body and its sexuality. By 'modern' Laqueur is referring to the post-1800s since which time writers of all sorts adopted a two-sex model of the human body, forgoing the previous discourse of male and female bodies as occupying various levels of corporeal perfection along a single axis.

45Jeffrey Weeks, Sexuality and Its Discontents, p. 191.
The work of Laqueur, David Halperin, Angus McLaren, and others contests the conventional notion of a linked system of two biological sexes, male and female, two genders, man and woman, and two sexual orientations, heterosexual and homosexual. As with the written histories of sexuality, much of the initial impetus in contesting ‘natural’ sexuality has come from researchers of homosexuality. The best of this work, such as George Chauncey’s meticulously researched _Gay New York_, illuminates not only the discourses of homosexuality but the heterosexual discursive hegemony from which homosexuality was excluded. And so we are returned to Jeffrey Weeks’ ‘whirlwind of deconstruction’. A main contributor to this endeavour is Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, whose guiding question through several monographs has been not so much ‘how does homosexuality function?’ but ‘why is it culturally necessary to import a homo/hetero binary into every aspect of modern life?’ This question acts in the same capacity as Natalie Zemon Davis’ admonition to the 1975 Berkshire Conference on Women’s History: a demand that both halves of the discursive binary be examined without theoretically prioritising the oppressed side.

Historical and ethnographic scholarship shows that a sexual dialectic, despite its elevation in our culture over the last two centuries or so to a primary truth, has worked more like an Ancient Greek charter myth, a narrative our culture tells itself in order to chart its course. A sexual dialectic guides us politically, socially and culturally simply by being taken for granted. It is worth quoting Fletcher’s outline of sixteenth century Tudor gender understandings to make this point:

*It* [gender] shaped sex rather than the other way around. Woman was seen as a creature distinct from and inferior to man, distinguished by her lesser heat. For heat was the source of strength, and strength, whether of mind, body, or moral faculties, was in this formulation what gender was all about. Heat, as the immortal substance of life, was the most crucial element in humoral physiology. An individual’s sexual temperament, in effect gender, was a question of the balance in the body of hot and cold, dry and moist qualities. This gender system had nothing whatsoever to do with the sexual orientation of men and women. Nor was the visible genital difference, except insofar as it reflected and symbolised someone’s place on the continuum between human strength and weakness, of significance. Sex, in other words, was still a sociological and not an ontological category.

Scholars propose various reasons for the shift from a system as described above to a sex/gender dialectic through which we now view the body and its behaviour. Laqueur provided a veritable shopping list:

The rise of evangelical religion, Enlightenment political theory, the development of new sorts of public spaces in the eighteenth century, Lockean ideas of marriage as

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a contract, the cataclysmic possibilities for social change wrought by the French revolution, post revolutionary conservatism, post revolutionary feminism, the factory system with its restructuring of the sexual division of labour, the rise of a free market economy in services or commodities, the birth of classes, single or in combination... to which has been added by others the consolidation of monarchical power, the rise of bureaucracy, the colonial frontier and the strong centralised state. None of these factors caused the reordering of bodies, sexuality and gender. Rather these political situations (and here I am using political to refer generally to the competition for power) generated and enabled new and different ways of constituting the male and female subject.

As the literature discussed in the previous section on masculinity and above has demonstrated, an epistemological shift occurred in our understanding of both sex and gender after the early eighteenth century. But given the current deconstruction of the epistemes of sex and gender, led by Judith Butler and French feminist theorists, how can I discuss the sexing and gendering of the male discretely from one another if, indeed, at all? Or, as Julia Kristeva poses the question, “what can ‘identity’, even ‘sexual identity’, mean in a theoretical and scientific space where the very notion of identity is challenged?” Although recent theorists have argued that definitions of identities are impossible, if not undesirable, for the purposes of this work I need to be explicit about what I mean when I use the terms sex, gender, and sexuality before I go any further.

**defining the terms**

Although it may have made more sense to set out definitions of sex, gender, and sexuality before opening the door on their messy houses, it is difficult to fully grasp why such definitions are so complicated—and so necessary—before having put them into play. After all, when I have told people of my thesis topic, many have raised eyebrows and asked ‘what’s the point—sex is sex, men are men, and they have sex, mostly with women’. But many varied perspectives, both historical and political, have shaken that comfortable notion. Men *are* men, of course, but many are not ‘real’ men, getting there is no comfortable ride, and it is often unclear as to quite what a real man is anyway, as the previous section’s literature shows.

To start, a catchy but crude setting of the terms. By sex I mean the body, coded as it is in our culture as intrinsically and incommensurably male or female. By

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sexuality, I mean the sexual performance of that body. Gender, possibly the most tricky to pin down in this post-feminist, post-structuralist theoretical climate, refers in this work to the cultural identity given to the body.

These definitions obviously require further clarification. First, sex. In much post-structuralist writing on bodies, sex, and corporeality, actual flesh rarely makes an appearance. Hormonal feedback loops, cell metastasis, the ganglia and the hypothalamus, while each having an integral part in the process of adolescence, are not the subject at hand. As fascinating as these processes are, the focus of this work is the *representation* of the physiology of the body in discourse, not the observation of the actual bodily functions. These bodies are what Moira Gatens has called 'imaginary bodies', existing as flesh to touch but as only an imaginary corporeal to think about.  

To return briefly to Laqueur, there is a distinction to be made “between the body and the body as discursively constituted, between seeing and seeing-as”. When I refer to sex in this work I am referring to sex not seen but seen as.

The analytical distinction between sex and gender has been precarious for as long as the latter has been part of modern vocabulary. Feminists of every position have debated the ‘critical-political sharpness’ of using the terms independently, and have created an enormous body of literature in doing so. More recent engagements with the terms have been more fraught, as attention has shifted from systems of power to identities and discourse.

In nascent feminist political use in the 1960s and 1970s, gender was used to refer to the perceived transposition of biological sexuality onto cultural behaviour and systems; a use which facilitated the equations biology=sex, culture=gender. The significance (and strategic power) of this definition of gender came from its easy integration into other identified binaries of meaning: nature/culture, active/passive, producer/consumer and so on. A sex/gender distinction was strategically necessary for the second wave feminists who deployed it in fighting urgent political struggles for voices, bodies, and the autonomy of those bodies. Yet however politically useful, the sex/gender distinction soon came under scrutiny from a variety of feminist theorists.

The problem with seeing the world as a sex/gender system was the tendency of such a construction to universalise and make irreducible one’s maleness or femaleness. This tendency belied the intentions of its users to escape those limitations and fully politicise and historicise the concept of gender. One of the most profound challenges

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52 Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex*, p. 15.  
to the sex/gender distinction emerged in the work of Judith Butler, who argued that the use of gender as an identifying category presumed the ‘fictions of heterosexual coherence’. Butler set as feminists’ task the disqualification of analytic categories such as gender, a move which would expose the illusion of universal—culturally, racially, historically impervious—female or male.55

The same argument was being made concurrently for very different reasons by feminist theorists positioned outside the Anglo-European/American academic mainstream. These theorists, from bell hooks and Audre Lourde to Gayatri Spivak, argued that the experience of being a woman of colour interrupts at every point the neatness of the sex/gender distinction. So too, of course does the experience of being white, or lesbian, or working class. Every social categorisation moderates one’s experience of being female; at this point in the development of feminism, that is a given. For the solidarity minded users of the sex/gender distinction, noting such a thing was neither politically strategic nor morally imperative. Audre Lourde foreshadowed the challenge and the subsequent conceptual struggle eloquently in her 1982 autobiography:

> Being women together was not enough. We were different. Being gay-girls together was not enough. We were different. Being black together was not enough. We were different. Being Black women together was not enough. We were different. Being Black dykes together was not enough. We were different ... It was a while before we came to realise that our place was in the very house of difference rather than the security of any particular difference.56

Acknowledging the multiple axes of identity which intersect in various ways according to circumstance demonstrates why a notion of gender cannot be, as Donna Haraway expresses it, “grounded in shared positioning in a system of sexual difference and the cross-cultural structural antagonism between coherent categories called women and men.”57 Difference intervenes too often, and variously, for the concept of gender to have any purchase in our different realities. Yet masculinity is quantitatively and qualitatively different from male sexuality, and it is not merely an addendum to it. For my purposes, defining what gender is is less important than identifying how the cultural/historical mechanisms that create versions of it work. Sandra Harding suggests three ways: (1) as a fundamental category through which meaning is given to everything, (2) as a way of arranging social relations, and (3) as a structure of personal identity.58

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Identity is the key to my use of masculinity as a referent to what may also have been called gender, were gender a less awkward word grammatically, theoretically, and historically. This thesis argues not for the emergence, consolidation, or shift of gender (male), but of a specific gendered identity. I will leave the last word on gender defining to historian Joan Scott who avoids positioning gender as the intermediary between ‘natural’ bodies and ‘constructed’ culture: “[gender] is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes ... a primary way of signifying relationships of power.”

sex(uality) seen as

Now that the terms are defined, I will return to the literature that (although it inevitably engages both gender and sex) takes as its prime target the ‘natural’ sexuality of its subjects. Although there appears to be a natural taxonomic lineage in the definitions of sex, sexuality, and gender—from the building block of sex we add sexuality and then gender, or to use an older formulation physiology beget behaviour beget identity—historical texts consistently confound such an expectation. As the work of Laqueur has shown, a sexual dialectic was culturally dominant well before it was located at the morphological level. Further undermining the taxonomy of sex and gender is David Halperin’s work on the history of discourses of male homosexuality. This work identifies interpretations of homosexuality which have historically employed gender and sexuality to varying degree in explaining male same-sex behaviour. The nineteenth century medical labelling of homosexuality as inversion, for example, staked its claim more firmly on the gender behaviour of the actors than on specific sexual acts. The passivity, or appearance of femininity in the invert, more than his or her sexual activity, branded his or her identity as a perversion. In contrast, Halperin pinpoints a historical discourse of pederasty, or sodomy of subordinate males, which occupied a cultural position as perversity (a deviant act) rather than perversion (a deviant identity).

That sexual behaviour could be a classified as perversity and non-sexual behaviour (possibly without the presence of corresponding sexual acts) as perversion reflects a historical tendency to define sexuality in hierarchical, rather than incommensurable, terms; terms which relate both to the sexual choice of object and the sexual presentation of self. To sodomise a man was to do a wrong; to be sodomised or,
even more so, to present oneself in a manner that suggested one was willing to be penetrated (i.e. to act 'womanly') was to be wrong. While the latter position was viewed as incommensurable with hegemonic masculinity, the former, in contradiction to a contemporary sensibility, did not necessarily exclude one from dominant masculine ideology. George Chauncey presents a similar case, using the documents of a turn of the century American psychiatrist who argued that the desire of the invert for his own sex was actually a 'normal' sexual feeling because inverts were actually women even though they appeared to be men. This paradox was explained by the good doctor with his assurance that: "although the inverts had male bodies, they had female brains, and ... the brain, rather than the anatomy, was the 'primary factor' in classifying the sex of a person."61

The implication of this type of historical research for the study of normative male sexuality is simple but significant; that the things we say about sexuality (both historical and contemporary) already have a claim staked on gender, and vice versa.62

**history and 'the history of sexuality'**

In the academic field of modern sexuality Michel Foucault is a conspicuous, underlying presence. Before Foucault, sexuality was largely considered something expressed (natural) or repressed (by society). Steven Marcus' work on Victorian sexuality is a key text against which Foucault wrote, and the assumption that sexuality was an uncomplicated affair that the machinations of society made complicated. Although much writing following Foucault contended with this notion, not all who came after Foucault were influenced by him. Edward Shorter's post *History of Sexuality* work in the 1970s on sex and the family maintained that modern sexuality was a triumph of ebullient, natural impulse over repressive social tradition.63 In *The History of Sexuality* Foucault questioned the very notions of expression and repression. He suggested instead that sexuality is not a quality of the flesh to be flaunted or hidden but a way of organising the self 'in the experience of the flesh' which is, itself, 'constituted from and around certain forms of behaviour'.

The organisation of the flesh, Foucault argued, exists in relation to historically specific systems of knowledge, or *epistemes*, the rules of which determine what is or is

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not natural and which enable the individual subject to recognise him or herself. Although I disagree with Foucault (and he himself abandoned the concept) that one episteme is replaced decisively and entirely by another, preferring to see epistemes as potentially overlapping entities, I would agree that a hegemonic epistemological system can be identified in a given historical period. This theorem has been demonstrated more carefully and ably by authors other than Foucault himself, and its mark can be seen in many of the critical works I have presented in this section. As with his work on the relations of power/knowledge and the practice of history, Foucault has inspired better historians to flesh out his intriguing theoretical approach.

On the history of sexuality, his most influential statement is a simple one:

Sexuality must not be described as a stubborn drive, by nature alien and of necessity disobedient to a power which exhausts itself trying to subdue it and often fails to control it entirely. It appears rather as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power: between men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity, and administration and a population. Sexuality is not the most intractable element in power relations, but rather one of those endowed with the greatest instrumentality: useful for the greatest number of manoeuvres and capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies.

The second substantive contribution provided by Foucault that is valuable to this work is his identification of the specific mechanisms whereby knowledge and power came to focus on sexuality. The History of Sexuality suggest three general axes which promoted the increase in sexual discourses which characterises modern western culture. First are the sciences: medicine, via the discourse of nervous disorders, followed closely by psychiatry which set out aetiology of mental illness, particularly the sexual 'excess' of patients and later 'frauds against procreation', culminating in the annexation of sexual perversion as 'its own province'. A second axis consists of the regulatory bodies—criminal justice, education, welfare— which radiated discourses aimed at sex and thus intensified people's awareness of it as a site of danger. These two axes correspond to chapters two, three and four in this dissertation. The third axis is identified as people's self-recognition as sexual subjects, as proliferating discourses insisted that sexuality was the truth of one's being.

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The final contribution of Foucault that is germane to this work, and to the field of historicising sexuality in general, is one which by this point may also seem self evident. Much of the literature discussed here takes it as a starting point. But it is disingenuous not to acknowledge the source from which much inquiry has begun. While Foucault’s own work tends to hyperbole and occasional historical vagueness, the ‘strategic unities’ identified by him as forming the mechanisms of modern sexual discourse, and thus modern sexuality, are critically sharp tools, demanding (and receiving) use by historians. As identified by Foucault, these mechanisms are: (1) a hysterization of women’s bodies, (2) a pedagogization of children’s sex, (3) a socialisation of procreative sexual behaviour, and (4) a psychiatrization of perverse pleasure. In varying degrees and combinations, these mechanisms have made an appearance in virtually every text on the history of sexualities since they were identified by Foucault. The mechanisms of particular interest to me are the latter three.

The pedagogization of children’s sex is a theme which runs throughout the chapters of this thesis. It is a double assertion: that the sexual activity of children and adolescents is at the same time ‘natural’ and ‘against nature’. As a result, it poses moral and physical danger to each and every individual who has not yet reached the point of maturity (at which point certain sexualities are legitimised) and who, therefore, must be educated. This leads to the second mechanism: the socialisation of procreative behaviour. Foucault defines this as a threefold socialisation: economic, via the incitements and restrictions brought to bear on the fertility of heterosexual couples; political, through the encouragement of couples to regard themselves as part of a social body requiring limitation or reinvigoration (and thus straying dangerously, and frequently, into the territory of eugenics); and finally, medical socialisation via intervention into birth control practices.67

The final mechanism—the ‘psychiatrization’ of perverse pleasure—is fairly self-explanatory. Primarily, of course, this occurred through the categorisation of homosexuality as an autonomous (perverse) identity. However other pleasures were variously described as perverse in the psychiatric community of inter-war Australia and elsewhere. Although the masturbating child whom Foucault identified as one of these strategic unities (with the Malthusian couple and the pervert corresponding to the others respectively) is the first of these archetypes to have lost its grasp on the public imagination. The potential for disaster continued to dominate the social discourse of sexuality into the twentieth century, if not through a discourse of

perversion, then through one of dishonour, miscegenation, and weakness; dangers which lurked amongst the pleasures of the flesh.

The bibliography of pleasure and danger is large and rapidly growing larger. The terrain that has not been navigated already is, in general, plotted for imminent navigation on an intellectual map, and by necessity not all of it to a Foucaultian graph. Although valuable in dissecting the threads of power, governmentality, and pleasure, Foucault's work was been rightly criticised for its failure to consider the question of human agency, of a diminishment of the extra-discursive, and of the tendency for histories to be reconstituted from above. Foucaultian critical scholarship is as abundant as Foucaultian; to avoid getting mired down in those arguments here, I will reserve that theoretical gap at specific moments in this thesis where the two general fields of scholarship have a more solid territory with which to engage. As may already be clear, the body of generalist historical literature in the field of masculinity and male sexuality which can be said to have an Australian focus is small, despite the considerable efforts of historians such as David Walker, Stephen Garton, Clive Moore, Kay Saunders, Alistair Thompson, and occasional forays into the field by others. When I turned my focus early on to the inter-war period, the field became minuscule. And when I decided that my prime interest lay in exploring how sexuality and masculinity came to bear on the process of coming of age within that period, a generalist Australian perspective practically disappeared from view. Even taken as an independent field of study, adolescence has not been widely theorised in the Australian context. Other Australian explorations of sexuality and masculinity have engaged with these concepts in a discussion specific histories, of education (David McCallum), psychiatry (Stephen Garton), masturbation hysteria (David Walker), war (Clive Moore, Kay Saunders, Stephen Garton), and national identity building of particular kinds, although the very recent work by Martin Crotty on masculinity and middle-class youth at the turn of the century has begun to fill a small part of the gap.68 I will discuss these contributions in relation to the sites of this thesis which they specifically engage. As a general work, my contribution to the field of sexuality and masculinity is, hopefully, two fold. Firstly, I hope to contribute to an Australian historiography, and secondly to interrogate the interactions of identity and sexuality, using the genesis of an adolescent male identity as an example. I will now turn to the body of critical literature which has served to draw adolescence into the discursive mix.

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adolescence

Once more the legend flourished that the number of years lived constitutes some kind of temperamental bond, so that people of the same age are of many minds but a single thought, bearing to one another a close resemblance. The young were commented on as if they were some new and just discovered species of animal life, with special qualities and habits which repaid investigation.69

The historiography of adolescence is much smaller, more self-enclosed, and less fraught with theoretical concerns than either of the two previous areas of critical literature. This is perhaps because it is seen to encompass a smaller range of behaviour, although this is contestable. Just as everyone has some configuration of sexuality and sex, so too has every adult in Western culture experienced something called adolescence. While it is not a life-long identity to the extent that being a man or a woman is, in order to be an adult one has to have lived through what has been colloquially known as both the ‘terrible teens’ and the ‘best years of our lives’.

The work of American educational psychologist G. Stanley Hall (which will be examined in the next chapter) in the first years of the twentieth century defined a subject area that has since been scrutinised mercilessly, although rarely historically. It is interesting to note that the first contextualisation of adolescence as a specifically defined phenomenon came only two decades after Hall’s definitive work, with the release, in 1928, of anthropologist Margaret Mead’s Coming of Age in Samoa: A Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation. Mead used the case study of the tribal culture of Western Samoa to highlight the unique positioning of adolescence in what she termed ‘civilised’ societies. Although her research methodology and results have been contested,70 Mead’s theoretical argument in Coming of Age in Samoa and elsewhere is a simple and irrefutable one: not all cultures recognise puberty and adolescence and those that do are varied in their emphasis of all aspects of the process. What the scholarship on adolescence too often fails to realise, however, is that the experience is a historically contingent one. A literature search at a library using ‘adolescence’ as a keyword is likely to elicit several hundred entries with an eerie similarity to their titles: Adolescent Life Experiences, Comparative Youth Culture, The Adolescent Experience, Adolescent Suicidal Behaviour, Youth in Crisis and so on, which posit adolescence not only as natural and inescapable, but naturally and inescapably traumatic.

What troubles me most about work of this type is that seventy years after Margaret Mead first suggested that the experiences of youth might depend on cultural

context, the vast majority of texts on adolescence make the a priori assumption that adolescence is a distinct stage in the life cycle subject to external stress of one kind or another. Very little critical literature on adolescence is actually critical: about its use of the term adolescence, about its own investment in certain implicit understandings of the term, or about its constant problematisation (and often demonisation) of adolescents without a corresponding interrogation of adolescence. For it does not take too great a leap of thought to apply Edward Said’s thesis on Orientalism to studies of youth, as Christine Griffin does in the 1993 text Representations of Youth:

‘Youth’ is/are continually being represented as different, other, strange, exotic, and transitory—by and for adults. Youth research which operates from radical and mainstream perspectives has told different stories of transition and threat about (certain groups young The gaze of the researcher is generally voyeuristic, invested with a magisterial authority which can decide who is deviant, deficient, perverted and/or resistant.71

There is, of course, a thread critical inquiry running through the scholarly literature which does interrogate the cultural/historical category of adolescence, among them the work of Griffin cited above. The field of historical inquiry into the subject, as distinct from the reifying sociological and psychological contributions to the discipline of youth study, can justly be said to have started in 1962 with the publication of Centuries Of Childhood by Phillipe Ariès. Ariès boldly claimed that people in other historical settings “had no idea of what we call adolescence”.72 He went on to trace the concept of adolescence through its various historical incarnations from Aristotelian Greece to the twentieth century, highlighting the verifiable disparity of interpretation by using a variety of examples from different Western European cultures. As for an adolescence recognisable to contemporary readers, Ariès pinpointed its initial emergence to the years following 1900 and its consolidation in the years following World War One when, “people began wondering seriously what youth were thinking ... youth gave the impression of secretly possessing new values capable of reviving aged and sclerosed society. A like interest had been evidence in the Romantic period, but not with such specific reference to a single age group.”73

Most of the historically aware literature produced since Ariès cites his work and reinforces his thesis that adolescence is historically contingent. Three more recent influential texts on adolescence in historical perspective, by Joseph Kett, John Gillis and John Springhall, provide another shopping list of cultural circumstances which

73 Ariès, Centuries of Childhood, p. 30.
brought adolescence into play as a cultural definition, and experience, early in the century: a decreased birth-rate, more closely spaced births, an increase in school leaving age, the institutionalisation and expansion of schooling, greater control over fertility, the introduction of child labour laws, and the collapse of volunteerism in youth organisations in the 1890s among them.\textsuperscript{74}

Springhall suggests that prior to the twentieth century, and particularly in the seventeenth century when there existed a recognisable, if more fluid, concept of youth as an intermediary life stage, the identity crisis which we commonly think of as associated with youth was framed in religious terms. Conversion experiences were generally experienced in the late teen years. Springhall argues that, as a consequence, seventeenth-century society required a corresponding concept of youth as a special stage of life. Outside religious discourse, however, one’s social identity was more likely to rest on one’s relation of dependence and separation from the immediate family. And while some have argued that the widespread phenomenon of apprenticeships created a unique youth culture, it cannot be argued that all young people were considered a part of this subculture. Springhall notes that sixty per cent, at the most, of young people aged fifteen to twenty four were employed in various capacities, as apprentices, servants, or labourers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but makes no mention of the gender distribution of such employment, or whether the culture that was nurtured by the apprenticeship system was gendered in any particular way.\textsuperscript{75}

This lack of attention to gender issues is astounding but not at all unusual in the literature of adolescence. It is particularly astounding because the experience itself, from its discursive inception, has been coded so thoroughly by the sex of the adolescent. As but one example, the beginning and end of adolescence for females has been seen to be signified by the onset of menstruation and pregnancy, respectively. For boys, physical signs are less obvious, if evident at all. The adolescence of the male then, has been subject to different criteria, ones socially and culturally as well as biologically determined. Most historians of adolescence have pointed to the level of dependence in relation to the family as indicating the parameters of the experience but the experience is marked on the body of the twentieth century male adolescent as it is the female, albeit in different, and often more restrictive ways.


The formal segregation of a certain age group, which in the nineteenth century was exclusive to those who could afford public schooling, increased enormously in scale and attracted the attention of observers of this ‘new species of animal life’ at the turn of the twentieth century. The multiple identities available to young men of an earlier time—apprentice, student, bread-winner—was quickly reduced to a single option, adolescent. As social scientists and doctors reclassified young people as ‘adolescents’, sexuality and ‘manliness’ (to use the early twentieth century term for respectable, positive masculinity) were drawn into the concept of adolescence both implicitly and explicitly in a way that sharply distinguished and foregrounded the male experience of adolescent as the truly unique, and dangerous one. In *Representations of Youth*, Christine Griffin points to the coincident emergence of a muscular Christian form of masculinity and the psychiatric targeting of (male) homosexual ‘perversion’—which directly preceded the ‘discovery’ of adolescence—to suggest that the discourse of adolescence was primarily constructed to satisfy the demand for the management and construction of sexualities, and male sexualities in particular.\(^{76}\) Although Griffin is rare amongst historical researchers of adolescence in highlighting the sexual and gender discourses which are brought into play in adolescence, Kett also looks vaguely in the same direction when he emphasises the fact that the modern concept of adolescence caused males to be viewed in a way previously associated only with females.\(^{77}\)

What is hinted at, but most often left unsaid, in the historiography (although it was explicitly, and at length, discussed by the historical participants in the discourse) is that adolescence is not only considered a step of the journey to adulthood, but at least as much a step in the path to ‘normal’ heterosexuality. For what, in our culture, marks the end of adolescence as profoundly as marriage?

As a final note, I should acknowledge the contribution made to my analysis of adolescence by researchers of contemporary youth. In particular, Gordon Tait and Mica Nava have brought Foucaultian and feminist perspectives to bear on contemporary adolescence that sets a standard for the way historical research needs to engage the present in order to have full resonance. Tait reiterates the belief that adolescence is a discursive invention, but links that invention directly to Foucault’s notion of self government and ‘work on the self’. The institutional interventions which classify young people as normal, deviant and so on, Tait argues, are premised on the understanding that each individual must construct themselves as a socially workable adult being. By regulating how the young use their time and resources, the

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\(^{76}\)Christine Griffin, *Representations of Youth*, p. 12.

\(^{77}\)Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage*, p. 6.
institutionalised concept of adolescence can operate to ensure a maximum level of adherence to a normative adult self.78

A similar view is presented by Mica Nava, who also focuses on the institutional regulation of the young. Nava emphasises the discourse of sexual difference which is implicit in such a regulation, arguing that young women and men are differently regulated in their sexuality in the home, school and peer environment. She goes on to criticise the tendency of much youth study to assume that male and female adolescents can be understood with the same concepts. In doing so, she addresses the inadequacy of theorising adolescence as a unitary category:

[G]irls are simply unproblematically subsumed under the general category that defines one group of people to another, that is to say youth to adults. This approach obscures differences within the category. Emphasis on youth as a period situated between childhood and adulthood has resulted in the neglect of gender as a relational concept—of power relations between boys and girls.79

Nava’s focus is girls, mine is boys, but it is true from either side of the sex divide that adolescence has specific meanings attached to it which differ for each sex. John Tosh asserts that, “masculinity is never fully possessed, but must be perpetually achieved, asserted, and renegotiated”.80 These negotiations are never more fraught with danger and anxiety than at the time when one’s manhood is incumbent. And although adolescents are ‘othered’ by cultural discourse, they will never be seen to be as incommensurable with adults as males are with females.

The intention of the works discussed here, as in my analysis, is not to suggest that youth is something new. There are plenty of historical examples in literature alone, from Shakespeare’s lament in The Winter’s Tale that the young do nothing other than “getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting”, to Shaw’s complaint that youth was wasted on the young, to demonstrate that some kind of age distinction has always, necessarily, functioned as cultural constraint and enabler.81 What I would like to suggest is that a particular configuration of adolescence has held the imagination of our culture firmly for less than a century, and we can not think it natural, inevitable, or necessary outside the discursive mechanisms that have created it. It is the historical workings of these mechanisms that will occupy the chapters that follow. I will begin with the work of G. Stanley

Hall, the first ‘ethnographer’ of adolescence, and the inter-war educational interventions into the adolescent body that Hall’s work inspired.
chapter 2. G. Stanley Hall and the education of adolescents

A dictionary entry for adolescence is likely to define the noun as 'the period in human development between the beginning of puberty and adulthood', or something quite similar. The entry for the adjectival form of the word results in the definition, 'of or relating to the period of adolescence' but also offers the informal definition 'behaving in an immature way'. Likewise, most synonyms offered by a thesaurus for adolescence are negative: 'boyish', 'puerile', and 'immature' are all offered before 'youth', 'minor', or 'growing' in the Collins thesaurus.1 While being an adolescent may mean occupying a subjective space legitimated by science and social science, being adolescent means, more often than not in current cultural usage, that one is behaving in a manner less than befitting a legitimate member of society. The common-sense view of adolescence in contemporary Western cultures suggests that when an individual acts in an adolescent manner, they demonstrate a failure to shoulder the burden of adult responsibility either through an inability to regulate their actions or through an inherent irresponsibility. Moreover, implicit in this view is the idea that there is a certain moment in one's life that such a lack of responsibility is inevitable and acceptable. During that temporal moment, those (adolescents) who have a legitimate reason for failing to handle responsibility are offered regulation and protection by adult authorities who determine when these 'natural' lapses of responsibility require social and institutional intervention.

The cultural license given to the adolescent to be irresponsible is both elevated and denigrated; adolescence is seen as both natural and anti-social, and the adolescent himself is both groomed for adult society and completely set apart from it. This cultural positioning of adolescence is an ongoing process that historians have linked to the historical trajectories of industrialisation, the social scientific management of daily life, and other macro-cultural processes.2 Here I will argue that the history of adolescence is also a micro-history; that is to say that the way in which adolescence has become a culturally defining state of being is linked not only to cultural upheaval but to micro-particulars such as a definition coined, a characteristic explained, or a concept debated within a small fraternity of interested scholars and pedagogues.

At the beginning of the century, these small conversations were repeated in wider cultural circles and overheard by social scientists, educators, and parents, and

2A range of scholarship examines these points. For an overview see, James Côté and Anton Allahar, Generation on Hold: Coming of Age in the Late Twentieth Century, NYU Press, New York, 1996.
they hastened an understanding of adolescence which has since become uncontested. I will begin this chapter with an analysis of the work of G. Stanley Hall on adolescence. Hall’s major text on the subject provided a springboard for further investigations by educators and others into the ‘problem’ subject which adolescents represented. I will then turn to the ways that Hall’s concept of adolescence was drawn into a specific discourse of educational discipline in Australia. In two of the major debates dominating Australian pedagogy in the inter-war years—increasing school leaving age, and physical and psychological testing and training of students—Hall’s reconceptualisation of adolescence loomed. It was not always a presence which accurately reflected Hall’s own work; in fact on many occasions Hall’s name was invoked to prove something entirely different. Yet both the work of Hall and the work of others that it inspired created a uniquely modern concept of adolescence and its attendant characteristics, risks, and responsibilities. The history of adolescence as a cultural concept (and subsequently, as a state of being) is certainly gradual, but at the beginning of this century it was just as certainly catapulted into a new historical trajectory, and it is that discursive springboard, and the cultural splash that followed that will begin this chapter. The discourse I will trace in this chapter was used by the subjects of the following chapters as a starting point for their own discourses of responsibility, deviancy, and superior manhood. Although recreated in the service of different goals, the specific discourses of adolescent sexuality and the achievement of a better manhood were created around an a priori notion of those events that was, itself, the discursive construction of Hall and his contemporaries.

adolescence, in two parts

G. Stanley Hall’s capacious two volume work on adolescence, titled Adolescence, Its Psychology and Its Relations to Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education, was published first in 1904 and became a standard text in the burgeoning field of education study, used particularly to analyse the effects of puberty on the psychology and physiology of the individual child. Adolescence was Hall’s first monograph and was based on a series of graduate lectures and occasional papers the author had presented and published in university classrooms and journals throughout the United States. Hall earned the first American PhD. in psychology and used his expertise in the field to develop the child study movement in the United States in the 1880s and 1890s. He was founder of the American Psychology Association, one of the first to invite Freud to the United States to lecture, and was a Professor and Lecturer at
Johns Hopkins and Harvard Universities before becoming President of Clark University where he remained until his retirement in 1920.

Many historians have credited Hall with single-handedly creating the modern concept of adolescence. Yet Hall’s undeniably major work is largely a summary of the work of others on the subject of puberty and adolescence. As its full title suggests, Adolescence is a garrulous work; written in an embarrassingly overblown and pretentious style, the two volumes comment on everything from prenatal growth rates to the rapture of religious conversion. Yet it popularised both the nomenclature and subjectivity of adolescence to the extent that both became culturally intractable. Here I will be focusing on only a few elements of Hall’s text; those that became the most repeated, contested, and instructive to educators concerned with furthering what we now call ‘life-skills’ training of those who are no longer children but not yet adults.

Hall defined his subject with strict age parameters: pre-pubescents were those aged eight to twelve, pubescents those twelve to fourteen, adolescents were those between the ages of fourteen and twenty four, and those over twenty four were classified as adult. Five pages into the enormous text, Hall makes his first sex distinction between the nature of male and female adolescents. In girls, he dates pubescence to the eleventh or twelfth year; in boys he suggests it comes two years later. In girls, Hall identifies (or, more precisely, uses the research of physiologists to identify) a ‘decided abatement’ of physical growth at eighteen years; again in boys this abatement is dated two years later, often with a final period of increase and irregular tapering off of growth until the early twenties.4

The entire first volume of Adolescence is little more than the drawing together of numerous studies on the height, growth of organs, tissues, motor functions, diseases, and sexual physiology of the pubescent and adolescent subject. Hall had no compunction about including contradictory research and theory in his summations; a huge number of the assertions he presents are followed by contradictory evidence from another reference, many of which came from German research in the area. It has been suggested that it is this quality which contributed most fundamentally to the ideological influence of Hall’s work. The enormous scope of the two texts allowed Hall to incorporate diverse and opposing discourses which allowed Adolescence to be used simultaneously by radically different professional and popular audiences for different purposes.5

What the first volume also did was make adolescents and adolescence visible to an observer who no longer needed to be professionally trained in the science of physiology to identify such a subject. Information about the changes in sense, in physical presentation, temperament, psychology, motor function, disease, faults and crimes of adolescents had been studied in earnest for a century before Hall’s work appeared. Yet this knowledge was known only to the specialised professionals who performed the tests and experiments and was not widely recognised outside the academies and institutes in which they were produced. *Adolescence* changed that, gathering together this compendium of observable traits and presenting them to a wider audience. In this way, Hall can be credited with the social ‘discovery’ of adolescence, for it was his work that brought adolescence as a concept and adolescents as subjects into a new position of social visibility. The specific developments in scientific classification across a range of professional fields were, for the first time, collected together as evidence of a unique phenomenon. Not only was this phenomenon scientifically tested (by the many authors Hall references) but it was to become self-evident in the discourses that followed.

**rebirth**

All of Hall’s statistical presentations of the first volume come, in the second, into the service of a deceptively simple concept. After exhaustively demonstrating that the physiological growth of children slows to a dormancy period from eight to twelve and then, after age twelve, begins a new wave of vital growth, Hall suggests that this phenomenon should be classified as a ‘rebirth’ marked not only on the body but on the mind, sexuality, and culture. Hall called this disciplinary approach ‘psycho-genetics’ and the process to which it refers is dubbed ‘psychic evolution’. Many of Hall’s British and American contemporaries in the field of social health viewed Hall’s work as indispensable to the proper understanding of and instruction in the social management of life. This is not surprising considering Hall’s key position within American professional and scientific culture at the time. Although the suggestion that Hall single handedly created a psychology discipline in the United States, his position as head of the American Psychology Association was a key factor in positioning his text as influential. Colleague C.W. Saleeby (who later made his own name in the eugenics field) boldly claimed:

Those who know that the proper study of mankind is man would certainly put down the *discovery* and the promised recovery of adolescence as one of the great
beginnings made in our century ... This discovery has made no headlines, even in the best papers, but it has in many of the best heads.\(^6\)

The ‘discovery’ that Hall’s work put into the best heads was not a particularly new one. Jean Jacques Rousseau prefigured Hall’s idea of a second birth by over a century when he wrote in *Emile*, “We are born, so to speak, twice over; born into existence, and born into life; born a human being and born a man.”\(^7\) The discursive importance of Hall’s work, however, emerges from the fact that, despite its failure to say anything startlingly new, *Adolescence* was definitely the first portrayal of adolescence to appear in a modern context that used both vernacular and scientific language to systematically classify the adolescent subject.\(^8\)

The vernacular prose style used by Hall throughout *Adolescence*, particularly in his discussion of rebirth and storm and stress, reveals a language legacy that may have contributed to the book’s success and influence. Throughout, Hall draws upon the stylistic tropes of melodrama, dramatic tension, and heroic fantasy to tell the ‘scientific’ story of adolescence. In doing so, he places his story not only within the realm of academic psychology but within another tradition of narrative—the romantic adventure—which provided his particular story with powerful resources in the cultural imaginary. Robert Dixon’s work on adventure stories before the Great War demonstrates the power (although waning) that the trope of individual male adventurer facing external, uncontrollable dangers had on the popular imagination early in the twentieth century.\(^9\) Hall’s work reconfigured this adventure into a space of science; replacing lions and savages with allusions to statistics and physiology Hall’s prose style comfortably straddled the gap between the authority of science and the imaginary pull of the adventure tale, making it as effective as telling a tale as with telling the story of the human body.

Hall’s work draws an array of specific scientific research on the young into the rational classification of a state of being called adolescence. Recognising, understanding and ministering to adolescence/its, he suggested, is ‘the noblest and most satisfying vocation of man, as well as the best safeguard against cultural pessimism’. For this reason, Hall suggested that adolescents themselves are more worthy than ‘anything else in the world of reverence’, as well as the most inviting and most in need of a service that he acknowledged “we do not yet understand how to

render aright.” Hall saw his duty to be the safeguard of what he called adolescents against the insidious cultural dangers facing youth so that they may traverse safely and productively into a form of adulthood that would bring society as a whole into a new evolutionary stage. The experience of adolescence was taken as a cross-roads between forms of humanity; it remains fixed while those who pass through it may go on to higher evolution.

From the outset of the text, then, there is a recognition that adolescence is both a fixed and, at the same time, flexible state. Hall smooths the incongruity with the assertion that, although the bodily form of the individual is comparatively stable, his soul is in a transition stage. He notes in his preface:

Old moorings are constantly broken; adaptive plasticity to new environments—somatic, economic, industrial, social, moral and religious were never so great; and in the changes which we hope are on the whole truly progressive, more and more human traits are too partially acquired to be permanently inherited. All this suggests that man is not a permanent type but an organism in a very active stage of evolution toward a more permanent form. 11

The importance of adolescence is, in this statement, phylogenetic: in undergoing its changes, the adolescent provides a crucial sequence of events in man’s evolutionary development. It is this quality of adolescence that led Hall to one of his most provocative theories of adolescence: that the occurrence of adolescence in the individual mimicked the evolutionary progress of man from savagery through to civilisation and, potentially, beyond. Hall called this theory recapitulation, and it positioned adolescent bodies centrally in the science of social management, as the developing adolescent literally embodied the development of the species.

As is evident from the exhaustive statistical documentation of physiological data that comprises Volume 1 of Adolescence, Hall considered the ontogeny of adolescence to be as central to the experience as its potential for evolutionary progress. Arguing that adolescence represents both the great awakening of the species, as well as the sensual awakening of the individual, Hall notes,

One of the most characteristic descriptions of this period is that it is pre-eminently the age of sense, and hence prone to sensuousness not only in taste and sex, where the danger is greatest, but in the domain of each of the sense species ... Never is the body so imperiously dominant and insistently in evidence, and never is the external world so ineluctable and impressively real, as in this impressionistic age. 12

10 Hall, Adolescence, Volume 1, p. xviii.
11 Hall, Volume 1, p. vii.
Adolescence is thus positioned not only as a distinct subjectivity but as a crucial (and physically dangerous) step on the path to a more highly evolved form of individual and of humanity. This facet of Hall's work can not be over-emphasised because it provides the means by which adolescence was both etched on the individual and drawn into the social. Put simply, it is that adolescence is an experience of development both for the individual and for the species. What follows from this assertion is to a contemporary reader at times both ludicrous and obvious. At the risk of this discussion falling into either category, it is necessary to carefully examine the rebirth theory that made Hall's name in the field of psychology.

**entering the kingdom of man**

Hall was obviously smitten not only by the work of Rousseau but by the science of Charles Darwin. In the first volume of *Adolescence*, many of the pubertal changes in physiology are juxtaposed to those of the lower mammals. Hall laments the lack of research available in the field of primatology to support his view, but claims nonetheless that, "For men ... and for animals, the age of sexual maturity is marked by an outburst of muscular growth, and also by great changes in its direction and distribution. It is the age when males engage in conflicts for females and develop organs of combat and also of prehension." Hall identifies as the marker of puberty and the harbinger of adolescence mobilises as well the psyche of the youth engaged in these processes. It is worth quoting at length a section of Hall's florid prose in relation to this point to demonstrate the alliance created between physical and psychic processes, between human evolution and civilisation and between personal evolution and manhood:

Psychic adolescence is heralded by all-sided mobilisation. The child from nine to twelve is well adjusted to his environment and is proportionally developed; he represents probably an old and relatively perfected state of race maturity ... a terminal stage of human development at some post-simian point. At dawning adolescence this old unity with harmony and nature is broken up; the child is driven from his paradise and must enter upon a long viaticum of ascent, must conquer a higher kingdom of man for himself, break out a new sphere, and evolve a more modern story to his psycho-physical nature. Because his environment is to be far more complex, the combinations are less stable, the ascent less easy and secure; there is more danger that the youth in his upward progress ... will backslide in one or several of the many ways possible. New dangers threaten on all sides. It is the most critical stage of life, because failure to mount almost always means retrogression, degeneracy, or fall ... The old level is left forever. 

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13Hall, Volume 1, p. 132.  
This statement aptly represents several of Hall’s contentions about adolescence: that it is a synecdoche for human evolution in general, that it is initially characterised by acute disturbances at puberty (which are reconciled through the experience of adolescence), and that it occupies an inordinate amount of psychic and physical energy and time for individuals engaged in its process. It is these three assertions that created the adolescent as a subject requiring careful understanding and close inspection for the good of himself and society, and it is these three points I will be analysing in the rest of this section.

The first of these contentions has, since the time of its publication, become of less value scientifically or psychologically than historically. Hall presented adolescence not only as a discrete stage of life but as one through which the past of the race could be revealed. In adolescence the individual is actually, in evolutionary terms, an infant. The burst of growth energy which characterises adolescence is taken by Hall to literally embody the momentum of human evolution. Thus the child is not only father to the man, but potentially father to a ‘super-anthropoid’ form of man that Hall predicted would result from the careful scrutiny and nurturing of adolescents. 15

To suggest today that children represent the lower evolutionary form of savages is laughable. Yet it is this very contention that I would suggest informs much of the way we have come to understand the male experience of adolescence in this century. From the first page, Adolescence sets the female and male experience of physical maturation apart. Girls, Hall found, mature earlier, more suddenly, and faster, and have their acute disturbances at puberty and in relation to the onset of menstruation, rather than in the period of evolutionary recapitulation represented by adolescence. When Hall turns to the physical struggles of adolescence, girls almost drop out of the picture entirely. To undergo the transition to adulthood, he argues, children need to be goaded through the lower states of savagery and barbarism before emerging victorious in civilised form. The male experience of this is enmeshed in the socio-biology of reproduction, whereby boys are driven, from the cell level upward, to physically compete for access to females. Because females are in a position to choose their mates, this view claims, they do not need to exert themselves in order to become women; in short, the onset of menstruation is an inherent trait of womanhood and girls need do little more to prove themselves adults, capable, and fit for reproduction. 16 With nothing to do to become women, girls can experience only a rudimentary form of the adolescent struggle. Or, in other words, “Girls can never

15 Hall, Adolescence, Volume 1 pp. 71, 89, 94; Volume 2, pp. 73, 101.
experience the hour of glorious conflict, when the blood leaps, and the muscles rally for mastery.”

The seeds of earlier evolution that remain in boys, moreover, make their experience of adolescence more prolonged, painful, and ultimately takes them to a higher state of being. Hall notes that females are what he calls a more ‘generic’ form of human than males; they have fewer specialisations (and also fewer deformities), and have less far to go both in personal and evolutionary development. While this notion was contested by feminists even in Hall’s time, it nonetheless informed (and still informs) a way of viewing the male experience of adolescence. While explicit references to recapitulation theory were quickly dropped from the wider professional and popular discourse of adolescence, the idea remained that boys both require the primitive struggle for survival and need to organise this biological fact into socially acceptable forms of behaviour. For girls, womanhood is the result of an uncontrollable shift in sexual biology, but for boys there was no such biological guarantee. Becoming a man required that men utilise the evolutionary struggle for survival to instruct them in the achievement of successful manhood.

storm and stress

The second of Hall’s contentions—that puberty brings acute physical and psychological changes for which the process of adolescence is a natural and necessary period of recuperation—was also not above contest at the time of writing and ever since. In 1928, Leta Hollingworth’s *The Psychology of the Adolescent* was published by the same company that published Hall’s work. Hollingworth’s book took issue with many of Hall’s assertions; in particular she rejected the idea of a sudden transition in puberty and adolescence and argued that adolescent changes occurred gradually and did little to disrupt the essential subjective continuity of the individual. The rejection of Hall’s theory of sudden and acute change did little to undermine his related point that the adolescent underwent a period of ‘storm and stress’ which required enormous amounts of psychic and physical energy. The power of this idea came, in part, from the visibility of the body Hall called adolescent. Not only was the adolescent visible to

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The idea of self-restraint relies on the notion that individuals will recognise that deferred pleasure is more fulfilling (individually and socially) than immediate pleasure, and on the notion that there is something in men which requires restraint. Hall’s reconfiguring of evolutionary theory in the service of adolescence clearly demonstrates that boys have something very powerful indeed that they need to restrain, millions of years of savagery and barbarism, the ghost of which haunts their bodies at every step. While not a new concept (indeed much Victorian social policy derived from the understanding that men were, in true nature, beasts\(^{25}\)), Hall brought it into play in a new relation to the process of becoming (and staying) a man. Proper use of one’s innate savagery was now linked invariably to the period of life during which such a skill could be inculcated by concerned experts.

‘he longs to struggle’

The third of Hall’s main contributions to the discursively constructed adolescent was that the adolescent was a subject consumed, psychically and physically, by the process of becoming a man. The body of the adolescent was, for Hall, not only visible but useful, indeed indispensable, in the project of achieving a healthy, productive manhood as well as an invigorated nation.\(^{26}\) As I have noted, Hall saw in the process of adolescence the evolutionary struggle for survival and the individual struggle of the savage. Many pages of the text are filled with rhapsodic descriptions of boys’ capacity and ability to fight vigorously and mercilessly. In boys, such a quality is taken as a primordial phyletic motivation; one that should never be repressed but trained vigorously in the service of evolutionary ascendance:

\[\text{[Physical aggression] makes against degeneration, the essential feature of which is the weakening of will and loss of honour. Real virtue requires enemies, and women and effeminate and old men want placid, comfortable peace, while a real man rejoices in noble strife which sanctifies all great causes, casts out fear, and is the chief school of courage. Bad as is overpugnacity, a scrapping boy is better than one who funks a fight ... Like dancing, [fighting] should be rescued from its evil associations and its educational force put to do moral work ...}\]

Educators and others charged with the care of adolescents were encouraged by Hall to develop the boy’s inner savage for several reasons. The first is that a body occupied with physical activities would not be tempted by sensual ones, such as sex or


\(^{26}\)The undeniably strong undercurrent of eugenics in Hall’s work, which is evident also in the wider discourse of adolescence will be discussed more thoroughly in chapter 5.

masturbation. Hall treats sex and aggression as so intimately connected that one cannot but grow in proportion to the other. When, at puberty, the sexuality of the boy rapidly ripens, his tendencies toward physical aggression do so in turn. What is crucial to the achievement of 'real' manhood is that their exercise be in inverse proportion. Hall was concerned with ensuring that energy be expended on what he called 'war' rather than the 'love' that is its biological twin.28

The adolescent's physical expressions of savagery were not, despite the romantic overtones given them, to be allowed to flourish without training and discipline. Historian Gail Bederman sums up Hall's philosophy of physical training in adolescence with a succinctness that Hall himself never approached: "To wield manly power" according to Hall's discourse, she suggests, "one must possess both a male body and the racial ability to restrain the masculine passions of that body."29 Two regulatory means by which this balance could be inculcated in adolescents were physical training through team sport and military-type training of the body.

Team sports such as football, baseball, or cricket are presented as 'schools of mental and moral training'. Not only did they keep the body occupied, but they encouraged observance of rules, and the importance of mental discipline of the body. Moreover,

Group loyalty in Anglo-Saxon games, which shows such a marked increment in coordination and self-subordination at the dawn of puberty as to constitute a distinct change in the character of sports at this age, can be so utilised as to develop a spirit of service and devotion not only to town, country, and race, but to God and the Church.30

This sentiment was hardly a new one; in fact it reiterates the established principles of the Rugby boarding school for boys, which had been established early in the nineteenth century. Thomas Arnold, founder of Rugby (both school and sporting code), established both in order to discipline the bodies of boys whom he felt were more developed physically than morally:

Unquestionably, the time of life at which you are arrived, and more particularly the younger boys among you, is in itself exceedingly dangerous. It is the time, beyond all others in life, when temptation is great, and the strength of character to resist it is exceedingly small ... it is a great matter too, that your bodies, at your time of life, so far outgrow your minds;--that your spirits and bodily strength are so vigorous and active, while your understandings are, in comparison, so feeble.31

28Hall, Volume 2, p. 221.
29Gail Bederman, Manliness and Civilisation, p. 84.
30Hall, Volume 2, pp. 221-22.
There is certainly a rapport between these two statements, but it is necessary to
distinguish them on the basis of their address and emphasis. Arnold was addressing
his comments to a very select group of boys whose ages were of less importance than
the class position that enabled them to attend Rugby. His emphasis too, was on the
exclusivity of such physical training; only certain wealthy and educated boys were
encouraged to participate in Arnold’s version of football on the understanding that it
would elevate those select few even further in their personal development for their
future service to the nation. Hall, on the other hand, was addressing his remarks to
educators and interested social observers who were encouraged to create what he
referred to as the mental and moral training schools of sport as widely as possible. His
purpose was to elevate, not the class which he addressed, but the nation to a higher
level of being.

The second means by which Hall strove to normalise and discipline the young
male body were the ideals and methods of military training. Not only would military­
style training provide ‘helpful regulations’ on the appetite for combat, but it would
also provide immediate physical benefits to the growing body. Marching provides
uniform movement to the legs, arms, and carriage of the body, while the hierarchical
structure of the military, Halls suggests, would give each boy a feeling of inclusion
and progress. Although Hall uses the term youth throughout this discussion there is
no indication that he means to include girls in such disciplinary training of the body.
Throughout the text, Hall uses adolescence to refer to both females and males; ‘youth’
is used as the male equivalent of ‘girl’, and rarely includes girls in its usage. When,
soon after his discussion of military training, Hall points out the ‘subtle but potent’
sexual influence in the behaviours of sport and military ‘play’, it is to demonstrate
how these skills enable the male to properly show off his virile body to the watching
female. Girls are encouraged to be sympathetic spectators rather than fellow players,
in accordance with their biological role as passive observers of male shows of
aggression and physical skill.

It is clear that the weight given by Hall to the sexuality of the adolescent on his
journey to manhood was immense. Every aspect of adolescent awakening, if not
springing from the sexual, is considered to lead to it in one way or another. This is a
notion that modern sexologists had applied to adults for a number of years and its
application to a younger cohort would characterise not only the work of Hall, but of all
the experts on adolescence who followed him. By linking a conception of adolescence

32Hall, Volume 2, pp. 222–23.
33Hall, Volume 2, p. 224.
as a distinct stage of life to a concept of sexuality as the primary human motive, Hall created a subject who was not only unique but profoundly and fundamentally sexed and sexual. Encouraging boys to act out their primordial savagery while at the same time completely restraining their sexuality placed the boy in the difficult position of having to indulge and to control at the same time. Although the tension of this paradox was eased somewhat by Hall's suggestion that boys—during the adolescent stage—should focus on the 'war' impulse and defer the 'love' impulse until fully developed, the discursive strain of such a proposition would occupy sex experts, psychiatrists, and proponents of respectability and nationalism for years to come.

Hall's psycho-genetics of adolescence suggests that the phenomenon is a universal, biologically and evolutionally ingrained one. Yet one of the most famous works on adolescence (perhaps today more so than Hall's own work) emerged from a deliberate attempt to undermine this universalising notion of adolescence. Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* was written under the mentorship of Franz Boas, an American professor of anthropology whose professional motivation was to release cultural theory from its rationalist, organicist moorings. In 1928, Mead's results were published; they demonstrated that the experience of adolescence in Samoan girls was one of untroubled transition from childhood to responsible womanhood. Although it revolutionised the discipline of anthropology, Mead's achievements had little impact on the well-established school of thought which derived from Hall and had since been established comfortably in the mainstream of the psychology academy, social welfare, and legal discourses.

Ironically, Hall had seemingly prepared for such an attack on his biological determinism. The last section of the second volume of his work on adolescence is wholly occupied with presenting the argument that non-Western cultures are perpetually fixed, by virtue of their evolutionary inferiority, in a state of childhood. Thus, from birth to death, a Samoan (or any other non-white) existed in a child-like state. As a result, Hall pre-empted Mead's argument with his assertion that non-Westerners would experience no adolescent 'storm and stress' because they would never in their lifetime reach the state of true adolescence and the manhood that lay beyond.34 With this argument, Hall neatly side-steps the whole debate about the relative contributions made by nature and by culture on the individual.

In this section I have focused on outlining the arguments made by G. Stanley Hall in his seminal text *Adolescence*. It may seem unusual to have devoted so much space to analysing a text that was published well outside the self-imposed historical

34Hall, Volume 2, Ch. 18.
parameters of this work, but there are several reasons for doing so. The first is that Hall's work represented a historical shift in recognising, discussing, and understanding the subjectivity of adolescence and the adolescent subject. The shift was not so much in the knowledge of adolescence but in the orientation of that knowledge toward the social production of a superior form of individual, and of man. While Adolescence reveals a strong historical continuity with earlier notions of a social birth (Rousseau's idea), and the precocious development of body in relation to mind (presented by Hall and earlier by Thomas Arnold), the orientation of Hall's work towards a social attention to, and regulation of, the process of adolescence marked a new direction in the discourse of adolescence. To put it in Foucaultian terms, I would suggest that Hall's first monograph played a critical role in the hastening of a new 'regime' of discourse and forms of knowledge.

Foucault suggests that a new discursive regime can arise within the space of a few years when the development of knowledge is hastened and takes off in a new direction. Of course, this new direction in the case of Hall (and in general, according to Foucault) was not the result of a change in the content of knowledge about adolescence (Hall did not absolutely refute old errors or recover new truths) or a change in theoretical form, but in the way that statements regulate each other so as to "constitute a new set of propositions". The fact that Hall relied upon a body of knowledge about adolescence that was historically established does not mean that his work did not differ from that body of knowledge. Rousseau had suggested that men were born into existence and then into the social; Hall not only quantified and made visible that second birth, but provided an exhaustive list of criterion by which others could identify and utilise this birth into society. In doing so, he changed the way in which knowledge of adolescence was used and by which adolescents were defined.

Just as Hall posited adolescence as the recapitulation of human evolution, I would suggest that his work represents a recapitulation of previously existing discourses of the transition to adulthood; in Hall's theory, the individual re-lived through history's stages, the effect of his work is that a form of discourse re-constituted the history of knowledge about adolescence. The result, in Hall's recapitulation theory, was that the individual would emerge from adolescence at a higher evolutionary level.

The analogous result of Hall's work was that the discourse of adolescence was brought to a new place of engagement with the social discourses of personal and social functionality. In the twenty years between the time of Hall's publication of Adolescence and the years that are the focus of this work, the main propositions made in his work

were not only, to use Foucault’s expression, in governance of each other, but guided the literal governance of a significant section of the Australian population. Historian Patricia Meyer Spacks notes that when Hall presented his exhaustive analysis of adolescence, he both resolved the discursive impasse that marked Victorian cultural constructions of sexuality and established a direction for the next several decades.36

The second reason for focusing so closely on Hall’s work is that the ideas presented in *Adolescence* reconstituted the question of what it means to be a young person in a framework that provided later contributors to the discourse a way of framing their investigations. While many disagreed with some (or many) of Hall’s presumptions, his explanation of adolescence brought the concept (and subject) into play in the inter-war debate over growth, responsibility, and nation. The ease by which Hall’s concepts became given understandings of certain characteristics of human life comes not from his having stated something revolutionary about adolescence. Rather, the influence of *Adolescence* can be seen in the way that it organised constituent knowledge about the physiology and psychology of adolescence into a holistic theory which presented adolescents as organic, essential subjects essential to the task of social improvement. For various inter-war professionals tending to that same task, Hall’s work provided a point from which their own investigations could know and utilise young bodies in that task. It is in this direction I will now turn, to examine some of the ways that Hall’s theory of adolescence was used in the specific discursive history of inter-war educational theory in Australia, and thus drew adolescents into this new regime.

*the education of adolescents/ce*

If G. Stanley Hall can be said to have enunciated adolescence to a receptive audience of educators, social workers, and welfare professionals, then it was this audience that constructed Hall’s meanings in their interactions and training of the children and youths in their care. In this section I will examine the inter-war debate over physical and mental testing in Australian schools to look at the various ways that the discourse of adolescence created early in the century came to play a role in the organisation of bodies and individuals specific to the inter-war years. Everyone engaged in the process of defining and caring for adolescents did so in the interests of creating a stronger, better nation. After the turbulent events of the Great War, the body of the male, and in this case the young male, proved indispensable to that task. As a result, the main purpose of this section will be to examine specific discourses of

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education which enmeshed certain bodies in the process of social rationalisation, regulation, and normalisation.

The practice of medical and psychological inspection of young bodies in inter-war Australia can be viewed as part of what Foucault refers to as the foregrounding of the body as a primary site of social normalisation and the incitement to discourse on sexuality, nation, and progeniture. For, to use the words that open one investigation into education discourse and social normalisation, "where else than in school rooms and yards, can we find such explicit attempts to define 'country' and 'nation' and the feelings children were expected and encouraged to have for them?" Where else too can we find such explicit and widespread attempts to engage the bodies of these children in the process of building that nation?

Inspection of school children is not exclusively a phenomenon of the inter-war years. In 1909 the Victorian Department of Public Instruction established a school medical service whose specific duty was to inspect, but not to treat, children observed in Victorian public schools. In 1916, a similar scheme of inspection and treatment was established in New South Wales. The exigencies of war and the vociferous debate between the British Medical Association of Australia and the state governments of Victoria and New South Wales that had raged since the introduction of school medical inspection had, by 1919, undermined both the breadth and strength of the scheme. In its place arose a different form of school inspection, undertaken not by medical officers but by a new breed of social scientist, the psychologist. The linked historical trajectories of the profession of psychology and its intervention into the school room and the discourse of the continuing education of becoming a man will occupy the remainder of this chapter.

the modern psychology

While school inspection may not be an inter-war phenomenon, the discipline of psychology was certainly pioneered in Australia during the years following World War One. Henry Tasman Lovell was Australia's first Professor of psychology, appointed to the University of Sydney in 1921. He and other psychologists of this period had strong connections to educational pedagogy: John Smyth was the principle of Melbourne Teacher's College, and K.S. Cunningham was associated with the

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39 *Medical Journal of Australia, 30 April 1921*, p. 362; *MJA, 12 February 1916*, p. 137; see also Kirk and Twigg, "Constructing Australian Bodies".
Melbourne Teacher's College and would later become first Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research. Together, they formed the first Australian fraternity of psychologists, and marked the direction that the discipline would take. Shortly after the establishment of psychology as an academic discipline the first public psychology service began, in 1922, with the appointment of psychologists to special educational systems in Tasmania and South Australia. Educational psychology preceded other forms of the discipline—occupational and clinical psychology—by two decades and were the only public services in psychology available to the general population of the country until 1942.

Historian David McCallum has suggested that Hall's *Adolescence* was prescribed reading in teacher training courses in Australia throughout the inter-war period. Its influence can certainly be seen in the work of R.J.A. Berry, a Professor of Anatomy at Melbourne University who published one of the first extensive studies of mental and physical school testing in 1921, in a text called *The Modern Psychology*. In 1918, in an article in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Berry questioned the quality of scientific research in Australia on the psychology of children, imploring: “The children of today are the real wealth of the nation. Is their future to depend on the unverified opinions of an amateur, superficial and bungling decade, or is it to be the product of scientific research and knowledge?” From the psychology laboratories of the Melbourne Teacher's College and the Melbourne Children's Hospital, and through Victorian state schools, Berry set out to ensure that the latter would prevail by testing ten thousand students—male and female—to ascertain the 'normal rate of brain growth' and, through it, the physical and psychological potential of young people from six years of age into the third decade of life.

The methodology used by Berry was the meticulous observation and recording of the physical, psycho-physical, and intellectual development of his subjects. Physical tests comprised the observation of brain capacity (measured through head size), and sitting and standing heights; the psycho-physical component consisted of tests of hand grip and lung capacity; and the intellectual of Binet-Simon and Porteous IQ tests. Berry found that the tests effectively highlighted the presence of the feeble-minded among his subjects; seventy five per cent of those classified as feeble-minded (or, as

44Berry's results were published in full in *The Modern Psychology*, Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, 1921, and documented in part in several articles in *Medical Journal of Australia* between 1921 and 1925.
Berry called them, ‘aments’) failed to reach the average in the physical component of the test and ninety two per cent scored below average in the psycho-physical tests.\textsuperscript{45}

From the outset, Berry’s findings supported the view of puberty and adolescence presented fifteen years earlier by Hall. The chart of brain capacity used by Berry to classify children and adolescents as feeble-minded, normal, or above average in intelligence lists twelve years of age to be the resting stage in the growth of the brain, thirteen and fourteen as the pubescent years, and fifteen to thirty post-pubescence. (In this text, the evidence comes from tests conducted in schools, therefore subjects over fifteen rarely make an appearance.) The difference in brain size increase between boys and girls (8.4\% and 4.7\% growth, respectively) in post-puberty is taken as an indication of the precocity of girls and the subsequent need to nurture boys with extra care in the post-pubescent years.\textsuperscript{46} Berry later notes that ‘irrefutable evidence’ shows that in approximately fifteen per cent of the population, brain growth ceases at fourteen. Since boys are less developed at that age, there is more cause for concern for the education and development of the boy than of the girl. Moreover, Berry expresses grave concern for those who leave school at fourteen because of their lack of full brain development. These unfortunates have not yet fully developed the required control over the “animal calls of the infra-granular” (what Hall called the psycho-genetic) and, as a result, “such individuals may, given a suitable environment, develop into criminals ... and social inefficients.”\textsuperscript{47}

To avoid such a national calamity, Berry took a strong eugenic line, advocating segregation and voluntary sterilisation of the unfit. Other professionals followed eugenic doctrine to a lesser degree, but all agreed that the scientific study of school-goers was a national necessity, “if the ravages of war are to be eliminated by the next generation.”\textsuperscript{48} Other surveys of school children followed, not all of which concurred with Berry’s organicist orientation but all of which suggested that attention to the body and mind of the school-goer and, increasingly in the later years of the inter-war period the school leaver, was the highest service educators could provide the nation. The social orientation of the discourse of adolescence was one of the many inheritances Hall provided for educational interventions into young lives in Australia during the inter-war years. In a 1932 survey of a thousand young people prepared by K.S. Cunningham regarding identifiable problems in education, physique, personality, and conduct of students (conducted again in Victorian schools), the causes assigned by teachers to those problems included poor heredity (153 cases), poor home conditions

\textsuperscript{46}R.J.A. Berry, The Modern Psychology.
\textsuperscript{47}Berry, The Modern Psychology, pp. 34–35.
\textsuperscript{48}Berry, The Modern Psychology, p. 51.
(over-indulgence, lack of discipline, lack of recreation, illness in home) in 275 cases, early illness or injury in twenty four and poor physical condition in 139 cases. In contrast to Berry, who had claimed that ten per cent of school children were feeble-minded, and the later claim of psychiatrist John F. Williams that two per cent of school children were definitely defective along with another ‘submerged’ tenth of delinquents, dependants, and general misfits, Cunningham identified the largest number of abnormalities in school age children to be those in personality, followed by abnormalities in conduct.49

As noted above, Berry was strongly in favour of segregating these ‘abnormals’ and ‘inefficients’ while Cunningham, who would later also become involved in the eugenic movement, offered no strict guideline on how to deal with the identified ‘problem children’. The two later studies by Cunningham and Williams, one undertaken in 1932 and the other in 1937, are representative of the discourse of educational psychology which grew larger and more diverse throughout the inter war years. By the end of the inter-war period, professionals like John Williams were soliciting virtually the whole of the social machinery in the task of making young people socially productive through professional intervention. In addressing the possibilities of preventative psychiatric and educational intervention, Williams notes,

If we are to utilise to the full these possibilities of prevention, cooperation between many agencies is desirable, for example, the medical profession, nurses, social agencies, insurance companies, the clergy, and so forth; and, moreover, that this cooperation will be brought about only by a process of education of those concerned, so that they will be aware of the possibilities and unite to avoid them.50

The actual means of prevention and identification of feeble-mindedness were somewhat vague. In a 1921 public lecture in Melbourne, Berry noted that seventy per cent of the mentally deficient seem ‘in no way different from the intelligent man’.51 What I would like to focus on here, however, is not so much the identification of the feeble-minded, but the identification of a second group of young people, one that the education system was seen to have already failed. The growth in educational interest in the school-goer had, by the 1930s, become particularly concerned with the plight of the male school leaver. This concern emerged partly from the increased general visibility of psychology and educational pedagogy52 but was more so, I suggest, the

51Berry, Stewart Lectures, Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, 1922.
52By 1932, the Australian Psychology Centre was publishing a journal, The Quest, which was almost entirely occupied with the child question in both its earliest development and last stages of growth i.e. adolescence. Educational journals such as the Education Gazette and Teacher’s Aid, Education, and The Teacher’s Journal also emerged in these years as contributors to the discourse of education and nation.
result of an increasingly visible population of unoccupied adolescents that resulted from the Depression. In New South Wales between 1925 and 1935, the high school population doubled; given fewer options for gainful employment, candidacy for high school leaving certificates increased by 120 per cent between 1927 and 1931. Although the percentage of those remaining at school past the age of fifteen remained small, both that increased population and the potentially dangerous population of young men who no longer had gainful employment to occupy them were subject to increased concern and scrutiny.

One suggested method of managing the new population of unemployed youth was to keep them in the educational system longer for their own, and society’s, protection. Education leaders stressed the need to raise the school leaving age in order to combat the potential problem of idle youth, who were often spoken of in fretful tones, characterised by New South Wales’ Director of Education G. Ross Thomas in 1932:

Unless the wheels of industry soon begin to turn, the state must face a formidable and perplexing problem in its army of unemployed and unemployable youth, which instead of being the hope and security of the state may, in revolt, prove a serious menace.

The kind of menace that young people may present had already been expressed by Berry in 1921 in a statement on the evolutionary awakening of adolescence:

The emotions of fear, sex, of animal instincts, as well as many other primitive emotions may retain, in the human being, the more primitive pathways through... the infra-granular cortex, and, if so, especially when associated with a badly developed controlling supra-granular cortex, may result in such pathological behaviour as to become a menace to others, and a cause of disease, crime, and prostitution.

Key to this assertion is Hall’s theory that the young require protection and management during the impressionable years of their adolescence, which constitutes a cultural awakening during which the individual is vulnerable to internal and external dangers. The Depression had ill-effects on the ‘second birth’ of the young (and the young male in particular) who were either laid off indiscriminately, or more typically,

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54 Education, 15 June 1932, p. 83.
56 I say cultural awakening here because, although there was some debate about Hall’s view of adolescence as a biological crisis, there was unanimous agreement in the Australian psychological field that it constituted, at the least, a crisis in the psyche. Mary Sheridan, a Sydney psychologist and frequent lecturer on physical and psychological culture explained, “Adolescence is not an abrupt growth or crisis—it is the culminating stage in the slow developmental processes that have been steadily going forward since the moment of birth. The actual crisis is in the transition from family to social life.” The Quest, No. 9, 1933, p. 2.
laid off from jobs when they reached the legal adult wage rate threshold of seventeen years of age.57

These unemployed youth—no longer drawn into an early adulthood by virtue of their gainful employment yet beyond the disciplinary grasp of the school system—were seen to embody the failure of the education system to properly care for those considered most vulnerable. To increase the school leaving age even by one year, educators argued, would instil in the young not only the fundamentals of education, but the fundamentals of social education, and provide the means by which the young male could distinguish between good and bad:

No education system is any longer of any use which forces adolescents at the impressionable age of fourteen to encounter unprepared those influences whose aim is a violent revolution. Rather, whatever the cost, let the state keep the young people under its control as long as may be necessary for their own and its own well being.58

One year is a small amount by which to increase the education of such a needy population, but according to the norms established by Hall and reiterated by Berry, such a small increment would have a significant impact. If the school goer is pubescent at thirteen and fourteen and adolescent from fifteen, then an increase of one year would enable teachers to continue to educate boys through the crisis of puberty and into the early stages of the distinct life stage that followed. The discipline and normalisation provided by the education system would thus affect an adolescent population, rather than just a child or pubescent one.

There is an obvious shift here in the focus of psychologists to an older cohort. In the early 1920s Berry and his colleagues argued that the observation during the pubescent years could disclose the potential of the child, and urged more attention on those in the final years of schooling life. As the Depression forced an older group into a highly visible cultural limbo between child and adult, adolescence trumped pubescence as the life stage seen as most crucial and in need of attention and instruction. Next to the early years of childhood, psychologists agreed, the years between fourteen and twenty were the most decisive in a boy’s life.59 The crisis created by the Depression for the young reasserted the idea that adolescence is more profoundly a male experience. It was the boys who had achieved a certain symbolic manhood and who the Depression caused to slip backward into an adolescent state that were of most concern. Not only were they unoccupied but they were clearly and

58 Teacher’s Journal, No. 20 August 1932, p. 4.
59 See A.E. Mander, Spoiled Lives, p. 8; The Quest, No. 4, October 1932, p. 3.
publicly visible in their vulnerability. Writing on the tragedy of youth unemployment, A.E. Mander opens with a story of a typical young man in the 1930s:

He left school when he was fourteen and found a job in a factory. There he was employed for five years, engaged in simple repetition work. At the age of nineteen he was discharged ... At nineteen this youth was larger and stronger than he had been at fourteen; and (on the physical side only) he had, of course, developed sexually ... This aspect [is most disturbing], the mind deadening of a large part of Australia's manhood.  

Experts were both concerned for and fearful of young men like this, who were no longer physically occupied and were thus susceptible to using the physical vigour (that Hall had identified in them) in the dangerous practice of love, rather than toil. Young men were increasingly having the physical discipline of employment taken away from them or were simply not offered the chance to do the type of physical toil that would make them men and protect them on the way. Indeed, offered little to do at all, it was widely feared that this group of adolescents could easily become dangerous to women, society, and themselves through delinquency and/or sexual deviance:

When the adult body, with its adult instincts, is coupled with the undeveloped brain and intelligence and weak inhibitory powers of ... a child, the only possible outcome, except in these cases where constant guardianship is exercised ..., is some form of delinquency. This delinquency most usually assumes one or other of two forms—either uncontrolled sexual or homo-sexual gratification—or some form of moral delinquency, such as thieving, lying, slander, as well as other animal instincts.  

The less socially and morally disciplined by education the boy, the more likely was the presumption of an outcome like the above. Where once boys had been trained at school and then in employment in a seamless disciplining of the volatile male body, the Depression created a gap in this training at what was widely considered, following Hall's theory of adolescence, the most crucial time of life.

In more ways than one, the shifting population of adolescent boys created by the Depression turned hope for the future of the nation into anxiety over the lack of management of this population. The testing of a school-going cohort could aid in the containment of such a population while at school, but the ability of psychologists to fully discipline the adolescent population was undermined by the population's mobility, by the structure of the school system, and by the inflexible tools of testing that had been used by Berry and others to classify and normalise school-goers. As K.S. Cunningham noted of school testing subjects in 1923, "We can give you an estimate of

60 A.E. Mander, pp. 3-4.
his ability in school work but can pass on no information as to his special abilities and his probably degree of usefulness or danger to society.”62

During the inter-war years, this difference between expectations of educational discipline and the ability of the profession to engage in that disciplining procedure were never reconciled. Hall had suggested that pubescents and adolescents were visibly identifiable. While the Australian education system had the power to identify, and in doing so, define and normalise the pubescent body, the bodies of adolescents were, as Hall has suggested, more unwieldy. The discourse which had made them unique had also, particularly in the compromised economies of the Depression, made adolescents difficult to fully contain or discipline through educational forms of discourse. Occasionally, where schools could not capture this volatile group, other organisations attempted to fill the gap in order to provide boys with a seamless education and training from child to man.

*the ‘temple of the soul’*

During the later years of the inter-war period, protecting and disciplining the young person in the care of the self merged in the push for physical training of the young outside the school yard. Schools could not cope with this entire at-risk population of young men, nor did they intend to. While there was no government responsibility for post-school youth until 1939, there were numerous parochial organisations aimed at ushering boys through the dangerous phase of life. The Boy Scouts (who catered for boys up to the age of twenty three), the Church of England Boy’s Society of Australia (serving, in the ‘Knight Degree, adolescents of fifteen to eighteen years), the Young Christian Worker’s Movement (whose membership comprised unmarrieds from school-leaving age to twenty five), the YMCA and the Father and Son Movement were all endorsed by professionals as a means of training and protecting young people.63

Organisations such as these—Boy Scouts, YMCA, Young Christian Worker’s Movement—are all late nineteenth or early twentieth century in origin. To some extent their handling and imagery of young males reflects that origin, yet they remained popular during the inter-war period at least in part because of a self conscious effort to become post-Victorian. Many organisations added separate

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63A Directory of Youth Organisations, National Youth Council of Australia, Melbourne, 1963. A 1932 editorial in *The Quest* urged that, “everything should be done to promote international brotherly feeling in the exchange of ideas, lectures, trading, games; movements on the Boy Scouts lines should be formed.”, No. 4, October 1932, p. 1.
sections for older youths, or changed the age divisions within their ranks, and 'talks' for adolescents became a ubiquitous part of the youth organisation curriculum.\textsuperscript{64}

The attention that these organisations paid to nurturing the strong and self-disciplining male body was reflected in the push for the inclusion of physical training in the school curriculum and beyond. When Berry entered classrooms and measured students the emphasis on the physical marks of development were reinforced. Not only did the belief predominate that the process of pubescence and adolescence were as much of the body as of the mind, but the attention directed by school testing of the body reinforced the idea that physical training could play a major role in prevention of social and medical problems.\textsuperscript{65} Here I would like to look at the growing public chorus calling for medical testing of older adolescents that led to the establishment, in 1939, of the National Fitness Movement and the 1938 decision of the federal government to promote physical culture throughout Australia.\textsuperscript{66}

Before the advent of school medical testing in the second decade of this century, institutional physical exams were administered only to those entering the Armed Services or public institutions for the insane. Once school medical testing had legitimised the inspection of 'normal' bodies for the purposes of scientific understanding, similar inspections for older adolescents were seen, by many, to be the next reasonable step in rationalising and normalising the body. In a letter to the Minister of Defence, the Victorian Board of Directors of the Australian Natives' Association urged compulsory medical exams of males at the ages of between twelve to fourteen and again in the period between eighteen to twenty three. Suggested as a replacement for the more select testing of military entrants, the organisation argued that the medical fitness of all youth was crucial to the defence of the nation.\textsuperscript{67} The Director-General of Health added that, "In as much as fitness for defence is one of the principle considerations in the background of the request, the age of twenty five would be necessary ... because it is the period at which growth to maturity is normally complete."\textsuperscript{68}

The question was deferred soon after due to the perceived cost and the difficulty, noted by the Victorian Department of Education's School Medical Service, of organising systematic examination of adolescents in the eighteen to twenty age

\textsuperscript{64} See A Directory of Youth Organisations, National Youth Council of Australia, Melbourne, 1963.


\textsuperscript{66} Kathleen M. Gordon, A Youth Service for Australia, Government Printer, Canberra, 1945. At the time of publication, Gordon was a Commonwealth National Fitness Officer.

\textsuperscript{67} Letter to Sir G.F. Pearce from Australian Natives' Association dated 13 June, 1934, Australian Archives, Canberra, National Physical Fitness, Pt. 1, item no. E347/1/11.

\textsuperscript{68} Memorandum from Director General of Health re: Australian Natives' Association proposal, dated 19 July, 1934, Australian Archives, Canberra, National Physical Fitness, Pt. 1, item no. E347/1/11 part 1.
In the end, no national medical fitness tests were conducted on young men after leaving school unless they applied for the Armed Services (in which case, by 1941, their entry procedure included a battery of psychological tests as well as fitness ones). In 1939, the National Fitness Movement would form in response to the need for a post-school youth service and, through youth organisation membership, would engage the bodies of a huge number of Australian adolescents (36,883 in Victoria alone) in activities intended to elevate both the body and soul of the young. The activities of these organisations provided a degree of disciplinary training of the body (and certainly explicitly attempted to train the sex instinct, which will be the subject of chapter seven) but did not follow the rigid anthropometric agenda of Berry. Indeed, the emergence, at the end of the inter-war years, of a physical fitness and training movement rather than a post-school inspection service equivalent to that operating in schools earlier during this period suggests a loosening of regulatory bodily practices over the years of the inter-war period. As they tried to capture an older, more flexible and itinerant population, the psychologists and educators of the inter-war period had to forgo the quantitative tools that Berry had used to classify pubescents, regulatory practices of the body, sexuality, and sociality of the adolescent necessarily had to be more dispersed.

Interest in the body of the young male formed an important part of the educational discourse of the inter-war years. Through initial inspections of school children and pubescents in the late 1910s a relationship was established between the progress of the physical body and the potential for the physical and social progress of the individual and society. The work of G. Stanley Hall had invested the young body with an enormous amount of power, and educational psychologists like R.J.A. Berry aimed to chart this manifestation of human potential thoroughly and systematically. While Berry’s purpose was particularly to identify feeble-mindedness, he and all other educationalists during these years performed their tests in order to rationalise and normalise both the body itself and the social expectations of that body. As the debate over the testing and training of adolescents makes clear, this was not always a seamless venture; bodies not confined to classrooms were difficult to contain, and even more difficult to systematically classify. Moreover, the power of the education discipline to intervene into the lives of adolescents dissipated as a variety of parochial and social youth organisations moved in to protect and nurture the vulnerable young

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69 Letter from A.E. Machin, Principal Medical Officer of school medical services for the Victorian Department of Education, dated 11 September 1934, National Physical Fitness, part 1.
70 Nixon and Taft, Psychology in Australia, p. 203.
71 Gordon, A Youth Service for Australia, p. 6.
men under their charge and, in doing so liberalised and diversified the types of inspection and normalisation which Berry had hoped for.

In this chapter I have examined two facets of the inter-war discourse of education, particularly as it relates to the education of the male body; firstly, in an examination of the text that set the discursive orientation of the discussions of educational pedagogy that followed and, secondly, in a survey of one of those discussions. My intent has been to show that the practices of psychological and physical testing in inter-war schools were part of an organisation of practices aimed at 'policing of populations and a clinic of bodies'. In particular, these practices etched onto the bodies studied an understanding of adolescence that had been given a new, visible form in the work of G. Stanley Hall.

At the beginning of this chapter I suggested that Hall's work is of more interest historically than psychologically; the inter-war years represent the apex of the popularity of Adolescence in the field of education and psychology. As inter-war texts and modes of normalisation gave way to a different set of texts and practices precipitated by the renewed need to utilise the male body for another war, discourses of adolescence kept pace, proving themselves as historically elastic in nomenclature, orientation, and prescription as are ways of dealing with the adolescent question. Yet, in some ways, just as Hall saw the body of the adolescent as both fixed and flexible, the discourse of adolescence has been characterised by the same paradox. This is in part the result of the fact that adolescence is, at its core, a biological process. There is a fixed essence to adolescence because it is the name given to an almost inevitable process (barring early death or congenital or hormonal abnormality) of biological maturation.

The point at which biological truths about adolescence give way to cultural ones is far harder to fix. By suggesting that the experience of adolescence was both fundamental and unique, Hall and others used its discursive power to harness many of the popular movements of the early decades of the twentieth century. One of these, the scientific management of everyday life, utilised the discourse of adolescent awakening, 'storm and stress', and the vulnerable, visible adolescent body to control the bodies and sexualities of those deemed in need of protection. The form of protection offered by the educational discourse of adolescence was one of bodily discipline. Although less effective than some had hoped at containing the bodies of older adolescents, because of their public mobility, the adolescents/ce created in the early years of the twentieth century provided the means by which bodies could be

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rationalised and controlled. For males, this control came with a licence to engage in a type of physicality linked to, but not involving, the profound sexual feelings that were seen to emerge, as if from nowhere, during the years of adolescence. As a result, the male experience was both privileged and problematised.

Several historians have noted that adolescence has functioned historically as a metaphor for human nature; dangerous if left untutored and natural, but “capable of ennobling the nation if tutored by a skilled hand.” A similar metaphor had functioned in regard to masculinity for several decades: men were seen to hold in their bodies the keys to the elevation or degradation of humanity, particularly in the way they used their sexuality. When Hall applied this understanding of masculinity to the unique state of adolescence, he joined the two in a way that would enable changing attitudes toward sexual pleasure to be absorbed without threatening the boundaries of respectability and adult responsibility. Because adolescence was positioned as a different state of being with a different body, mind, and psyche (all of which could be quantified and utilised), different rules would apply to those engaged in the experience. As a result, the disciplined self-control of the body became the exclusive province of the adolescent male, enabling the adult male to enjoy the pleasures of a modern sexual discourse of pleasure.

I opened this chapter with contemporary dictionary and thesaurus definitions of adolescence. I do not mean to suggest that the discourse of G. Stanley Hall and R.J.A. Berry has remained unchallenged and unbroken to this day. Much, if not most, of the research on youth and adolescence done in the years since Hall has demonstrated the role of culture and discourse in shaping the experience of adolescence. And yet traces of Hall’s flowery prose remain, and continue to be etched on the bodies of the young. The school leaving age was eventually raised for the continuing protection and education of a subject who was seen to require a safe place in which to mature. That place would be, and still is, a school, and its structure and curriculum continue to rely on the idea that the adolescent is somehow set apart, by virtue of his vigorous engagement with one of the most important processes of his life. During the inter-war years, this institutional site was not nearly as effective at containing and constraining adolescent bodies as it is today, and while the discourse of adolescence had emerged from the discipline of educational pedagogy, it was in other discursive sites that the discourse of adolescence was more fully mobilised in the disciplining of bodies. It is one of these sites that I will examine in the next chapter, as

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I turn to the way that Hall's modern adolescent was legally defined by the discourses of punishment and protection.
In 1930, the Inspector-General of New South Wales prisons, R.H.W. Bligh, wrote an impassioned letter to Australia’s Prime Minister. In it, he asked that the Prime Minister give consideration to the protection of the morals of young men. He declared:

> Girls who have not had the necessary guidance as to what true womanhood means are wrecking the lives of youths. They have a law which they can use as a whip to punish the youth who does not satisfy them ... [W]here there is a circumscribed area the position is more serious for youths, as they are constantly approached by girls for sexual contact. It seems hard to believe, that I frequently have an appeal made to me by youths to assist them to resist the overtones. In this state, the Minister states publicly that he looks to the Father and Son’s Movement to deal with parents.¹

Bligh personally endeavoured to protect these youths in his position as Inspector-General, but his letter indicates that he felt more should be done in the area. The efforts of groups such as the Fathers and Sons Movement to protect boys with the knowledge provided in sex conduct literature will be the focus of chapter six. In this chapter, I will explore not the protective means that Bligh requests, but the discursive edifice of which he was a part: the professional legal discourse of juvenile delinquency. In the previous chapter I looked at some of the ways that a modern discourse of adolescence came into play in the educational surveillance and discipline of the pubescent and adolescent male. Here I will turn to a discourse directed at the young male who, by reason of truancy or age, was able to avoid the tutelage of educational discourse. Where the previous chapter charted the construction of the good adolescent, this and the following chapter examine in turn those who staked the boundaries between good, bad, and mad.

In The Policing of Families, Jacques Donzelot suggests that the juvenile court, by eradicating the distinction between the penal (punishment) and the ‘assistancial’ (protection), “widens the orbit of the judicial to include all measures of correction.”² Here I will focus on two elements of that correction: the discursive and legislative edifice consolidated during the inter-war years to contain criminal and neglected children, and the psychological investigations that helped to define certain of those young people as delinquent adolescents. The former element will be traced through the establishment of the Children’s Court and the legal provisions of juvenile delinquency, the latter through a number of inter-war psychological investigations.

¹Letter from R.H.W. Bligh, Inspector-General of Prisons, NSW, dated 14 November, 1930, Series no. A1928, item no. 655/6, Mental Hygiene Suggested National Lecture Scheme on Sex Instinct and Control, Australian Archives, Canberra.
into the character of the delinquent. I have situated a discussion of juvenile delinquency between that of educational and psychiatric discourses because of its pivotal position between sanctioning offences and defining the norms that characterised offences as such. Donzelot suggests that juvenile law relies on the former (the "retributive justice" of ordinary law) in order to guarantee and ratify the normalising work of social agencies (such as education, welfare, and so on). Inter-war juvenile delinquency discourse, moreover, drew on the professional expertise of both educational pedagogues and psychiatrists to determine the status of the young offender and the best means of treating him.

The discussion in this chapter will not focus strictly on judicial determinations or examinations of juvenile delinquents. Of greater interest is the way that the legal discourse of juvenile delinquency drew the delinquent into a position of scrutiny not only in relation to the magistrate, but to a range of social technicians converging on the social subject of the adolescent. In inter-war Australia, the development of juvenile law situated the delinquent not only in a discursive space between tutelary and penal sites but reinforced his pivotal position between child and adult. As experts established both the delinquent subject and the specialised mechanisms for dealing with him, their emphasis turned from the punishment of 'bad' boys to the protection of vulnerable ones. British historian John Muncie has noted, however, that "the birth of the concept of juvenile delinquency did not so much engender a greater humanitarian attitude toward young offenders, as justify an increased surveillance and regulation of both themselves and their working class families."4

Muncie and many others historians working on delinquency issues do not use sex-specific language to describe the discourse of delinquency. The modern discourse of juvenile delinquency, however, was certainly, if not in word then in deed, notable for its sharp sex distinctions at all levels of intervention into delinquent behaviour. Here I will be emphasising the particular ways that the discourse made the young male a socially operative subject, and a distinctly sexed (and sexual) one as well. This is not to suggest that young females were any less scrutinised or constrained by delinquency discourses, but simply that the delinquent population as identified by judicial instruments during the inter-war period was overwhelmingly male and that much of the knowledge of juvenile delinquency was constructed from that (male) population. This will become obvious in the second section of this chapter which will analyse two Australian surveys of juvenile delinquents—conducted on boys—which helped turn the legal subject of the delinquent into a social one. First, however, I

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3Donzelot, The Policing of Families, p. 112.
I would like to trace the development of the judicial edifice that made the adolescent a distinct legal subject.

juvenile justice

In one of the most thorough modern examinations of the character of the young delinquent (in a 1925 monograph called *The Young Delinquent*), Sir Cyril Burt, a London psychologist, suggested that among the young crime may be rare but "naughtiness is universal." While the naughtiness of young people may be universal, the classification of certain forms of that naughtiness as juvenile delinquency is a nineteenth century invention. One of the first uses of the term 'juvenile delinquency' came in the Report for the Committee for Investigating the Causes of the Alarming Increase of Juvenile Delinquency, prepared for the British Parliament in 1816. Historians of law have linked the development of the modern phenomenon of juvenile delinquency with several key transitions of the early nineteenth century period: urbanisation, industrialisation, population growth, a breakdown of traditional forms of social control, and the related development of new social control mechanisms. It is the Australian occurrence of the last of these phenomena that I will engage with here.

As with other nations such as Britain and the United States, the first moves to identify and recognise the young offender in Australia coincided with the development of institutions to deal with neglected and destitute children. In 1866 New South Wales passed the Public Schools Act, making school attendance compulsory. In the same year the Reform Schools Act, Industrial Schools Act, and Workhouse Act for vagrant children were also passed. In Victoria, legislation providing for the care and education of infants who may be convicted of felony or misdemeanour had been passed in 1849; it enabled the court to administer apprenticeships to court defendants under the age of nineteen. In 1850, the Victorian Parliament passed an act allowing for the more speedy trial and punishment of juvenile offenders, in this instance referring to offenders under the age of fifteen. Between 1863 and 1874, Reform and Industrial School Acts had been passed in most Australian states. Together these Acts comprised a new way of identifying and dealing with young people as a distinct subject group. Their passage also enabled

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Australian courts to compel young people to attend school, or to deliver them into the care of other social management institutions. The creation of separate procedures for young people based on their age and not the circumstances of their involvement with the court blurred the distinction between those who needed punishment, *i.e.* young offenders, and those who needed protection, *i.e.* neglected children. Although reformatory school acts were instituted to deal with criminal offences, throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century Australian courts were empowered to send neglected children to reformatories and to transfer them to reform institutions if they were categorised as a management problem. Release from reformatories was an administrative procedure, not a legal court procedure, which further blurred the distinction between punishment and protection. Armed with a separate procedural system for young people, one which constituted a different penal regime, different intervention criteria and penalties, and administrative discretion over the type of intervention into young peoples’ lives, the juvenile court system of the nineteenth century was marked by an overlap of criminal and welfare interventions, an overlap that would continue well into the twentieth century.8

Nineteenth century legislative amendments provided for the treatment of young people at the court’s discretion. If the young offender was consigned to the criminal justice system, rather than dealt with administratively, no provisions existed to legally distinguish offenders on the basis of age. Although the common law *doli incapax* presumed no criminal responsibility up to the age of fourteen, this was rebuttable in court. In a history of juvenile criminal law in Australia, John Seymour notes that under this common law Victoria’s Pentridge Gaol contained children as young as six years of age who could be flogged and sentenced to road gangs.9 Although youth could mitigate sentencing, the age of a criminal did not mitigate Australian law until the early years of the twentieth century, when the establishment of Children’s Courts systematised the exclusion of young people from the regular judicial system.

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the children’s court

Legislative amendments of the nineteenth century, piecemeal though they were, established the juvenile justice system as one of benevolent as well as penal intervention. At the court’s discretion, a young person appearing before it could be conditionally discharged, offered ad hoc probation, fined, committed to a reform institution, or sentenced to a penal institution. The choice between these options depended not only on the crime (or circumstance) of the young person, but on the court’s determination of what would be in the child’s best interest. Australian historians Chris Cuneen and Rob White have suggested that the power of the court to commit young people to long periods in reform institutes expressed the ideology that the court was committed to the training and education of young people, and not just the adjudication of their crimes.10 Precipitated by this ideology, and by a desire to remove young people from a penal system where they could be morally contaminated by incorrigible adult criminals, rudimentary forms of a children’s court apparatus were established in all Australian states between 1905 and 1918.11 It should be noted that although the court system was called a ‘children’s’ one, the system served all Australians under the age of eighteen, both in criminal matters and in matters pertaining to this welfare, including pensions, feeble-mindedness, adoption, vagrancy, and neglect.

The form of legal, discursive structure that resulted from the creation of children’s courts has been described as anti-legal, because intervention could be undertaken when no offence was committed, such as in cases of truancy, uncontrollability, or exposure to moral danger.12 The role of the children’s court was also very different from that of the adult penal system: children’s courts were to be parental, informal, and administered in a ‘fatherly manner’.13 Magistrates were to be specially selected and trained for their distinctive duties, and probation officers were given a special role in the supervision of young offenders and the creation of background reports. While I will elucidate these specific judicial tools in more detail later in this chapter, here I would like to note that the roles of the children’s court administrators were created with the understanding that properly managing young

11 Although the administration and management of the children’s court system varied from state to state, legislative acts brought one form or another of the apparatus into existence. In 1905 South Australia passed a State Children Act, and New South Wales the Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act, a Children’s Court Act passed in Victoria in 1906, in Queensland and Western Australia in 1907, and Tasmania followed in 1918 with the passage of The Children’s Charter.
13 John Seymour, Dealing with Young Offenders, pp. 70–71. See also John Ramsland, With just but relentless discipline: A Social History of Corrective Services in NSW, Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst, 1996.
people would require specialist knowledge and understandings of the character and circumstances of the child. This made the status of the juvenile offender vastly different from his adult counterpart, not only in the way he was treated, but at every step along the judicial path, from identification to rehabilitation.

The implications of denoting juvenile delinquency (and juvenile delinquents) as a site of knowledge and management are obvious. To return to Donzelot for a moment, he identifies the unique status of the juvenile offender as one who is constructed by specialists who seem to be reducing offenders’ sentences but who, in actuality, expand the scope of surveillance and punishment of young people. As we will see, the children’s court employed not only magistrates, but social technicians, psychologists, and medical specialists to determine the nature of the offence and the character of the offender. As a result, the category of juvenile delinquent quickly came to refer to more than just a legal status. Instead, it has been situated by historians and theorists as an apparatus which extended out from the law into the spheres of social intervention and scientific classification:

Delinquency is not a purely legal category but a ‘scientifico-legal’ one; and its reference is not simply to the juridical subject who commits a legal offence. When judges and social workers speak in the court of delinquency, there is a shift of focus from the offence considered as an act to the offence considered as an index of the personality or soul of the offender.

In the United States, the creation of a juvenile court in the late nineteenth century enabled magistrates to determine the delinquency of the child, after s/he was brought to the court on a delinquency petition. If a petition was brought before the court, the decision of the judge was not related to a particular behaviour but of the general character of the delinquent subject. The delinquent’s crime did not matter so much as the dysfunction that such a crime indicated in the nature of the individual. In Australia, by contrast, the court adjudicated on the offence and not the status of the offender. Because the latter was often implicated in the former, however, offence and offender remained linked, if not by principles of the court then certainly by its procedures. The 1920 New South Wales Royal Commission into the administration of all acts regarding state children remarked at length on ways to distinguish and account for both the offence and the offender:

The magistrate, before dealing with a juvenile offender, should consider, not so much what crime the accused has committed, but the question whether the offence was consistent with the general character of the child; the circumstances surrounding the committal of the offence as an indication of the disposition of the

delinquent; the extent to which his other character had become set in the direction of wrong doing; whether the delinquent had advanced so far in evil courses as to be strongly under the influence of bad habits; or, on the other hand, had become an offender through some course which indicated that he or she required only a more wholesome environment to prevent any further delinquency. The character of the home and of the parents was regarded as an important factor; and where those were found to be bad, separation from them was considered necessary. Where the home control was weak and insufficient, it was considered it might be strengthened by the support which the action of the court could secure. Consideration of these factors, it was thought, would lead the magistrate to the determination whether he should release the offender upon probation, under supervision of responsible officers, or commit to an institution.\textsuperscript{16}

Before I turn to this element of delinquency, however, I would like to outline the discursive construction of an edifice that enclosed adolescents. While the foundations of legal intervention were certainly set in the years preceding World War One, the inter-war years represent a period of consolidation of the principles and functions of the legal apparatus concerning adolescence. I will focus this discussion on the developments that occurred in New South Wales and Victoria, primarily because these two systems are the sites in which two substantial inter-war surveys of delinquency were undertaken, but also because they represent the largest, most well established children's court systems in operation in Australia during the inter-war period. While I will use the labels structure and/or edifice to refer to the mechanisms of the court, I do not want to suggest that they are not discursive practices structured and edified through knowledge and identified truths. It is simply to highlight and distinguish practices that directly controlled the adolescent and ones (that will be discussed in the second section) that constituted that control as the proper means of socialising the young.

\textit{widening the net, tightening the holes}

The creation of a special form of justice for young people had the almost immediate effect of situating young people in a position of vulnerability that demanded legal intervention. The year after children's courts were established in New South Wales, the magistrate who presided over the court commented on one of the most obvious changes in the way that the official mechanisms of the state came to bear on young people. In his \textit{Report on the Working of 'Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act, 1905}, Mr. A.N. Barnett acknowledged the effect the court had had on

widen the net around offenders and other categories of children who previously would not have appeared before the court. He noted:

It is certain that a very large proportion of the children who have appeared before the [Sydney Children’s Court] since its inception would, under the former regime, have remained uncared for and unrestrained, partly owing to the unsatisfactory methods open to the Police Courts for dealing with neglected and uncontrollable children, and partly because of the natural diffidence felt by aggrieved persons in prosecuting, and of Magistrates in applying the harsh alternatives of the then existing law to juvenile offenders.17

Two elements of this statement are telling about the way that magistrates and court administrators saw their role in relation to young people. The first is Barnett’s acknowledgement of the dual role of the court: at the same time, even in the same case, to ‘care for’ and to ‘restrain’ young people. The second is his recognition that the workings of the court constituted a regime. Of course, Barnett was using the term regime to refer to the system of administration practised by the children’s court. It will become obvious, however, that the regime of the children’s court also worked in the manner described by Foucault: as a way of organising knowledge, discourse and the instruments of that knowledge around a particular ‘truth’. 18

The ‘truth’ which organised the children’s court system, functionally and discursively, was the one identified by Barnett: that Australians under the age of eighteen required special attention and treatment under the law for their own protection and the protection of society. The early development of the children’s court instituted this truth by setting up a system whereby all children who came to the attention of police would be dealt with in one location, and that treatment would be guided by the principles of care and restraint. The result was two-fold. First, the ability of the court to intervene into young people’s lives increased. Second, the attention to the care of children necessitated the intervention not only of the court but of a range of social technicians who would determine whether the child in question required care or some other form of judicial restraint. These effects both widened the net of scrutiny and tightened the holes through which young people could escape the attention of the court. I will now turn to this process in a brief sketch of inter-war children’s court procedures in New South Wales and Victoria.

Children’s court legislation ordained not only separate treatment for young people but separate premises, administration, and technicians. While these features of the court often lagged far behind the courts’ distinctive duties,19 the New South Wales

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19 South Australia, for example, passed the State Children Act in 1905 which separated the activities of the children’s court, but a separate premise was not established until 1934 with the building of the Central
and Victorian court systems both established separate premises for children's courts in the years preceding World War One. In both of these states, specially appointed magistrates presided over the children's court. For the appointment of children's court magistrate, the New South Wales Attorney-General had in mind a person "endowed in no ordinary degree with the larger and better attributes of human nature", but there is little evidence to suggest the special suitability of those who were appointed to the task.\textsuperscript{20}

Another feature intended to distinguish the children's court from the police court was the liberal use of alternative means of dealing with those who came before it. The sentencing pattern of the Sydney children's court had, from its inception, distinguished it from its adult equivalent. Of the 876 offenders tried by court in 1910–1911, forty per cent were fined, either in conjunction with other punishment or as sole punishment.\textsuperscript{21} Release on probation was the sentence for 45.6 per cent of offenders, and committal to an institution accounted for twelve per cent of sentences handed down in 1910 and 1911. That the children's court used surveillance (through probation) as a means of treating the largest number of offenders before the court suggests that, although distinct from the police court, the children's court did have effective and unique ways of proscribing the behaviour of its subjects.

\textit{identifying the subject}

Before I go further, I should clarify what I mean when I refer to the subject of the children's court system. The system existed to deal with any Australian under the age of eighteen. Those in the upper years of this category were certainly not considered 'children'; they were offered different facilities for reform, and were treated quite differently from younger children who came before the court. I have also used the word 'offender' to define the young people who appeared before the court. It should be noted, however, that these 'offenders' had not necessarily committed a criminal offence. Indeed, the largest proportion of young men and women who came before the court did so because of activities that were not illegal: the typical male presented to the court as a result of truancy, and the typical

\textsuperscript{21}Sir Charles Mackellar, \textit{Address on the Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act and the Ethics of Probation Law}, Government Printer, Sydney, 1913, p. 25.
female for 'uncontrollability'. As Mark Finnane has noted, the establishment of a children's court gave police responsibility for surveying young people in ways that extended "well beyond the notion of criminal offence or its prevention." Compulsory schooling and the children's court apparatus enabled police to apprehend any young person they came across who was of school age but absent from school. An 'offender' then was not necessarily a law breaker but could simply be a child who was considered a public nuisance or who attracted the attention of one of the social policing agents—welfare officers, truancy officers, probation officers, police, and so on—whose job it was to identify and deal with such children and adolescents. 'Delinquent' too remained an imprecise nomenclature, for it could be used to describe a child who had done nothing more than be born into a home which experts defined as unacceptable. While magistrates' attitudes may have varied in relation to a neglected child and a criminal one, no definite division existed between the tools used to classify him or her or in the solutions available to the court. These young people—delinquent through behaviour of their own or simply through circumstances beyond their control—were subjected to policies and treatment that narrowed the gap between the social machinery of education and of the law and made social agencies' monitoring and control of the social lives of young people potentially seamless through the childhood and adolescent years. Many administrators of the children's courts acknowledged that this was the intent of juvenile court apparatus and although it never fully succeeded, it did encircle a visible adolescent subject with social machinery.

Legislation and intervention of the courts was, from the start, configured according to the sex of the subject. Males and females were provided with separate reformatories and scrutinised according to different elements of behaviour. During the inter-war years, females accounted for only a small percentage of juvenile offenders and were brought into the tutelary sphere of the court largely as a result of special provisions on sexual behaviour.


25 Police Department and Child Welfare Department reports for the period indicate that formal judicial action barely touched girls during the inter-war period. In 1919, New South Wales statistics on young offenders show that 1292 out of 1361 (94.9 per cent) total juvenile crimes were committed by males; by 1936 crime statistics show an increase in total number but little change in proportion according to sex: 6042 out of a total of 6555 (92.2 per cent) were crimes committed by males. Annual Police Report, N.S.W.P.P. 1920, p. 857; N.S.W.P.P., 1937–38, p. 40.
misconduct applied only to girls, and the commonest charge for girls appearing before the court was ‘uncontrollability’, a charge that, according to New South Wales stipendiary magistrate J.E. McCulloch, “very often covers wayward conduct with the opposite sex”.26

I have several times referred to the ‘juvenile justice’ system in discussion of the children’s court. Here again, clarification is required. While the machinery of the children’s court dealt with young people from infant age to seventeen, the focus of this chapter is on the particular interventions and discourse that characterised the adolescent subject. When I refer to ‘juvenile justice’ I simply mean the broad net of legislation and practice which captured all young people: orphaned infants, neglected children, school truants, and post-school juvenile criminals. Procedures certainly varied according to age, circumstance of court appearance, and sex, and I will focus more thoroughly on the distinctions of the (sexed) subject of the children’s court when I turn to the discourse that aimed to identify, classify, and understand the character of the delinquent. Next though I would like to focus on the construction of the tools of the children’s court before turning to the disparate ways they were used to identify particular troubled and troublesome subjects.

Returning to the inter-war developments of the children’s court, I will focus on two elements of children’s court practice: the examination process which classified the young person for the court, and the treatment options available to the court in dealing with young offenders. In New South Wales, existing child welfare laws were consolidated in the 1923 Child Welfare Act, after which no new legislation was passed until an updating of the act in 1939. Similarly in Victoria, various acts were amalgamated under the Children’s Welfare Act of 1928. These changes brought together several policy and procedural elements into one legislative regime. It is the use of sheltering and sentencing procedure that illuminates a number of ways that the children’s court created another means of drawing particular young bodies into the social, and into an increasingly impermeable net of discourse and intervention aimed at utilising the body of the young in the project of social reform and progress.

**sheltering and sentencing**

A key element of the children’s court from its inception was the establishment of shelters for those appearing before the court. These shelters were attached administratively to the children’s court and were the first point of entry into the

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judicial system for the young offender. At the Sydney Metropolitan Children's Court in Surry Hills, a shelter for boys was located adjacent to the court building; a separate shelter facility for girls was located several kilometres away at Glebe. Every child who came before the court was processed and examined by officers of the Child Welfare Department in preparation for court proceedings. Not only did officers inspect the case papers of the offender, the offender was also examined by medical and psychological officers at the shelter. The results were passed on to the presiding magistrate and could be used to mitigate culpability, sentencing, and treatment of the offender. In New South Wales, these magistrates differed from those of other states' children's court: they were stipendiary where other states relied on honorary (and untrained) magistrates; were drawn from the ranks of existing stipendiary magistrates; and, in the Metropolitan Children's Court at least, devoted all or most of their time to their special duties in the children's court. In other Australian states, the lack of such a professional, orderly, and efficient magistrates' system drew criticism and most states attempted to emulate Sydney's model, although uniformity was not achieved until as late as the 1950s.27

The Sydney shelters were established in 1911 in conjunction with the establishment of the court itself, but it wasn't until the mid 1920s that a 'scientific' approach to testing and understanding delinquents became standard procedure. When it did become standard, it influenced not only the ways that magistrates dealt with offenders, but the way that delinquency itself was constructed in relation to the body and mind of the delinquent. By 1920, testing had resulted in the classification of juvenile offenders into thirteen distinct types, among them, "juvenile offenders guilty of major offences, whom expert examination shows to be mentally abnormal, boys under the age of sixteen who are known to be addicted to immoral habits", and "juvenile offenders who are shown to possess a wicked and perverse discretion in the exercise of the offence or offences".28 This classification system received approval from the New South Wales Justice Minister and was utilised in determining the culpability of the young offender and the responsibility of the court in treating him.

Classification and observation of the young offender also served a wider social and moral purpose. In his report for the years 1926 to 1929, D. H. Drummond (Minister of Public Instruction at the time and, later, Minister for Education in New South Wales) commented on this function of the children's court shelters:

Given this [complete examination of every child] each delinquent can be given individual attention and that degree of care considered necessary to build up a healthy body, remove all undesirable thoughts from and instil healthy, clean

27Seymour, Dealing with Young Offenders, pp. 117–18.
thoughts into his mind and avoid all those difficulties which tend to undo the good work done by the Department.29

From the years 1926 to 1929, 10,051 males and 2,040 females passed through the Surry Hills Boys' Shelter and the Glebe Girls' Shelter.30 Every one of these young people was given Binet-Simon IQ tests, personality tests, tests of strength, grip, and metal development as well as medical examinations for venereal disease, malnutrition, hearing, sight, height, and physical development in a format echoing that of R.J.A. Berry's testing of school children discussed in the previous chapter. All of this information was made available to the presiding magistrate during his deliberations and in 'difficult' cases, a medical doctor could be called upon to intervene in the court proceedings.31 Quoting American psychologist Barry C. Smith, Drummond aligned his work at the Child Welfare Department with the work of educational psychology, suggesting that their purpose was the same:

[F]or the child who is tending towards delinquency ... the single greatest need is that he be accurately and adequately understood; that his problems, difficulties, and motives be understood—in short, that the decisions as to what is the best thing to do for him be based on a thorough going knowledge.32

The accretion of this knowledge drew on several elements of social technology—education, public health, and welfare reform—and further established the young as a separate species from the adult, requiring careful and constant attention. Several times during his tenure as Minister of Public Instruction, Drummond expressed concern that the technologies of observation and normalisation were not comprehensive enough. "It seems a pity", he noted, "that a child has to become a delinquent and an offender against our moral laws before the community makes available to him this preferential treatment of which he stands in need."33 Several elements of this statement are immediately compelling. The first is the distinction between delinquent and offender, which suggests that one could be the former without having committed a legal offence. The second is the reference to 'our moral laws', suggesting special criteria of morals (and of laws) for young people. In relation to the first element, Donzelot has argued that the preservation of the social relies on the adaptation of individuals to its regime. On these grounds, interventions

30 Report of the Minister for Public Instruction, pp. 11–12.
31 The medical consultant for the Sydney children's court was Dr. J.W. Kemp Bruce, a psychiatrist who tested the medical and psychological capacity of children in the court system. Kemp Bruce was also a frequent contributor to the Medical Journal of Australia in relation to adolescent insanity, which is the subject of the next chapter.
by the state into private behaviour are justified in order to apply the social norm. Thus
the legal status of the delinquent or offender is less important than his or her
identification as a threat to the normative operation of the social. Or, to return to the
words of D.H. Drummond:

To give a child the maximum of education available, so making him wise and able
to think and reason for himself on the problems that confront him, is to arm him
against suggestibility and wrong doing, and many careers have been saved through
the timely interference of the [Child Welfare] Department acting as a parent for the
state.

Two inter-war surveys of delinquents illuminate the second and third elements of
Drummond’s statement and I will turn to them shortly. Before doing so, I will return
to the court itself to look at the special provisions for treatment made available to the
young following their examination and subsequent appearance before the court.

sentencing the young offender

The powers given to magistrates to deal with young offenders focused on
reforming young offenders through management intervention. Extensive
discretionary powers were available to magistrates dealing with young offenders and
although they differed from state to state they indicate a widespread belief that the
young required state protection. In some states, fixed sentencing terms had featured
in the treatment of young offenders for some years and were established by inter-war
legislation. In Victoria, the 1917 Children’s Court Act conferred additional powers on
the court to sentence older offenders—aged fifteen and sixteen—for a fixed term of
twelve months and following the expiration of that term to a further indefinite
sentence ‘during the Governor’s pleasure’. Although this enabled a magistrate to
sentence a young offender to life committal, the Victorian Attorney-General assured
parliament during the bill’s reading that this would be unlikely to happen:

[T]he men administering the Act—the probation officers and the special
magistrates—are men with whom the zeal of social service operates to a very large
extent. They are very interested in the social reformatory work in which they are
engaged, and they may be safely trusted ... with the exercise of this discretionary
power.

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34 Donzelot, Policing of Families, p. 57.
36 South Australia and Western Australia both passed laws allowing courts to commit children to fixed-
term probation and committal, South Australia in 1918 and Western Australia in 1919. See Seymour,
Dealing with Young Offenders, pp. 119-123.
The debate on the provisions of the bill included the charge that leaving the matter of committal to the will of the court's administration could constitute a punishment in itself of the vulnerable young offender, but the willingness to rely on the expertise of court and welfare personnel was strong and the bill passed into law unchanged.

Perhaps one reason that the increasing powers of the children's court were seen to not adversely affect its young users was the heavy reliance on probationary sentencing. To turn again to New South Wales, the Sydney Children's Court released thirty eight percent of young offenders on probation in 1927; in 1937, the number had decreased slightly to thirty two per cent. Its most frequent sentence, the probationary system was also considered by many to be the greatest feature of the children's court system.38 Throughout the 1920s the probation system relied heavily on honorary probation officers to carry out the regular inspections and management that comprised the duties of such an officer. The responsibility of the probation officer, in the words of Sydney Children's Court magistrate J.E. McCulloch, was to be a 'friend to the child', and his essential duty was to ensure that the interests of the young offender were safeguarded.

In the early years of the inter-war period, honorary probation officers were most often drawn from religious or social organisations. In keeping with the court's move toward a more 'scientific' management approach, however, reports from the Child Welfare Department increasingly emphasised the need to use specially trained probation officers instead of honorary ones. In 1934, J.E. McCulloch, in his official report on the general workings of the court system, noted that the use of honorary probation officers had been discouraged since the mid-1920s and that the number of honorary officers had decreased substantially since then.39 By 1937, D.H. Drummond (by this time New South Wales Minister of Education but still authoring the reports of the Child Welfare Department) alluded to the change and its effect on the probationary system:

The staff [probation officers] have been impressed with the necessity for scientific knowledge in the execution of their duties and encouraged by lectures, discussions, and readings to appreciate and to master the literature and technique of organised social science.40

According to the Child Welfare Department, up to 3,500 juveniles could be under supervision during any given year. Comparing New South Wales statistics from 1908 to 1935, the effects of systematised probation are evident: in 1908 24.5 per

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39 McCulloch Report, p. 113.
cent of children's court cases resulted in committal, 32.7 per cent in probation, 3.6 per cent in boarding out to foster homes, 39.2 per cent admonished and fined, and none admonished in court and released unconditionally. The figures for 1935 children's court cases show 12.9 per cent resulting in committal, 42.5 per cent in probation, 6.8 per cent in boarding out, 19.7 per cent admonished a fined, and 18 per cent admonished and released. The change from committal to probation and/or release suggest that the court's ability to identify young people (through pre-court mental and physical testing), and to 'rescue and guide' the young offender to a successful future through the ongoing observation of probation, had supplanted punishment by committal as a means of disciplining.

In *The Policing of Families*, Donzelot suggested that the creation of the children's court made it a unique instrument of social control:

> [T]he mode of appearance before the court implies the placing of the child and his family in a setting of notables, social technicians, and magistrates: an image of encirclement through the establishment of a direct communication between social imperatives and family behaviour, ratifying a relationship of force prejudicial to the family.\(^{42}\)

In court, the family certainly came to bear upon the decisions made by the presiding magistrate. Their mode of appearance could easily influence those factors (described earlier) that magistrates were encouraged to use to determine the best means of dealing with a young offender. In pre-court testing and post-court probation, however, the family remained only a shadow on the body of the individual delinquent. The family was not interviewed, and appeared in psychologists' assessments only in the way that the offender described. Where this was seen to be prejudicial against the character of the child, attention reflected back onto his family, as will become obvious when I turn to delinquency survey texts. While the discursive mechanisms of the court could, through knowledge of the family situation, communicate to the family unit certain social imperatives, it remained its primary duty to take the delinquent out of his family situation in order to properly manage him with the more refined tools of social technology, rather than family guidance.

The probation system ensured that communication between the social mechanism and the individual would be ongoing. The young offender, after identification by police or social welfare officers, was presented to the court shelter for testing and examination, brought before the court by the senior probation officer (who was initially appointed from the Education Department but was by 1936 an officer of the court), and then (most likely) sentenced to an ongoing process of professional

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\(^{42}\) Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, p. 3.
punish and protect

The accepted principle today is that the State must deal with the children who break the law in the same spirit as a wise parent would view their misdeeds.43

In some cases, the state intervened to the extent that it replaced both parents and parental homes. Although decreased in importance as a means of dealing with young people, the committal of young people to reform and industrial schools remained an important feature of the Australian children's court system and delinquency discourse in the inter-war years.

reforming adolescents

As with children's court shelters, reform institutions were sex segregated. In Sydney, girls' industrial schools operated at Parramatta and La Perouse, the latter with an annex to house "less depraved and younger girls whose general conduct and good health justify [separate accommodation]".44 Boys were sentenced to Mittagong or Gosford Farm Homes: Mittagong if under fourteen years of age, and Gosford if over fourteen (or at a younger age if the boy was considered particularly troublesome). Separation by age ensured that young children guilty of minor offences would not be housed with what Charles Mackellar, during his tenure as President of the State Children's Relief Board, called 'vicious adolescents'.45 Other states did not have the facilities to separate children from 'hardened offenders', a problem which continued throughout the inter-war years and increased the concern of magistrates and administrators as 'scientific' classification and understandings of the causes of delinquency came to dominate the discourse. In Sydney, however, because of the large population and well established facilities, boys could be sent to a facility that existed specifically to train them through adolescence. D.H. Drummond summed up the provisions of these facilities in his reports for the Child Welfare Department:

43 Mackellar was a prominent doctor and social reformer in New South Wales during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He was President of the 1904 New South Wales Birthrate Commission, and was involved in philanthropy, eugenics and social welfare reform until his death in 1926. McCulloch Report, pp. 102, 106.
44 McCulloch Report, p. 2.
45 McCulloch Report, p. 44.
At Gosford Farm Home, the elder boys are admitted, and by a process of character-building consisting of drill and individual training based upon each boy’s psychological peculiarities, pass through successive grades or classifications in the institution until it is though they are once more fit for a trial on conditional discharge.46

McCulloch’s 1934 report on the Child Welfare Department asserted that New South Wales institutions like Gosford, Mittagong and Parramatta Industrial School were superior to those existing in other Australian states and ‘in many countries of the world’. Certainly from the yearly reports of the Department, the boys at reformatory farm homes appeared to be well cared for. Offenders were offered physical training, swimming and life saving instruction, sport, lectures at night and regular cinema screenings to occupy the hours not spent breaking and farming the land surrounding the reformatory. These activities were provided not only to keep the boys occupied but to train their bodies and characters to be socially useful:

Every effort is made to build up their characters, instil into their minds clean thoughts, healthy ideas, the value of obedience and reliance on their better natures. In a short time the majority of them do learn the value of self-discipline and do develop into decent, honest, law-abiding citizens.47

Activities were meant to ensure that the constant supervision of offending inmates at Gosford and Mittagong (and also Yanco Farm Home which operated between 1928 and the late 1930s) did not appear as punitive captivity but rather social skills training. When recidivism statistics became available in 1936 (collected through entry surveys of the inmate population), the effects of this training could be quantitatively examined, increasing the scope of observation and management of young offenders. In his 1937 report for the Child Welfare Department, D. H. Drummond suggested that recidivism was bound to decrease as the mechanisms of the reform and probation system became more scientific and efficient.48

Although farm homes for boys at Mittagong and Gosford were considered progressive and effective, criticisms increased during the inter-war period about the quality of instruction and administration of reformatory institutes. The McCulloch Report drew attention to the lack of training and qualifications of staff running the institutions, a criticism also aimed more widely at the administrators of the Child Welfare Department in general. Throughout the inter-war years, as the legal and institutional edifice of juvenile delinquency was constructed piece by piece it

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47 McCulloch Report, p. 23.
continued to lag behind the vision of its creators that the children's court system would rehabilitate the squandered potential of the nation's young.

While the parental approach to treating juvenile offenders dominated the discourse and practice of the Children's Court in the inter-war years, criticisms were expressed by those involved in its construction. Sir Charles Mackellar expressed one side of this concern in 1920 during a Royal Commission into the administration of the acts relating to state children, stating that "the ranks of criminal and prostitute classes are largely recruited in consequence of faulty methods of treatment of adolescent delinquents".⁴⁹ In 1934, McCulloch's report also raised questions about the success of the children's court system. McCulloch favourably cited the work of Americans Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, which he suggested was the only survey available at the time showing the results of the efforts of juvenile justice legislation—results that were far from encouraging.⁵⁰ With no comparable Australian studies available at the time, McCulloch could only recommend that the work of the Child Welfare Department continue as it had been.

In this section I have focused on the creation of a legal and institutional edifice of delinquency but have not addressed one of its most fundamental elements: the young person for whom the edifice was constructed. The procedures I have outlined existed for the protection of all young people but I would like to look more specifically at a certain segment of that group who were encircled not only by the legal practices of the court, but by the expert knowledge that helped to develop both those practices and a particular understanding of the young male for whom they primarily existed. I will be drawing on the work of historians Mark Finnane and Victor Bailey, as well as contemporary texts on juvenile delinquency. The latter will comprise the work of Cyril Burt who, like G. Stanley Hall before him, set out to catalogue exhaustively the causes of juvenile delinquency and the character of the juvenile delinquent, and two Australian surveys of delinquency that attempted to apply Burt's method to Australian delinquents: F. Oswald Barnett's *The Making of a Criminal*, and D.E. Rose's *A Study of Juvenile Delinquency in New South Wales*. Together these texts illuminate the workings of a discourse that constructed subjects along with law. They also address more substantially, as will I, the ways that delinquency and protection interacted with the discourse of adolescence to effect new understandings of masculinity and the meaning of adolescence.

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⁵⁰Child Welfare Department Report, N.S.W.P.P., pp. 108–9. The Glueck's study showed 88 per cent recidivism among juvenile offenders and suggested that by the time the delinquent is brought before the court it is too late to effectively correct behaviour. Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, *1000 Juvenile Delinquents*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1934.
One of the connections drawn by G. Stanley Hall in his work on adolescence was between adolescence and crime. Hall argued that adolescence was "pre-eminently the criminal age when most first commitments occur and most vicious careers are begun". Not all of those appearing before the children's court were of adolescent age, and not all those who were adolescent were necessarily embarking on vicious careers. Nonetheless, observers and participants in the children's court system built on the tenuous connection Hall had established between adolescence and delinquency and gave special and unique attention to the adolescent offender. Modern investigations into delinquency established the crimes of the delinquent child as a response to social circumstance, a view expressed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (A.C.E.R.):

Delinquent behaviour is increasingly recognised as evidence of a breakdown in the adjustment of the individual to his milieu and of society's obligation to assist his rehabilitation. At present it is, however, largely a matter of chance—family position and educational opportunity—whether a delinquent child is dealt with by his parents, teachers, a doctor, or police.

Not only does this situate the problem of delinquency within a discourse of social management and mental hygiene, but it emphasises that the problem is one of adjustment. During the inter-war years, the concept of adolescent storm and stress—the difficult adjustment of boyhood to manhood—was constructed by experts as an observable, natural phenomenon and delinquency experts situated the subject of their concern as similarly natural and observable. The breakdown that precipitated delinquency and the breakdown that identified adolescence were drawn into a close discursive proximity, not only by their coincident trajectories but by the overlap of expertise between the two knowledge areas and by the way that both addressed a crack in the social machinery which could endanger (and make dangerous) those who fell through it. The authors of the above A.C.E.R. publication also noted that, "the problem of the juvenile delinquent has been the subject of much research and many reforms since the last war". Two of the most comprehensive examples of that research come in Barnett's and Rose's work on juvenile delinquents in Melbourne and Sydney, respectively.

51G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence, Vol. 1, p. 325.
Rose and Barnett both acknowledged a deep debt to British children’s court psychological examiner Sir Cyril Burt in their investigations. Burt occupied a position in relation to delinquency similar to Hall’s in relation to adolescence. In 1925, he published a hefty survey tome on juvenile delinquency based on his inspection of an enormous number of young people examined as part of the British children’s court process. The result, *The Young Delinquent*, was cited reverently in much of the Australian delinquency literature that followed. As with Hall, this resulted from Burt’s exhaustive cataloguing of the causes and factors involved in delinquency and his wide form of address. In the preface Burt defines both his subject and his audience:

Crime may be rare; but naughtiness is universal. And the problems of character-building are, or should be, the concern of all. Hence, throughout these pages the argument is addressed, not so much to the lawyer, the psychologist, or the medical man, as to teachers and social workers, and indeed to all who, whether as parents or as enlightened members of the general public, are interested in the moral welfare of young people, and are influencing, by their active or inactive attitude, the process of educational reform.54

From the beginning, then, Burt situates the problem of juvenile delinquency within a sphere of education and training and not, as with adult crime, in a discourse of law and order. Although the responsibility of the children’s court was to adjudicate on a given offence, Burt asserted that the court’s psychological investigators’ primary interest should be to investigate the offender, not the offence, through a thorough enquiry into the present situation, personality, past history, environment and future progress of the young offender.55 The justification offered for this invasive investigative procedure was two-fold. First, that crime in children is not a unique or self-contained phenomenon. Burt called on the teacher, the care committee worker, the magistrate, and the probation officer to work hand in hand on a problem that, in his words, “touches every side of social work”. Second, he identified no deep gulf between delinquent and non-delinquent youth: “It is a problem of degree ... This graded continuity, the normal melting into the abnormal by almost imperceptible shades, is entirely in accord with what we now know of most other forms of mental deviation”. Or, in other words, “it takes many coats of pitch to paint a thing thoroughly black”.56

What follows this is a cataloguing of factors associated with delinquency divided into heredity, environment, physical conditions, intellectual conditions, temperament, general instability, and neuroses. In the first section, Burt suggests that

heredity is the first and simplest hypothesis to offer itself for study. Although he refers in positive terms to Henry Maudsley's work on mental defectives and agrees that physical, intellectual, psychopathic and moral conditions are inheritable, Burt suggests that heredity's effect is, at most, indirect. When he turns to environment, Burt distinguishes between home and neighbourhood environment. While making no claim to conclusive data, he refers to his own reports from pre-court assessments of delinquents which show that 26 per cent of young offenders lived in homes of vice, 53 per cent in impoverished homes, 58 per cent in dysfunctional homes, and 68 per cent in homes where there was defective discipline. Burt took this as proof that home life always needs investigation in cases of delinquency and that further supervision of the home was required through greater intervention between not only teacher and parent, but also between psychologist and parent, teacher and offender, probation officer and offender, club worker, parent and child.

When he turns to the condition of the street, neighbourhood, and associates of the delinquent, Burt brings two interesting arguments to bear on the understanding of delinquency. First, he suggests that the child's associates or peers require the most professional attention because of the way that peers can encourage the delinquent's pre-disposing weakness. To find one element without the other, he suggested, is as "rare as a seed sprouting in bare rock with no receptive soil to nourish it. Against contagion of whatever sort, the strong mind, like the healthy body, is generally immune."

The second interesting aspect of Burt's discussion of peer influence is his suggestion that delinquency is closely associated with the temporary strains of adolescence (when the peer group becomes particularly influential) and the lack of legitimate directions to focus such strain. Burt asserted that there is a sharp observable increase in delinquency at puberty, a drop at fourteen and a rise again at fifteen. He associated this with what he called 'adolescent stress' and also with the end of schooling and later loss of the working adolescent's first casual job. In a later section on physical conditions, Burt returned to this formulation of adolescence and delinquency when he suggested later in the text that the sexual awakening of puberty confers new possibilities of wrong doing. "The child is born anew", Burt posited, and fundamental changes are linked to "the perfecting of the sexual glands and organs, together with the marked invigoration of the related impulses."

57 Burt, The Young Delinquent, pp. 29-49.
This is the only occasion in the text that Burt linked delinquency firmly to a single causal factor. Elsewhere he suggested that there is no single physical type, no strong evidence of mental difficulty, or neuroses in the delinquent. In his conclusion he reasserted the approach that has since been dubbed 'modified environmentalism' by historians, arguing that:

Crime is assignable to no single, universal source, nor yet to two or three: it springs from a wide variety, and usually from a multiplicity, of alternative and converging influences.

The result of this was that all elements of young people's behaviour were positioned as potential factors in delinquency, particularly in the pubertal and adolescent years. The physical/sexual burden of puberty and adolescence provided the young male with the desire and temptation to do wrong, and the social circumstance of those years—the transition from school to work—further contributed to their experience as one of crisis and adjustment. For these reasons, Burt concluded that all young people need to be scrutinised for signs of delinquency, and to receive extended training and supervision throughout the adolescent period, that delinquency be considered part of the general child welfare regime, that the delinquent himself be studied as a unique being, and that the remedy for his condition be geared toward factors causing delinquency and not acts of delinquency.

In Australia, the work of Cyril Burt was familiar to the administrators of the Child Welfare Departments and to the psychologists who worked with them to test young offenders. In two studies that appeared at the end of the inter-war period, Burt's work provided a template of methodology and theory of delinquency. In 1940 the research undertaken by F. Oswald Barnett at Melbourne's Castlemaine Reformatory Prison was released. It studied boys only and divided its survey into two sections, the first titled 'delinquent children' and the second, 'delinquent youth'.

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62 Burt's statistics showed only eight per cent of delinquents to be mentally defective, two per cent suffering from dementia praecox, and no inherent anti-social characteristics in his case studies. And while 70 per cent were identified as having physical defects, the vast majority of these were identified as trivial and pointed only to the necessity of medical testing in school and not an inherent criminal physique or stigmata, a finding that undermined the work of other 'criminologists' such as Cesare Lombroso's 1911 publication Criminal Man. See Burt, The Young Delinquent, pp. 216–6, 259, 300, 466, 591.


64 Burt, The Young Delinquent, pp. 610–11.

the making of a criminal

In *The Making of a Criminal*, the text and the process, Barnett divided his male cases according to age. In the former category of delinquent children, he studied 277 cases that came before the Melbourne Children’s Court in 1933. Three-fifths of these boys were under the age of fifteen and over half appeared before the court as a result of stealing, followed in frequency by larceny and housebreaking. In a few of these cases, the boys were dismissed with a warning, in a large number the offenders were placed on probation and in one out of five cases the delinquent child was sent to reform school or Castlemaine reformatory prison. Barnett was concerned about the high number of offenders he felt were ‘let off’ and was critical of the magistrates presiding over such cases:

They hope that an appearance before the court may of itself have such an effect on the lads that they will avoid crime in the future ... [an appearance] may be a temporary deterrent, but it is not a corrective. What is necessary is a change in the child’s attitude. This result will not be secured by preaching, nor by threat, but by re-education and re-conditioning.66

The re-education process is one that Barnett suggested will only be effective if it is complemented by a “drawing out process” whereby each individual boy is helped to develop into a “normal citizen”.67 This education was presented as a solution to the major cause of child delinquency established by Barnett: lack of parental control. Although he suggested that the chief causes of delinquency are divided equally between bad company and environment, lack of parental control was seen to lead to both and is thus “undoubtedly the greatest factor”.68

Like Burt, Barnett considered delinquency to be the natural result of improper discipline of the social instinct. He posited that the same instinct that makes the push (or gang) possible also makes the Boy Scouts possible, and his recommendations focus on how to transform the former manifestation of the social instinct into the latter.69 If disciplined, he argued, the instincts of the young could make for national progress and security. In cases of delinquency, the natural first mechanism of this discipline, the family, was seen to be inadequate. Knowing the family to be an unstable or non-existent source of discipline for delinquents, Barnett suggested that discipline should primarily come through the school but, in cases where schools no longer functioned as a disciplinary mechanism, the reformatory was positioned as a substitute. The

potential of the reformatory is examined in Barnett’s second concurrent survey of
delinquency, carried out between March 1932 and February 1933 on every youth in
Castlemaine Reformatory Prison.

The subjects of this survey were males between the ages of fifteen and twenty
one. Those over seventeen were dealt with by the Court of General Sessions, and
those under seventeen by the Children’s Court, but all were placed in Castlemaine on
indefinite or fixed terms. At the reformatory, young men were schooled for part of
the day and at night in scholastic and vocational work, provided with semi-military
training, swimming and life saving lessons, and farm and social work, throughout
which a hierarchical structure of age and behaviour prevailed. Barnett’s survey of
these young men was precipitated by his (and the court’s) desire to thoroughly and
scientifically understand and educate young delinquents. He asserts that, “it is a duty
to study most thoroughly the psychology of the criminal and to devise the most
humane and scientific way of treating him.”

Who Barnett attempted to treat were not only young men but young working
class men who had not had the full disciplining effects of education. Ninety five per
cent of Barnett’s inner city subjects had left school before fifteen and two thirds had
been persistently truant in the years leading up to their leaving school. As a whole,
inner-city subjects outnumbered suburban or country delinquents by a proportion of
five to one, from which Barnett concluded: “The greater the tendency to poverty and
the harsher the conditions, the more likely it is that youth of normal intelligence will
become unsocially inquisitive.” It might be added that a young man such as
this—working class, unemployed, absent from school—is far more likely to be visibly
identifiable on the street to social technicians. The causes presented by Barnett further
focused professional scrutiny and intervention onto a particular type of male.

The three major causes of delinquency offered by Barnett were lack of parental
control, bad company, and unemployment. Historians Mark Finnane and Robert Van
Krieken have both emphasised the ways that such a formulation of cause increased
surveillance and intervention into the lives of working class people. Here I have
focused on the increase in the scrutiny of individuals. Concurrently, the scrutiny of the
working class family unit and the working class as a subculture were seen to require
attention. Seen as a greater risk statistically, working class young people were

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70 Those on fixed terms were usually paroled before serving full term. Parole lasted for six months, during
which the parolee was not allowed to drink, ‘be idle’, or ‘associate with evil companions’. After parole,
the offender was given probation for two years. Barnett, The Making of a Criminal, p. 18.
72 Using IQ tests, Barnett found that sixty per cent of his subjects were of normal intelligence, despite their
lack of schooling, a number which was even higher (68%) for his inner city subjects. Barnett, pp. 21, 22,
24.
particularly targeted, on both these counts, for the psychological and re-education interventions recommended by Barnett and the Child Welfare Department.\textsuperscript{73}

At first sight it seems that one of the greatest causes of juvenile delinquency is due to a breakdown in morality—e.g. to the uncongenial environment provided where there are unhappy domestic relationships between husband and wife, resulting in broken homes ... Under such circumstances perhaps no effort is so simple and efficient as the removal of the child from slum-minded parents(where gaol is otherwise almost sure to be the ultimate goal) into the clean, healthy environment of a wholesome institution ...\textsuperscript{74}

If ‘respectable’, \textit{i.e.} not slum-minded, attending school, or under the tutelage of a boys’ club (which Barnett heartily recommended), working class young men could avoid the interventions of the Child Welfare Department, which characterised working class young men as either respectable and normal citizens or rough and troublesome ones requiring all the technologies that social science and the court had to offer.

Barnett’s study was conducted on boys only, not only because they represented the majority of delinquency cases, but because the acts of the delinquent were positioned as part of the process of puberty and adolescence, a process that was already sexed masculine. The importance of adolescent stress as a causal factor in delinquency ensured that it was a phenomenon more firmly linked to boys than girls. Indeed, the very small percentage of girls appearing before the children’s court were there because of uncontrollable behaviour, and not the public disorder and petty crime that accounted for the vast majority of male appearances before the court. While not suggesting that girls were exempt from the kinds of social interventions recommended by Barnett, I would suggest that the male delinquent was constituted differently. For him, it was every factor of his life that influenced the way he was to be treated by law and social welfare, and every element of his delinquent behaviour was associated with his sexual awakening. Sexual (mis)behaviour, or the way females used their sexuality, caused girls to be classified as delinquent; for boys simply developing sexually was cause enough for concern.

In New South Wales the work of D.E. Rose reflected Barnett’s Melbourne study of delinquency. Rose was a psychologist with the Department of Labour and Industry who examined 358 delinquent boys between the ages of twelve and seventeen at Mittagong, Gosford, and Yanco Farm Homes in 1938. His aim was to investigate the conditions under which delinquency occurred and the manner in which it developed. Rose saw this work as an essential part of the expanding field of psychology and social welfare, stating in the introduction to his study that:

\textsuperscript{74}Barnett, \textit{The Making of a Criminal}, p. 35.
The investigation of delinquency is therefore a socio-psychological problem. It involves the study of social influences acting on an individual of typical constitution whose traits may be determined and measured by psychological means. 

Although the publication of his work is later than the time frame of this thesis, Rose’s research represents an extension of the discourse of delinquency to which Barnett was a contributor. Rose, like Barnett, tested the mental capacity of his subjects (spatial ability, intelligence, dexterity, and vision), measured them physically, and assessed the temperament (using tests of retarded writing and grip to calculate perseverance), and personality (through interviews with his subjects about home, school, employment, health, and personal history) of his delinquent subjects. The result was a monograph titled *A Study of Juvenile Delinquency in New South Wales*, published in 1942.

Despite his criticism that Barnett’s work was flawed by over-simplification, Rose drew many very similar conclusions about the delinquent young male. Like Barnett, Rose classified lack of control as the single greatest cause of delinquency:

>In many, perhaps in most, of the cases of delinquency, the lads have not deliberately rejected the moral standards of society, but have never been taught to accept them ... if they are to have any permanent effect in regulating conduct, they [moral standards] must be built into the child’s habitual modes of thought and action, and he must be trained from the first to control his instinctive urges.

Lack of home training and bad companionship were considered the primary causes of such a dangerous lack of self control and Rose’s recommendation to remedy this was the organised use of leisure time and ongoing supervision of young people, which he felt would provide outlets for social impulses under the controlled conditions of club or classroom, rather than the uncontrolled conditions of the street.

Rose also reiterated the assertion of Barnett and G. Stanley Hall before him that delinquency is linked to the process of adolescence. He noted that many of his subjects had run away from home between the ages of eleven and thirteen (those identified by Hall as the pubertal years) and, citing Hall, credited this correlation to the “considerable disturbance in the lad’s personality” at this time, as well as “the ripening of the sexual instinct” which manifested, among other ways, in the urge to escape parental control. Rose also noted a drop in IQ test scores at the age of puberty that subsided when the subject got older, a phenomenon that reduced the individual’s resistance to unfavourable companions and environment:

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77 Rose, *A Study of Juvenile Delinquency*, p. 27.
As the more intelligent boys arrive at sixteen or seventeen years of age, they tend to achieve a satisfactory adjustment and to settle down in their jobs, the period of disturbance being outgrown together with their delinquent habits. The less intelligent more often either fail to achieve this adjustment or cannot break the habits they have formed.78

The works of Barnett in Melbourne and Rose in New South Wales are also similar in their approaches to the sexuality of the young offenders they studied. While sex crimes or misbehaviour constituted a statistically small proportion of the crimes for which young men were probated or committed, the sexual development and sexuality of the inmates studied was referred to often in both studies.79 An example of this is seen in Rose’s case study of ‘L.M.’, who was seventeen years and five months and “very mature and well developed” physically at the time of his assessment:

By the time he was fourteen years old he had a complete disregard for accepted standards of behaviour; he had acquired the habit of gratifying his instinctive impulses; and any internal scruples that may have originally been instilled, had withered away. With the development of sexual urges, which seemed to have been particularly powerful in his case, he was ripe for more serious trouble. When just sixteen years of age he was committed to an institution on three charges of indecent assault.80

Another boy examined by Rose was characterised by the same perceived gap between sexual and moral/social development. Admitted at twelve years and nine months, ‘R.D.’ had attained sexual maturity early and at the time of his committal was described by the examining doctor as having the sexual maturity of a man of twenty five years without, of course, the necessary moral restraint of someone that age.81 Sexual manifestations of urge gratification particularly troubled Rose. The understanding that he contributed to the discourse of delinquency—that delinquents are characterised by an inability to control the urge to gratify every urge and temptation—further consolidated the existing view of young male sexuality as a particularly dangerous manifestation of a tendency that existed in every male juvenile delinquent and, indeed, in every young male.

It is here that I return to the plea that opened this chapter. The machinery and discourse of the Children’s Court system functioned to separate decisively the young

78 Rose, A Study of Juvenile Delinquency, p. 46.
79 Sex crimes including buggery, indecent assault, carnal knowledge of a girl under sixteen, rape, and obscene exposure accounted for no more than thirty of the twelve hundred or so cases of juvenile crime processed each year by the Sydney Metropolitan Children’s Court between 1919 and 1937. See Police Report and Child Welfare Department Report, N.S.W.P.P.
80 Rose, A Study of Juvenile Delinquency, p. 61.
81 Rose, A Study of Juvenile Delinquency, p. 9.
offender from the adult offender and, within the former category, to further subdivide the crimes, offences, and subjectivity of adolescents from those of children. Both discourse and machinery also contributed to a widening of the concept of judicial responsibility to include the social and moral welfare of the young offender. Calls to educate and inculcate moral strength in juvenile delinquents resounded in the inter-war research into delinquency and also echoed the call of Prison Inspector R.H.W. Bligh that young men be trained in moral and social convention. From within the penal system Bligh linked the work of his professional sphere with the work of the education and social welfare systems, suggesting that their purpose was the same. Young men, made vulnerable by the unfortunate circumstances of their home lives and the development of their bodies required that every agency that addressed them do so in a way that would foster greater self control and social normalisation.

Historians of adolescence have pointed out numerous ways that the development of the adolescent subject has been historically linked to what John Gillis has termed "a deluge of protective legislation". In this chapter I have used one stream of that deluge to explore the way that adolescence became part of a landscape of observation, intervention, and training of individual bodies in service of the social. The apparatus of the children's court mediated the relationship between the state and the individual, a relationship that was often prejudicial to the individual but which, through the protective and parental orientation of the technology of juvenile delinquency, encouraged the individual to choose the tutelage of the state rather than follow his own undisciplined desires. A similar process was developed concurrently in educational pedagogy, which aimed at improving the norm. In both of these sites, the importance and influence of psychology came from the linking of the discipline to the management of a large, new population for whom psychologists presented themselves as the pre-eminent experts. As we will see in the next chapter, the process of identification and management also characterised psychiatric interventions, as inter-war medical professionals defined the boundaries of the psychiatric norm and the area that lay beyond.

Here I have looked at the discourse of a disciplinary site which charted the territory between education and medicine, one that reached in one direction toward a consolidation of normative adolescent behaviour and in the other toward proscribing the abnormal, in this case defined as the delinquent. Together the three discursive sites examined in the three chapters of this first section provide a recognisable and usable form of social subject: the adolescent. To return to where Cyril Burt left off, the aim of such interventions is evident in Burt's quotation from Anatole France:

Let us hope for these inconceivable beings who shall one day develop out of man, as man has evolved from the brute. Let us salute those future prodigies.83

Burt might have added, let us, as social technicians, law makers, and magistrates, do all that we can to ensure that such prodigies are carefully surveyed, examined, and trained not to stray from such a path.

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83Burt, The Young Delinquent, p. 613.
In 1925, Dr Maximilian Stern of the Manhattan State Hospital in New York released to the public the results of a test he and a number of his colleagues had undertaken. The experiment analysed the effects of surgical vasectomy on young male sufferers of a disease which no longer exists in that named form. The disease was called *dementia praecox* and Dr Stern wrote not only of vasectomy for its treatment but of the nature of the disease itself which, he suggested, “on account of its prevalence, is of utmost importance socially, medically and economically”\(^1\). Why, began Dr Stern’s paper, “should the medical establishment turn to vasectomy as a therapeutic measure in *dementia praecox*?” Why indeed, one may ask, would a medical doctor surgically sever the healthy *vas deferens* of young men (all of Dr Stern’s patients were aged under thirty) to cure their minds?

In this chapter I will be focusing on the ‘insanity of youth’ known as *dementia praecox*, a condition whose emergence in the medical literature was coincident with that of adolescence itself and which helped to define normative and pathological youth. I will be exploring how *dementia praecox* was constructed as a disease to which such measures as vasectomy were deemed appropriate and necessary. The main research source for this investigation is the *Medical Journal of Australia*. This journal provides the discursive materials through which I will trace the effects psychiatric discourse (such as the one which Dr. Stern and MJA authors developed) had in constructing adolescence and male sexuality. The body, be it male, sexual, adolescent, or otherwise, has an infinite number of histories. I will be analysing the intersection of two of these histories: psychiatry and masturbation. An outline of the professional history of psychiatry in Australia and the discursive history of masturbation will be followed by an analysis of the point at which they converged in the discourse of *dementia praecox* itself. In particular I will be looking at the ways in which the appropriation of adolescence as an object of medical and scientific inquiry drew particular young men into a position of professional scrutiny, and all young men into cultural scrutiny. As with the previous chapters, the discourse here is one that set firm boundaries around what constituted a ‘normal’ experience of adolescence and what constituted the experience as one requiring intervention and management.

\(^*\) Parts of this chapter have previously been published as, “From Solitary Vice to Split Mind: Psychiatric Discourses of Male Sexuality and Coming of Age, 1918–1938”, in *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 12, 1999.

psychiatry’s ‘coming of age’

Until the ‘enlightened’ years of the twentieth century, the discipline of psychiatry was shackled with the reputation of being little more than custodial care for the insane and invalid.\(^2\) The typical nineteenth century Australian psychiatric inmate had been brought to the asylum after elements of violent or manic public behaviour were witnessed by police. Until the passing of the Inebriate’s Act in 1912, unruly public behaviour was as likely to result in incarceration in an insane asylum as in prison. Men who got drunk and fractious in public and who were unlucky or unfortunate enough to find themselves within the psychiatric system were most likely to be classified with a manic disorder, one of three ‘classic’ types of insanity classified by Australia’s first psychiatrist of renown, Dr. Frederick Norton Manning. Manning’s other ‘classic’ types were defined as melancholia and dementia. In the 1870s Manning had also defined five causes for his three types of insanity: heredity, anxiety, isolation, intemperance, and sunstroke.\(^3\) The focus of the psychiatric profession until World War One was primarily on containment and/or management of the symptoms manifested by these disorders.

In less than one hundred years what is now a branch of our most respected profession has transformed itself, its goals, principles, and criteria for success. Yet the transition in Australian psychiatry should not be seen as a wholesale shift from one treatment regime to another. Psychiatrists in this country did not spontaneously decide that the custodial regime that they had followed faithfully was wrong and shrug it off in favour of a new paradigm. Instead, over several decades, they renegotiated the knowledge they had created and the frameworks they used. In doing so, psychiatric practitioners expanded their profession outward, philosophically, discursively, and practically into areas of social management and mental hygiene. Psychiatry’s disciplinary expansion, its coming of age if you like, changed the face of the discipline, of the patient, and of mental illness.

Prior to World War One the professional makeup of the Australian psychiatric establishment was largely British. On principle this select group adhered to British psychiatric tropes. Early leaders in the discipline such as Norton Manning and his successor Eric Sinclair, as well as Ralph Noble, John Bostock, and W.A.T. Lind had all trained and practised at one time or another in Britain. Indeed the facilities in Australia for training psychiatrists were rudimentary well into the twentieth century. The first

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The imperial connection gave a distinct shape to Australian psychiatry before the war. Leaders of psychiatric services and education overwhelmingly adhered to an organicist approach to disease. They also strongly promoted the abandonment of the regime of custodial care and turn toward a professional trope of thorough diagnosis and ongoing treatment. Psychiatrists wanted theirs to be a credible, respectable discipline within the medical field, and in order to make it so it was necessary to dissociate the profession from the popular nineteenth century image of the psychiatrist as key holder for the lunatic asylum. Overwhelmingly in Australian psychiatry this legitimisation was achieved by appeal to a predominantly British pedigree, a connection well established through the training of almost all of Australia's early psychiatrists. As we will see, only later in the inter-war years and reluctantly was continental psychiatry (and Freudianism with it) ambiguously welcomed to the Australian discipline. To professionalise, and to re-establish their position within the medical discipline, psychiatrists following the British tradition were quick to locate mental illness in the body of the sufferer, finding disorder at the level of organs and neurones. If patients were mad, rather than simply bad, the psychiatrist would no longer be the custodian but the expert and healer.

The desire to locate insanity in the body prioritised neuropathological research over other forms of disease management in Australian psychiatric institutes early in the century. Pathologists were appointed to large asylums and as public servants of the state to research and report on patients. Beginning in 1908 the annual Australasian Medical Congress incorporated affiliated neurology and psychiatry sections. Psychiatric cases were classified as one of two types, depending on the cause. Many patients were seen to have 'predisposed' insanity, resulting from heredity or congenital defect. The mental disturbance of others was seen to arise from 'exciting' causes such as intemperance in drink, venereal disease, and mental anxiety. Psychiatrists concentrated on the former group, the mad rather than the bad, not because the two could be neatly separated but because of psychiatrists' attempts to classify themselves professionally as doctors rather than caretakers. Both 'bad' and 'mad', the excited and the predisposed to mental illness, were used in early twentieth century psychiatry to define patients in a continuum along which the predisposing factors came to the force if acted upon by an exciting cause. In some cases, only exciting factors could be affected through intervention, which psychiatrists certainly attempted. In the years leading to World

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War One, however, psychiatrists were freed to concentrate on the medical mystery of predisposing factors more and more as police presence increased in urban areas and public elements of disturbing behaviour were increasingly captured through legal channels rather than in the net of the psychiatrist. Prior to the Great War voluntary admission and out patient facilities were not yet a part of the discourse of service of the psychiatric discipline. Yet by the late 1920s most metropolitan hospitals provided out patient treatment and voluntary admissions levels approached those of incarcerations. I suggest two basic reasons for this change: Freud and war.

While Freudian psychoanalysis had brought notoriety to the profession throughout Europe, hostility towards European modernism strongly influenced the discipline of psychiatry in Australia during the inter-war years. Although Freud himself had been invited to the 1911 conference of the Australasian Medical Congress (he declined but sent a paper outlining the tenets of psychoanalysis) and had been formally discussed by a group of psychiatrists as early as 1909, psychoanalysis remained on the margins of a psychiatric discipline which was keen to establish and legitimise itself through organic theory, heredity, and pathology.

While Freud’s interpretations of mental illness were shunned by many practitioners in the discipline they were not banished wholesale from the discourse. In fact, Freudian psychiatry received considerable attention in the Medical Journal of Australia, albeit attention of a dismissive and negative kind. Psychoanalysis was, at best, considered a diagnostic tool only, to be used in conjunction with other methods of both diagnosis and treatment. At worst, the non-organic approach to psychiatric illness was considered a “heresy”. When faced with the damaged psyches of returned soldiers, however, Australian psychiatrists became more willing to delve into the therapeutic tool kit and reach for those hitherto ignored tools of the Freudian therapist to deal with a mentally disordered population the likes of which they had never seen before. The unprecedented population of mentally ill confounded the notions of organic mental disease upon which Australian psychiatry had been built. To rely on organic explanations for post war mental trauma would be to suggest that much of the Australian male population was physiologically defective; not a tenable or likely assertion, and certainly not a culturally viable one to make of returned war heroes. Despite the challenge to the foundations of psychiatric discourse, organicism was not...

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6 See Stephen Garton, Insanity in NSW, Chapter 4. See also Chapter 3 of this dissertation.
8 A review of W.H.B. Stoddard’s The Mind and Its Disorders in MJA, Vol. 2, No. 10, July 1922, notes that the book’s main failing is that its author “is wholly given over to the heresies of Freud” which its reviewer considered “excresences on an admirable book”. Similarly hostile remarks were frequent in the reviews of psychoanalytically framed texts.
rejected or superseded. Instead, the inter-war years were marked by a “therapeutic pluralism” which created new discursive bodies and new illnesses to distinguish them.⁹

The type of therapeutic pluralism that characterised inter-war discourse is exemplified in the work of several influential inter-war psychiatric practitioners and professors. Physicians W.S. Dawson, John Bostock, and Ralph Noble each suggested in their academic and clinical work that mental disorder was caused by a number of factors, including environmental and organic. While they insisted that the most fundamental factor in disorder was physiological, they also stressed that environment determined the mental outcome of the individual. Congenital factors gave patients a lower “flashpoint” for illness but it was environmental factors which caused the flood of neuroses and mental disease.¹⁰ Thus people with a low flashpoint could be considered likely to capitulate to their innately diseased mind under any circumstances, whereas people with a higher natural flashpoint would become susceptible to mental disorder only if the conditions of their existence were traumatic enough to undermine their naturally strong mental constitution.

The phenomena of shell shock and war neuroses supported the view that a large proportion of the population was vulnerable, under certain stresses, to mental illness. As Stephen Garton notes, “War created the need to organise the treatment of neuroses on an unprecedented scale. Returned soldiers suffering from a variety of mental disorders challenged the explanatory powers of psychiatry and stretched treatment facilities to the limit.”¹¹ It must be noted that the body which caused the explosion of psychiatric services and discourses after World War One was male, and often young.

The body of the young male psychiatric patient of World War One was seen to have fallen prey to conditional neuroses: disordering of the mind that indicated not the low mental flashpoint of the sufferer but rather the high level of trauma experienced in the war. In Britain, still the example for Australian psychiatry, the 1922 War Office Committee of Enquiry on Shellshock had to create several types of neuroses (beyond shellshock itself) to capture the range of war-induced mental difficulties: conversion hysteria, anxiety, obsessional states, as well as ‘character deviations’ such as paranoia, psychopathic personality, and schizoid trends.¹² In New South Wales psychiatric hospitals, ninety percent of the 1,045 cases of soldiers diagnosed with war neuroses

⁹Garton, Insanity in New South Wales, p.123.
¹¹Garton, “Freud and the Psychiatrists”, p. 69.
were discharged as recovered by 1918. Of the 260 soldiers diagnosed with more serious illness, fifty eight percent had also been discharged by the same year.\textsuperscript{13} The disease of \textit{dementia praecox} (which as a putative entity was in the 1920s only thirty years old) was applied generously to returned soldiers as well, yet it was constitutively and discursively different from other war neuroses. Not merely a neurotic temperament excited by trauma, nor simply an organic predisposition, \textit{dementia praecox} discourse demonstrates the fluidity of the discourse used in inter-war Australian psychiatry.

\textit{Dementia Praecox} was used as an explanatory mechanism in over half of all army admissions for mental disease in one of the most substantial British surveys of World War One soldiers.\textsuperscript{14} The reactions of young men to their circumstances, reactions which to the contemporary observer would not seem unusual or unreasonable, were taken by government appointed psychiatrists during and after World War One as signs of mental illness. Refusal to perform routine duties, unmotivated states of excitement, returning late from leave, indifference and disorientation were all listed by the pre-eminent British war psychiatrist E.E. Southard as symptoms to classify sufferers as \textit{dementia praecox} cases.\textsuperscript{15} According to Southard, it was not the experience of war which produced this surprisingly large number of \textit{dementia praecox} cases. Instead, in his voluminous \textit{Shellshock and Neuropsychiatry}, Southard suggested that latent \textit{dementia praecox} manifested in an acute form under war conditions.

The observant psychiatrist could be certain that the causes of \textit{dementia praecox}, while remaining unknown, “lodge[d] more in the interior of the body or in special individual reactions of the victim’s mind” than in any experience of the brutality of war.\textsuperscript{16} That the disease of adolescent insanity was considered by a number of military psychiatrists to be exacerbated, but not caused, by war suggests that the mental ‘flashpoint’ of the afflicted population was an experience or pathology other than war. That such a proportion of young (the average age of Southard’s cases was twenty three) mentally ill soldiers were considered to be precociously demented certainly brought the disease, and the diagnosis of such, to wide attention. In the peace of the 1920s, single men formed the majority of those admitted to Australian psychiatric facilities by request and the overwhelming eighty percent of these admissions were men aged between fifteen and twenty five years, many diagnosed as precocious dement.\textsuperscript{17}

I suggested in the introduction to this chapter that \textit{dementia praecox} helped to define normal and pathological youth. Within that definition of youth, there is a

\textsuperscript{13}Stephen Garton, \textit{Medicine and Madness}, p. 76.
\textsuperscript{15}Southard, pp. 200, 207, 208, 210.
\textsuperscript{16}Southard, p. 207, 861.
\textsuperscript{17}Garton, \textit{Insanity in New South Wales}, p. 216.
particular understanding of the sexual body, and the ways that sexuality constructs the body as a pathological or normal one. Just as war changed the ways that mental health was defined and the ways that psychiatry intervened into the mind, so too did modern discourses of sexuality change the ways that sexual health was defined and the possibilities of professional intervention into the body. Before I can make that argument, however, it is necessary to trace the historical discourse of sexuality that led to those understandings and, in particular, the expression of sexuality that was to become so bound with notions of youth and mental health. In this discussion I will move from Australia in the inter-war years to Europe in the eighteenth century, when understandings of the solitary vice reconstituted the body and its vices. I will return to the Australian context to examine the effects of this development on nineteenth and twentieth century discourse.

**the solitary vice**

Masturbation occupies a unique place in social and cultural discourse, both in history and at the present. In a 1995 collection on auto-eroticism, Paula Bennett and Vernon Rosario rightly suggest that masturbation is the earliest, most intimate and, in all likelihood, most common of all sexual behaviours. It is the most private sexual act we perform, and yet fears and taboos have made the practice of masturbation as much an act of (anti-)social discourse as it is of personal sensuality. The twenty year historiography of academic research into sexuality that I discussed in Chapter One has uncovered the many complex relationships between sexuality, power, and desire. Masturbation, although oriented away from the social interactions of other forms of sexual behaviour, is no less entwined with social relationships. Even when practised alone, masturbation is arguably a social engagement in that one chooses oneself over others in its practise. In using one’s hand (or manus in Greek that, in combination with stuprare, to defile, forms the root of the word masturbation), thereby negating social interaction, one has not entirely escaped the social. Even when one is alone, society can haunt the body’s sexuality. The poltergeist which lurks around masturbation has historically been one of the most powerful, inflated by discourses of shame, degeneracy, decadence, and disease.

Attention was aroused to the dangers, and the importance, of masturbation with the publication, in 1760, of André Tissot’s *L’Onanisme*. Although a similar tract had been published anonymously fifty years earlier in England entitled *Onania, or the*

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Heinous Sin of Self Pollution (although some sources mention the name Dr Bekker in connection with the text), it wasn’t until 1772 when Tissot’s book was translated into English that the climate was right for Tissot’s and ‘Bekker’s’ commentary to find cultural purchase. Historian George Mosse links this purchase with a rising sense of national responsibility and respectability. To masturbate was to opt out of social interaction, to choose one’s self over one’s fellow man (and woman, which I add parenthetically because of the emphasis which historical commentators including myself place on male masturbation, a choice which I will explain forthwith). Thomas Laqueur has also emphasised the discursive importance of the masturbator’s solitude, noting that masturbation threatens the social by turning desire and pleasure inward. The masturbator practices a lonely vice, and ignores the call of family, nation, and humanity.¹⁹

Not only has the practice signalled a passion for secrecy and solitude, it has also signalled a sexual passion that could easily become uncontrollable. Mosse has traced these discursive links between the anti-sociality of masturbation and other forms of sexuality that have historically been viewed as anti-social or dangerous to the (social) body. For example, the passion for secrecy demonstrated by the masturbator could easily lead one to the most dangerous, anti-social secret passion: homosexuality.²⁰ This is not to suggest that masturbation was suddenly and harshly dragged by Tissot and ‘Bekker’ from the realm of normal pleasure to heinous sin. Regarding masturbation as a sin is as old as the Christian tradition, but herein lies the point. Prior to the eighteenth century, masturbation was considered a sin, venal or mortal, based on the biblical doctrine that its practice denied the natural function of sexuality, to procreate.

As for an appeal to social duty, while certainly implicit in post-Tissot masturbation discourse and undeniably a factor in its discursive sway, sociality is arguably as much an element of Biblical sanction of the practice as modern proscription. After all, to fail to procreate is to fail to establish one of the most basic social units of our culture, the family. Yet, what changed the cultural practice of masturbation after the eighteenth century was that condemnation was based on scientific rather than religious or moral grounds. Tissot’s publication brought masturbation into the realm of the scientist and the doctor. No longer did the admonition against masturbation rely solely on an appeal to moral duty or piety; from the late eighteenth century until the twentieth, commentary on masturbation, be it admonition or endorsement, could not avoid the body of the masturbator.

Tissot, a respected and distinguished physician, premised his *L’Onanisme* on science, arguing that, 'semenal liquor has so great an influence upon the corporeal powers ... that physicians of all ages have been unanimously of the opinion that the loss of an ounce of this humour would weaken more than that of forty ounces of blood.'\(^{21}\) I do not wish to suggest that such a claim was unanimously taken as fact by Tissot’s colleagues or by those who followed him. Historian Michael Mason has already done a fine job of demonstrating how historically contested the notion of spermatic economy has been.\(^{22}\) What I will suggest, however, is that Tissot’s placement of the masturbation issue into a discourse of the body ensured that masturbation became inextricably tied up, not only in a moral debate, but in medical assessments of danger and disease.

Not only did Tissot’s conception of masturbation as contrary to nature (rather than scripture) focus interest on the spilling of seed and all the masculine anxieties that accompanied it, it also drew young people into the discursive web of masturbatory danger and damage. Biblical condemnation of masturbation was addressed to adults: in the book of Genesis God condemned Onan, a man who spilt his seed on the ground rather than conceiving (which has caused theologians since to debate whether the sin was actually masturbation or *coitus interruptus*). By suggesting that masturbation had physical consequences as well as moral and social ones, the work of Tissot and that which followed, suggested that masturbation was dangerous for all its practitioners, not only those who were in a position of sexual maturity and who chose masturbation over procreation. Masturbation became the wrong choice for everyone, not only morally inferior to the alternative of procreation but inherently wrong.

Tissot’s statement on the vital properties of semen, and the turning point it represents in the discourse of masturbation, has been much commented upon by historians of the subject.\(^{23}\) René Spitz declared, with a level of hysteria befitting his subject, that the publication of Tissot’s book “marks the turning point in the history of Western civilisation. Masturbation at this point ceased to be an exclusively religious problem.”\(^{24}\) Although the latter statement is certainly true, Spitz vastly overstates the power and punitive force of the anti-masturbation movement. The opinion that Tissot’s work spawned a century or more of masturbation panic and attendant

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solitary vice to split mind

psychological and physical brutality against masturbators has dominated the discourse for the last forty years or so, and has provided a standard around which analyses have been constructed. There is no doubt, however, that masturbation as a social phenomenon (distinct and different from masturbation as a personal practice) did not simply force its way into public discourse and then recede quietly as the twentieth century dawned and professionals of all kinds awoke to the realisation that 'it's not so bad after all'.

Many doctors in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries believed masturbation could cause serious physical illness. Many did not. Many of the same and others believed the practice could endanger one's mental fitness; many did not. In Australia, the haematic model (as Mason calls it, in reference to Tissot's comments linking blood and semen) dominated masturbation discourse into the twentieth century but was by no means hegemonic. For those who did hold to the haematic model the practice was seen to cause a variety of bodily ills, from a loss of strength and flesh to nervous diseases, idiocy and insanity. William Langston, a Melbourne surgeon in the Imperial Forces and Royal Engineers and author of the popular 1892 pamphlet *Neurasthenia: Nervous and Vital Debility and Associated Evils*, referred to 'penile mucous' as "the habitation of living beings ... the gradual loss of which is tantamount to destruction of the frame." Langston, of course, offered a purchasable cure, an 'electric quadrant' with which he boasted to have cured over 50,000 Australian men.

What is of most interest and relevance to this work, however, is the shift, also evident in Tissot's own statement about blood and semen, to a masculinist view of masturbation. While Tissot's work emerged out of a trope of humoural physiology in which semen was a substance produced by both men and women, the discourse that it spawned has largely used a conception of semen as a male product. In the one-sex model of pre-modern medicine, there are no sharp boundaries between the fluids of the body and few distinctions between the fluids of the male and female body. Seminal emissions, lactation, sweat, and blood were all seen as commensurable units of exchange in a bodily economy of fluids. Men's and women's seminal fluid was seen as a more or less refined version of the same substance; man's greater perfection made his semen more powerfully generative but not his alone to spill. Moreover, women's menstrual blood was frequently equated with semen, as was men's blood; in both cases


intermperance or some other human flaw turned the semen into another form of bodily fluid. 27

When the model of male and female sexual physiology as differentiated along a hierarchy of perfection gave way to a model of incommensurable male and female bodies and sexualities, semen became the exclusive property of the male. Although during Tissot's time the territories occupied by male and female sex was still contested (some maintained that women produced a fluid necessary for conception), by the twentieth century the boundaries of sex and fluid were firmly divided by sex. Men had semen, women had eggs. Doctors' counsel to men and women to live temperate lives in order to maintain the quality of their seminal fluid was now a caveat directed for men, for it was men alone who were seen to have a bodily fluid which required proper conditions to remain viable. Women were no longer bound by their seminal secretions to particular modes of behaviour, as men continued to be. Vaginal secretions, which for centuries had been taken to be an inferior version of male ejaculate, turned into something quite different under the microscopic eye of modern medicine. Physician William Cowper noted that, "since the discovery of the egg ... that Liquor which has been taken by all preceding Ages for the Seed in [women], is found to be only a mucus Matter, Secreted from the Glands of the Vagina". 28

Professionals and quacks who seized on the post-Tissot conception of masturbation and masturbatory illness continued to focus their attention on the importance of the 'seminal liquor'. Now, however, that focus highlighted the physiology and behaviour of men in particular. The maintenance of the relation between semen, masturbation, and danger is evident in the classification by Langston and others of wet dreams as harmful to the male constitution (although minimally because of their unintentional occurrence). As far as behaviour was implicated in the discourse of masturbation, it would remain one of application to both men and women. Yet, because the act was so closely linked with the spilling of semen, modern discourse of masturbation accentuated the unique properties and responsibilities of the male body. This shift, while not absolute (women masturbators were certainly scrutinised and punished alongside men), drew masturbation into close discursive proximity to ideals and ideas of masculinity and manliness.

Just as masturbation discourse has, over time, become masculinised, it has also become one which focuses on particular types of male body. For young people who read Tissot's work, and who had no legitimate means to practice the procreative alternative, the consequences of an admonition against masturbation were obvious.

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27 For further discussion of humoural physiology and the economy of bodily fluids see Laqueur, Making Sex, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1990.
Tissot's contemporary and adherent Jean Jacques Rousseau made this concern explicit in *Emile* (1762), in which he suggested that it would be "a dangerous matter if instinct taught your pupil to abuse his senses; if once he acquires this dangerous habit he is ruined ... body and soul will be enervated; he will carry to the grave the sad effects of this habit." By the twentieth century, the type of concern expressed by Rousseau had become more intensely focused on youth, as material circumstances extended the sexually dangerous period between childhood and adulthood. As masturbation became more professionalised through the attentions of psychiatry, its physically dangerous properties were considered especially problematic for those who could ill-afford physical degeneration: the vulnerable, *i.e.* the young and the mentally unstable.

The youth focus of the medical trope of masturbation is explored in David Walker's work on masturbation anxiety in Australia in which he traces discursive links made between degeneracy and physical appearance. If masturbation were allowed to sap the vital energy Australian boys needed to grow, they would never reach their full physical heights. Not only would they then carry the marks of degeneracy on their bodies, making it visible to all not only that they were masturbators (or former masturbators), but it would be obvious to all that these weakened men would be less able to bear the strains of modern culture. The youth and virility of the Australian nation was inextricably bound to the youth and virility of the young men who were set to inherit that nation. Australia's status, constructed in pre-World War One cultural discourses as a bulwark against modernism, was already threatened by a reduced birth rate. Many, including Frederick Norton Manning himself, argued that the nation could not withstand a weakened (masturbating) population.

Victorian euphemisms such as spermatorrhea, lost manhood and premature decay largely fell out of favour in Australia by the 1920s as did attention to, and hawking of, cures for the practice. As professional scrutiny of the body became more prevalent, attention focused more specifically on the prevention of problems, rather than their cure. As well, the professional interventions into sexuality that increased rapidly in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries enabled a new vocabulary to replace the euphemisms of the early twentieth century. As management of sexuality became more professionalised and knowledge of body, sexuality, and self-discipline more specific and refined, the cures offered by medical hucksters lost their appeal.

While concern with seminal *fastidiousness* had waned, attention to informed and proper *management* of semen still occupied scientific and social professionals. Questions of personal and national vitality remained at the centre of sexual discourse and *vice*...

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versa. By the inter-war years, moreover, this discursive knot fastened around ideas of male sexuality, masculine responsibility and youth rather than simply around the masturbator (male or female) as perverted identity.32 This is not to suggest that masturbation moved out of a medical/scientific discourse or that Australian experts decided that its practice was healthy sexual expression. On the contrary; the practice of masturbation was re-inscribed with new medical/scientific knowledge that tightened certain links between masturbation and mental disorder and loosened others. The expenditure of semen, for instance, went from being a central issue for all masturbators (female and male), to one of importance only for men, to one of less importance than the circumstances of the practice. When one masturbated in one’s life became more important in characterising the practice and the practitioner than complex equations of blood and semen. Thus the criteria upon which masturbation could be considered deviance were narrowed according to both gender and the specific circumstances of the practitioner (such as age, temperament, mental ability); masturbatory deviance was not only masculinised but made an age-specific problem. While the links between semen and nervous energy became less pronounced, discursive links—coincident, rather than causal—remained between the practice of masturbation and degeneracy (of self, of race, of nation).

The discourse of masturbation that I have schematically outlined and that I will return to in more detail has a history which is its own but which also writes the history of masculinity, sexuality and youth. The psychiatrists of Sydney and Melbourne hospitals, clinics, and asylums used that history and they transformed it, turning masturbation from a disease entity to a disease indicator. Before I can discuss that transition in more detail I will return to the psychiatric arena and look at the disorder of youth which precipitated it.

the disease of youth

The disease which was to become dementia praecox (and later schizophrenia) was first classified in 1863 as ‘pubertal insanity’ by German psychiatrist Karl Kahlbaum. The diagnosis was of a catatonic type mental disease occurring at puberty and rapidly terminating in dementia, and Kahlbaum termed the disease hebephrenia. The term dementia praecox came into the European psychiatric vocabulary in 1891 when it was used to describe cases of hebephrenia that included maniacal symptoms varied by

32Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has theorised the change in twentieth century masturbation discourse on several occasions, showing how the practice has shifted radically in this century from a proscribed one to one that is often encouraged by professionals as part of a healthy, normal expression of sexuality and sexual awareness. See Sedgwick, Epistemology of the Closet, Penguin Books, Ringwood, 1990; Tendencies, Duke University Press, Durham, 1993.
melancholia and that were, again, distinguished by rapid mental deterioration. Soon after, *dementia praecox* was classified into a disease typology by an influential empiricist contemporary of Freud, Emil Kraepelin. The focal point of Kraepelin’s work was the meticulous classification of psychiatric syndromes, developed in clinical situations and tested empirically. Interestingly, despite his obvious organicist approach to mental disease, Kraepelin was reluctant to issue a definitive list of the diagnostic features of *dementia praecox*, preferring to articulate a “multitude of pathogenetically unclarified psychoses” as those leading to weakness and those not. The symptoms of the disease could, but need not, include defective heredity, physical stigmata of degeneration, mental peculiarities such as impulsiveness, affectation and moral instability, and gradual deterioration. Kraepelin classified three types of adolescent insanity: hebephrenia, catatonia, and paranoia. Hebephrenia literally translates from the Latin as the mental condition of youth.

The nebulous nature of the disease quickly became a point of debate in the European psychiatric arena. Eugen Bleuler, a Swiss psychiatrist who had headed the University of Zürich’s psychiatric clinic since 1897, compared his observations of precocious dementias with Kraepelin’s description of *dementia praecox* early in the twentieth century. Bleuler proposed that *dementia praecox* manifests itself in a variety of symptoms having a basic core—a split between various psychological functions. Bleuler retained the hebephrenic, catatonic, and paranoid varieties but subsumed them under the label schizophrenia. In 1933, the German government gave Bleuler’s attempt to place schizophrenia within an organic disease model chilling endorsement; the newly classified schizophrenia was declared genetic and sufferers were subjected to mandatory sterilisation. In Europe, the terms *dementia praecox* and schizophrenia were used concurrently throughout the early twentieth century. Inter-war critics of the classification’s vagueness argued that the terms hebephrenia, catatonia, and paranoia brought together casual and superficial similarities, allowing them to be used only tentatively. Even Kraepelin’s successor in the chair of psychiatry at the University of München, Oswald Bumke, criticised the imprecision of classification and diagnosis of the disease. The impetus behind Bumke’s reclassification of Kraepelin’s ‘hebephrenia’ was his antipathy towards the inclusivity of symptoms such as ‘mood’ and ‘delusions’ to
describe a dire mental condition. Bumke argued that use of the dementia praecox
diagnosis dangerously blurred the boundaries between sanity and dementia,
concluding his controversial 1923 article "The Dissolution of Dementia Praecox", by
asking:

Where does dementia praecox belong? Will it, like neurasthenia and hypochondria,
neuropathy, mania, melancholia, hysteria and paranoia, join the large group of abnormal
reactions and constitutions in which we may occasionally observe the development of
psychoses through morbid intensification of mental dispositions that are in themselves
normal?38

Rather than being connected with normality through indefinite transitional
stages, Bumke sought a classification of adolescent insanity which treated the disease
as a quantitative deviation from normal mental processes. Just as Bleuler had been
critical of the looseness of Kraepelin's descriptions of the disease, Bumke found
Bleuler's work to be too inclusive and confusing for the diagnostician, noting with
dismay in 1923:

So far I have not been able to convince myself that the traits of character requisitioned by
these authors [Bleuler and colleague Jacob Kläsi] for their concepts of schizoids and
schizothymia are anything else than normal peculiarities of the human mind, such as can
be found wherever we look for them, albeit more or less pronounced.39

Bumke goes on to quote the concession of a fellow psychiatrist in relation to the
classification of dementia praecox that "we cannot separate the pre-psychotic, the
psychotic, and the non-psychotic (namely in the schizoids)."40

From its inception in the late nineteenth century to its proliferation in the early
twentieth as a disease diagnosis, dementia praecox occupied a space which was not only
linguistically but constitutively slippery. In Australia, the debate about the accuracy of
symptomatology and classification were relatively muted. Kraepelin was commended
in the Medical Journal of Australia but Bleuler and Bumke were never mentioned.
Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the journal chose to use the term dementia praecox
rather than schizophrenia, and relied on the broader Kraepelinian classification of the
disease. Somewhat dismissively it was noted in the journal in 1926 that "the
psychoanalytic school on the continent of Europe have introduced a term
schizophrenia or 'splitting of the mind' in connexion with this variety of insanity".41
The European debate was not mentioned again.

40Bumke, p. 135.
Comments in the Australian psychiatric literature frequently included qualifications similar to the European criticism that the term *dementia praecox* is faulty, misleading, and inadequate. One writer on the subject clearly defined *dementia praecox*. It is, he wrote, "a vague and misleading term descriptive of a non-existent variety of insanity". Nonetheless, and despite the 1922 urging of West Australia’s Inspector General of the Insane, J. Theo. Anderson that insanity be substituted for *dementia* and adolescence for *praecox*, the Latin term *dementia praecox* predominated in descriptions of the mentally ill adolescent. The disease was to become one of the most common diagnoses of mental illness among the young male population of Australia in the interwar years. The discourse was imprecise but influential and created not only a pathological population defined largely by their life stage but, like the technologies of the Australian children’s court, helped to define the adolescent subjectivity from which such a disease population deviated.

**psychiatry and ‘coming of age’**

By the 1920s psychiatrists had a diverse symptomatology to help define and distinguish the ‘normal’ adolescent from the mentally diseased. This section of the chapter will demonstrate how the discourse of *dementia praecox* was crucial in defining adolescence, and in particular the normative sexuality of the adolescent male.

In the *Medical Journal of Australia*, psychiatric articles were subsumed under the section heading of Neurology, indicating the insistence on the primacy of organic causes in accounting for mental disease. The unofficial policy of the *MJA* can be found in the words of W.J. Springthorpe who, in 1922, ranked explanatory systems according to their importance in psychiatry:

> Behaviour is abnormal when the laws of physics or of life are disobeyed, when evolution is disturbed, when the endocrine glands or the sympathetic nervous system are unsound or when emotions, intelligence and the will to work inharmoniously follow the pleasure/pain [motive] instead of the reality motive or fail to secure systemic satisfaction.

Although Kraepelin’s classification of *dementia praecox* had included no recognisable pathogenic changes, pathological evidence was a popular avenue of determination of mental disease among the Australian psychiatric community. One of the most prolific contributors to the understanding of *dementia praecox* was W.A.T. Lind, pathologist of Victoria’s Lunacy Department, who concluded in 1922 that the

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probable cause of the dementia ailment was toxæmia of the liver. In most other ways, Australian psychiatrists adopted Kraepelin’s classification of dementia praecox. The disease was considered to become overt in adolescence and comprised, according to 1922 figures, thirty per cent of all admissions to institutions of the insane. In the majority of cases it appeared before the twenty fifth year in one of the three forms: hebephrenia, catatonia, or paranoia.

The three types varied in several respects. The prominence placed on heredity was strongest with the paranoid type of the disease, the type which was also considered to have a more acute onset which occurred most often later in the patient’s life (only thirty five per cent of paranoid precocious dments showed symptoms before the age of twenty five). The catatonic form was considered more similar to the hebephrenic; in both of these types onset was gradual and characterised by a change in the personality of the sufferer. In the catatonic form, however, sufferers tended to decline into a stuporous state of negativism and hyper-suggestibility occasionally broken by sudden impulsive excitement. A catatonic precocious dement was considered to be at risk of developing hebephrenia. The hebephrenic form of the disease, referring to the mental condition of youth, appeared before the twenty fifth year in seventy-five per cent of the reported cases and as a form of the disease represented about sixty per cent of the total number of dementia praecox cases. It is this significant number of patients, that is the eighteen per cent of the incarcerated mentally ill population who were diagnosed with the hebephrenic form of dementia praecox, around whom the discourse of dementia praecox in general was focused.

Australian pathologists observed and agreed upon four basic ‘facts’ of the hebephrenic form of dementia praecox; that the period of onset was inevitably the adolescent years (a range of years they classified as fifteen to twenty five), that a large proportion of sufferers experienced spermatogenesis and regressive testicular atrophy, that hypoplasia of the genitals was one common symptom, and that “the unhealthy sexual behaviour of most precocious dments, even in the pre-psychotic stage, [results] from a feeling of inadequacy”. The inclusion of a testicular abnormality as one of the basic facts of the disease clearly constructs dementia praecox as primarily a male condition, and one characterised by sexual deviation of a physical and psychological nature. Sexual/fantastic delusions were one of the most frequent of dementia praecox’s symptoms. Despite this attention to the sexuality of the male sufferer, Kraepelin’s most definitive clinical study of the disease had used a fairly even number of male and

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female subjects—twenty seven and twenty six respectively. As well, the first mention of *dementia praecox* in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, in 1918, was in reference to ovarian involution in female sufferers. Yet the pathologists’ assertions of 1932 suggest that the ‘typical’ precocious dement was male.

That *dementia praecox* quickly became a disease of young males was the result of a discursive knot created by the psychiatric profession that bound together adolescent turmoil, psychiatric illness, and the volatility of male sexuality. Statistically, the typical precocious dement presented in the hebephrenic form, and it was this form that was to become particularly entwined with professional and popular discourses of adolescence, sexuality, and sanity. According to the *Medical Journal of Australia*, hebephrenia’s first symptoms arise at the age of puberty but develop so gradually that patients most often fail to come under medical observation until years after the disease’s actual onset. W.S. Dawson referred, in a 1930 article, to the unique, and uniquely problematic, insanity of adolescence:

> The second decade is a period of special stress owing to the profound physical and mental changes of puberty and adolescence. Rapid growth, the awakening of the sex instinct ... the special demands of education and the social adjustment involved in leaving school and perhaps home ... may throw too great a strain upon the individual with poor psycho-physical development.⁴⁸

In the discourse of adolescent insanity, this statement in itself is indicative of the masculinist bias of the disease. That a female would be placed under stress by the vacillations of her body was not considered unusual and certainly not cause for psychiatric investigation. Diagnoses of hysteria and depression had defined women for some years before the emergence of *dementia praecox* discourse. And while women were classified as precocious dements, they formed a small minority of this particular mentally ill population. In the psychiatric literature the diagnosis of *dementia praecox* in women coincided with pregnancy or child birth and led to diagnoses of the two rarer forms of the disease, the catatonic and paranoid (the former associated with child birth and the latter with pregnancy). In Kraepelin’s own 1908 tests (that set up the classification system), the likelihood that the females subjects would be diagnosed with manic-depressive disorder, rather than *dementia praecox*, correlated inversely with the increase in their age.⁴⁹

Incarceration figures for New South Wales institutions in the inter-war years makes explicit what W.S. Dawson implied with his rhetoric of adolescent stress. Single men formed the majority of those admitted to asylums by request (the majority of incarcerated men overall were single as well), and a large percentage of this population

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were cases of adolescent insanity. These figures remained statistically consistent in New South Wales from 1920 to 1939. Thirty per cent of incarcerated males in New South Wales were under the age of thirty. Of this group, the largest proportion was of adolescents, a figure higher than that of mentally handicapped children. Stephen Garton's work has done a fine job tracing the changes in psychiatric facilities in Australia during the early twentieth century, demonstrating a shift during the interwar years away from treatment of men and toward the greater incarceration, treatment, and observation of women. As a whole in the field of psychiatry, the proportion of men being treated declined, but their are some interesting exceptions to that trend, one of which is the much smaller decline in the rate at which young men were incarcerated for adolescent adjustment disorders. While the overall makeup of Australia's population of mentally ill changed significantly over the course of the twenty year gap between two wars, the typical young asylum inhabitant remained male, single, and ill through a combination of weak or abnormal physiology and psychological pressure on his neuropathic temperament.

What effects, then, did dementia praecox have on its sufferer? Perhaps more importantly for my argument, how did psychiatric professionals perceive the relationship between adolescent turmoil, psychiatric illness, and sexuality?

The most frequent behaviours of the precocious dement, according to Kraepelin in 1908, had been non-specific psychoses, persecution delusions, catatonia, sexual-fantastic delusions, and auditory hallucinations. By 1922 in Australia, the characteristic behaviours had transformed into irritability, thoughtlessness, self-absorption, changes in disposition, obstinacy, and restlessness which occurred as "unexpected developments". Orientation and apprehension was—"as a rule"—not disturbed. The vagueness for which Kraepelin had been criticised remained, and the amorphous disease reached a disturbing level of inclusivity. W.S. Dawson suggested a thorough aetiology in 1930, and warned:

[N]eurotic symptoms, unusual fatiguability, anxiety, obsessions and emotional display should not be regarded too lightly in adolescence and any indication of lack of cooperation and resistance on the part of the patient and apparent indifference to the illness ... should be taken as warnings of a developing psychosis.
Once the diagnosis had been made there would seem to be no escape from adolescent insanity; any resistance, denial, or indifference could be taken as a sign of mental disorder and impending psychosis. In distinguishing between the three types of dementia praecox it is interesting to note that symptoms that, to the contemporary reader, seem to indicate mental disorder most clearly, such as hallucinations, stupor, delusions and disorientation, were considered more characteristic of paranoid or catatonic forms of the disease. Symptoms such as these occurred more suddenly and acutely than the symptoms of hebephrenia which were more likely to be behavioural and creep slowly and insidiously into the lives of sufferers. Other classified signs of adolescent insanity in the hebephrenic form included a noted "change in disposition, a laxity in morals, a lack of affection towards relatives and particularly an abnormal satisfaction in their own ideas and behaviour". In one extended passage, J. Theo. Anderson set out a list of symptoms:

They develop an emotional indifference and general lethargy without as a rule hallucinations or delusions ... They lose their accustomed energy; their disposition changes; they become self absorbed, seclusive, irritable, and obstinate. They become thoughtless, irresponsible and unbalanced. They become broody, sitting about unemployed and at times take to their bed and remain there for a lengthy period.54

The hebephrenia sufferer will "go to all kinds of extremes, even in the direction of religion, sexual conduct, etc.", and may exhibit a "very marked change in their sexual attitude".55 The behaviours which G. Stanley Hall considered the emblem of healthy adolescent turmoil were, in the discourse of psychiatry, being used to classify the degeneratively mentally ill. That the normal and the pathological would be so intricately tied together in the knotted ball of psychiatric discourse is unremarkable. Adolescence and precocious dementia were entities with short, coincidental historical trajectories. The discourses of both during the years 1918-38 had not yet become hegemonic; ambiguities, contradictions, and confusion remained a significant part of the discourse. An example of these contradictions, and certainly not a unique or isolated one, comes early in the Australian literature of dementia praecox. In the same journal (Medical Journal of Australia) in the same year (1922) it was suggested both that dementia praecox is caused by liver disease and that the disease exhibited no pathognomic changes. Such confusion and contradiction characterised not only the experiences of both adolescence and its insanity in the inter-war period, but also of ways of talking and writing about the two experiential states.

That behavioural conditions for the two subjectivities of adolescence and the precocious dements exhibit a large degree of overlap, or slippage, should not be taken as an indication that professionals viewed adolescence as a mentally deviant state. Most observers held the opposite opinion of the second decade of life and, like Hall, valorised the artlessness and energy of verdant youth. The discourse of *dementia praecox* served to define adolescence by delineating the qualities of youth and setting up parameters around those qualities that were normal and those that were not. Bleuler’s criticism that *dementia praecox* indicated merely a morbid intensification of otherwise normal mental dispositions was entirely correct. The discourse of adolescent insanity did rapidly evolve into a method of classifying observed qualitative deviations from ‘normal’ adolescence. But as Bleuler also noted, *dementia praecox* emerged as a psychiatric term in the same way as did neurasthenia and hysteria. Each, in its own historical moment, represents not so much the precision and objectivity of psychiatric assessment as the need to construct a particular subjectivity out of a set of behaviours that, in the particular historical context, seem new, strange, or problematic.

The hebephrenia sufferer certainly had the potential, according to his classifiers, to be a social problem. Explicit connections were suggested by psychiatric observers between hebephrenia and incendiarism, delinquency, and violence. More implicitly, the hebephrenic was expected to be sexually and socially irresponsible; he had, after all, chosen to satiate his own pleasures rather than sublimate them for the greater personal and social good. It is this dangerous pleasure to which I now turn.

*folly and disaster*

The *dementia praecox* discourse is interesting not only for the ways in which it helped to create adolescence as a cultural and ideological category both strange and familiar to adult society, but for the way in which it constructed the struggle for sexual responsibility as the primary challenge of adolescence. From Kraepelin’s sexual delusions to the extremes of sexual conduct mentioned by Australian authors in the inter-war period, adolescent insanity was identifiable by its distinct effect on the sexuality of the sufferer. As I mentioned earlier, two of the four ‘fact statements’ pathologists felt comfortable making about *dementia praecox* related to degeneration or regression in male sexual biology. Precocious dementia in females was considered to be, in the vast majority of cases, the result of the sex instinct’s successful fruition, *i.e.* pregnancy and childbirth. By contrast, in the majority of sufferers (young men) the danger lay not in the realisation of the sex instinct, but in its awakening.
In keeping with the general anti-Freudianism of the discipline, Australian psychiatric practitioners overwhelmingly insisted that puberty represented sexuality’s awakening point. Prior to adolescence, according to such a theory, the sex instinct is entirely unestablished. This conceptualisation set up adolescence as the crucial point in the sexual development and education of the young male. Compounding the pressure on the young male entering adolescence was the popular modern belief in the profundity and sanctity of the sexual being and its primary importance in individual integrity. Not only did a young modern male have to come to terms with his sweating, hair sprouting, ejaculating body; in adolescence, the young male had also to negotiate the demands of his body correctly and responsibly in order to avoid mental disorder and to become a responsible adult male. As W.A.T. Lind noted:

> Although modern civilisation brings sex matters more under the notice of youth, still, if youth be normal, there is every reason to believe that proper environment, teaching and rational line of thought will eventually guide the sex instinct through the hair trigger period of adolescence into the more crystallised social customs of mature age. All forms of civilisation favour the restraint of sex gratification up till a certain age or degree of maturity.56

In a 1936 article Lind wrote of the inverse correlation between the degree of sexual disorder in adolescent insanity and the probability of recovery, a finding which I think is indicative of a discursive alignment in the psychiatric discipline between adolescence, sexuality, and manhood. He noted:

> Youth and rapidity of onset as a rule are conducive to a good recovery ... When the whole of the patient’s mind is taken up by sexual delusions or dominated by sexual ideas the prognosis is bad and when there is an over-activity of the primitive organic instincts, such as eating, drinking, sexual desire, etc., the prognosis is bad.57

The more disordered the sexuality, the more deviant and incorrigible the mind. And while any sexual conduct implicitly indicated a problem, the symptom with the most power to undermine the achievement of manhood remained the solitary vice.

In New South Wales, masturbation appeared on the record books as an ‘exciting’ cause of insanity until 1932 when a professionalised psychiatric vocabulary changed the status of masturbation yet again. While it was commonly accepted by nineteenth century Australian ‘alienists’ that the finite amount of nerve energy that each male body contained was dangerously wasted with each ejaculation, masturbation was classified as a psychiatric disease until 1896, when it became one in a cluster of ‘exciting’ causes of insanity. After being downgraded from a type of insanity unto itself to a cause of other types of insanity, the act of masturbation was erased from the

record of insanity causation altogether. Inspectors-General of Australia's asylums replaced “sexual self-abuse” with “hebephrenia” as a cause of insanity.58

In keeping with their strong desire for higher professional status, Australian psychiatrists were quick to dissociate their profession from the realm of quackery and quick fixes in which masturbation had been situated. Interestingly, however, discussion of masturbation maintained a prominent place in the psychiatric literature of the inter-war period. While physicians strenuously and repeatedly asserted that masturbation did not lead to insanity, the discourse of adolescent insanity maintained a link between the two, not as cause and effect but as symptom and syndrome. And if masturbation no longer needed to be cured, the desire for expert knowledge and specialised healing certainly ensured that the disease indicated by the practice did. The path from folly to disaster is explained in the MJA in a 1923 editorial on sexual disturbances of the male. Three genital disturbances (note they are not referred to as themselves being disorders) required treatment, the author asserted: gonorrhoea, masturbation, and coitus interruptus. Masturbation is included because of its propensity to shorten the time required for orgasm. In doing so, the act prevents the urethra from fully relaxing, or ‘deplethorizing’, and this hyperaesthesia stimulates repetition of the act.59

Note that it is in the conscious continuation of the practice rather than the instance of the act, the choice of pleasure over continence, that constitutes the disturbance. This is made clearer when comments on masturbation are contrasted with later comments made about coitus interruptus. The physiological disturbance of coitus interruptus is remarkably similar to that of masturbation: the seminal vesicles are not properly drained, membranes remain congested and thus the nervous centres cannot relax. In this case, however, impotence is claimed to follow because prolonged excitability overwhelms the nervous centres that control erection.60 Thus, the two disturbing practices lead to two different and context specific problems. For the sexually mature man who has legitimate avenues of sexual expression available, to choose not to follow them threatens the man’s ability to fulfil the obligation of sexual maturity, fruitful coition. For the younger masturbator, choosing to continue the practice meant that he would not get to the stage of sexual maturity when such avenues became available.

In 1926 W.A.T. Lind explained the difference between masturbating and mental disease thus:

Masturbational insanity is a name sometimes given to a form of insanity by practitioners who have not had experience in hospitals for the insane. Medical men in these institutions recognise that it is a symptom and not a cause of mental disease, although its effect upon the patient aggravates the mental symptoms. Masturbation is the self gratification of a pleasurable sensation when the aesthetic controlling neurones are impaired or lost or where local changes ... act as an unnatural stimulation.

Of course, this dismissal of masturbation insanity is somewhat less reassuring when masturbation remained so firmly associated with disorder. Reassurance was further eroded when, just the next year, Lind wrote about masturbation in the *MJA* again, this time noting that, although rare, masturbation can indeed *cause* insanity as well as lead to “the practice of sexual perversions” and a “train of symptoms” of nervous exhaustion. These sexual perversions were catalogued as “abnormal or unaesthetic sexual practices includ[ing] fellatio, cunnilingus, sodomy, and bestiality.”

In general the condition that masturbatory symptoms would indicate was, by the end of the 1920s, no longer masturbatory insanity but in most cases *dementia praecox*, a disease for which masturbation was one symptom in an assortment that proposed adolescence as a specific, and specifically sexual, life crisis. The masturbator may have lost some of what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick calls his “diacritical potential for specifying a particular kind of person, an identity” but through the discourse of *dementia praecox* masturbation was firmly linked to youth, sexual danger, and disorder.

According to the professionals it was troubled youth who masturbated, indicating that the practice did not constitute an identity in itself but was an integral part of a particular, and problematic, subjectivity. Doctor and New South Wales Department of Education head, James W. Kemp Bruce, noted in 1932, “A moral lethargic condition is produced [by masturbation], thereby a weakening of the willpower ... Truancy and running away are common among masturbators.” Bruce’s description of a masturbator’s symptoms correspond to the professional classification of the precocious dement. Other tendencies shared by the masturbator and the sufferer of adolescent insanity included introversion, exaggeration of personality traits, and restlessness.

So while modern psychiatry decried the graceless and oppressive Victorian diagnosis of masturbation insanity, their own classification of *dementia praecox* served to

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place the masturbating young male within a larger, more complex mental disorder based not only on behaviour but age. New South Wales figures indicate that ninety per cent of males diagnosed with masturbatory tendencies up to 1932 were between fifteen and thirty.67 This indicates perhaps that masturbation after sexual maturity was considered a different, less damaging practice than adolescent masturbation. More likely, I would suggest, is that the emphasis in explaining mental illness in the inter-war period shifted to a complex of larger psychiatric problems relating to the adolescent age group and the struggle for sexual maturity, within which masturbation indicated failure to control the tumultuous male body.

And what of the young masturbator himself? While I would not suggest that the discourse of masturbation insanity and dementia praecox was so dominant that young Australian men hesitated in bedrooms, bathrooms, and isolated corners across the nation before indulging in the solitary vice, for those men whose sexual and social behaviour brought them under psychiatric scrutiny masturbation was clearly troubling. Stephen Garton has studied the case papers and letters of inmates of New South Wales psychiatric facilities and found that masturbation and jealousy were the most prominent anxieties of male patients. That guilt and anxiety over masturbation were self-described as important factors in mental breakdown suggests that such fears were widespread enough to be a part of the cultural heritage of the patients. In Garton's total sample of male psychiatric cases, ten per cent indicated some central preoccupation with masturbation and its supposed attendant effects.68

And why would patients not fixate on their sexual habits? Told that masturbation and sexual fixation were symptomatic of the mental disease for which they were incarcerated, the adolescent could not help but become anxious about his level of sexual fixation, a state that in turn was representative of mental illness. Nor would the cessation of sexual ideas and 'deviant' sexual habits help alleviate the disease. For, although it was indicated by behaviours such as masturbation, dementia praecox constituted a disorder located in the body as much as the behaviour. As such, treatment required more than behaviour modification. Although the masturbator could change his ways, the precocious dement needed to have both body and mind changed for him in order to be relieved.

67Garton, Insanity in New South Wales, p. 192.
68Garton, Insanity in NSW, p. 194.
curing adolescence

Although dementia praecox was largely thought to terminate in incurable dementia, a variety of treatments were attempted. The first of the ‘so called great physical therapies’, prolonged sleep induction, was developed in the early 1920s at the University of Zürich’s psychiatric clinic, and first suggested as a treatment in Australia in 1922. Although its efficacy was doubted, sleep therapy was consistently promoted throughout the 1920s. The treatment consisted of administering somnifen, a hypnotic, to patients to induce ‘dauernarkose’, or prolonged narcosis in patients. The desired outcome was to rupture the “vicious cycle between psychic excitation, psychomotor activity and the increase in psychic excitation”. It also conveniently quieted the patients. A 1922 editorial in the Medical Journal of Australia noted that somnifen induced sleep for twelve hours in the first instance and allowed a “state of somnolence [to be] maintained for several days by further injections ... every twenty-four hours”.

Sleep therapy was advocated by the MJA again in 1926 as a treatment not only for the disease of dementia praecox but for the practice of masturbation by asylum inmates suffering a variety of mental ailments. Proposals to treat masturbation (a practice) and dementia praecox (a disease) by sleep reflect an assumption about the contingency of one condition on the other. A 1932 article about another sleep inducing hypnotic, theelin, espoused that drug’s virtues of treating masturbation and dementia praecox, as well as the added perk of making patient management considerably easier. As for the general practice of masturbation by inmates, W.A.T. Lind suggested a range of treatment and management options both physical and narcotic to his colleagues in considered detail in 1926:

Local applications should be avoided. Manual labour, cold showers, baths, and interesting recreation to divert the attention are the best lines of treatment ... Authors of textbooks advise a hard mattress and pillow, but as these are likely to keep patients awake at night by their discomfort, they are more likely to conduce to the practice. A comfortable bed with a paraldehyde draught to produce immediate sleep and early rising as soon as the patient is awake are more rational as a means of preventing the practice during the night. Thread worms, lack of cleanliness in the erotogenic regions, phymosis or haemorrhoids may in some cases be a factor in commencement of the practice, but the egocentric mind and solitary habits of the insane weigh more in the causes of the condition.

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69 Medical Journal of Australia, July 1922, p. 135.
71 Medical Journal of Australia, July 1922, p. 135.
Note the ongoing discursive slippage both here and in previous psychiatric commentary in reference to masturbation. It is, concurrently and within the writings of a single author, a symptom, an indicator, a condition, a practice, and a pleasurable sensation.

In the late 1920s in Europe and by the early 1930s in Australia, other therapies began to replace 'dauernarkose'. Vasectomy, ductless gland therapy, fever inducement, insulin shock, and use of cardiazol to induce an epilepsy-type attack were all attempted through the 1930s to treat adolescent insanity. Each new drug, physical therapy, or bodily invasion was used in an effort to jolt the patient out of his paralysing adolescent turmoil and into adulthood and mental health. Cure of *dementia praecox* required a resolution between sexual and social needs, between desire and mastery, a resolution psychiatrists believed would be induced by the profound bodily shock of a simulated seizure or coma. In Australia surgical intervention seems not to have been encouraged, although its occurrence in the United States was noted in the *MJA*. Instead, recommendations of psychiatrists tended more to behaviour management through drugs and environmental modifications.

Psychotherapy, a treatment option marginalised by the *Medical Journal of Australia* and most of the country's prominent mental health specialists, was nonetheless given some attention for its proclaimed ability to jolt a patient psychically from his pathological behaviour. Authors who recommended psychotherapeutic measures were, however, quick to qualify their counsel with a deference to organicist tropes. Dr. James McAvee, an Adelaide psychiatrist and one of a handful of Freud defenders in the Australian psychiatric fraternity, claimed in 1923 to have turned a compulsive gambler, drinker, and loafer into a tea totalling businessman in twelve hypnosis sessions. McAvee was quick to note that he was "glad to see that ... practitioners are now beginning to realise that it is not sufficient to know in a vague manner that manhood is half physical and half psychic."\(^74\) Not only mental health then, but proper manhood could be restored to the psychiatric patient through a composite and ongoing therapeutic treatment.

Although a great variety of treatments was attempted, psychiatrists largely agreed that none of them would cure a precocious dement. Dr. Eric Sinclair questioned the very validity of the word recovery, arguing that such a term could refer only to respite from a psychotic attack or manifestation rather than recovery from the physical or functional defect underlying disease.\(^75\) It was far more likely that the outcome of any treatment would be a long remission period inversely proportional to the

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prominence of sexual symptoms in the sufferer. Remissions which lasted decades were considered to be a typical feature of dementia praecox. Those who experienced remission spontaneously—as ten per cent of hebephrenics were claimed to do—or through therapeutic measures, would nonetheless retain disease stigma. Although dementia praecox discourse had blurred the boundaries between hereditary and environmental causality, the precocious dement was considered to carry the burden of disease in his body even if he managed to control its disordered outbursts. While seemingly normal, these patients would exhibit residual symptoms—‘slight peculiarities’—long after treatment had concluded.

The insistence that masturbation indicated rather than comprised insanity did little to remove masturbation from the sphere of neuroses and organic insanity. And certainly, the discipline had no reason to remove it. Masturbation was still considered a vice that wasted (although not irreparably) vital male energy. In a culture which saw itself threatened by jaded, listless modernism, vigilance against further weakness was ever required. The effusive W.A.T. Lind, who had trained and practised in England before taking tenure with the Victorian Lunacy Department, addressed the issue excitedly in 1927. In an article on sexual disorder, Lind felt it appropriate to comment upon the differences between European and Australian cultures:

In the crowded cities of Europe amongst nations whose moral and business credits are quite unacceptable to us, the constant urge for sex gratification by normal and abnormal methods supplies the material from which certain European writers build up their ideas, but in countries whose business and moral reputations are good, we do not find such a mass production of those vicious perverts who, as a rule, comprise a very small proportion of the dregs of humanity in every country.  

By including masturbation as a symptom of a broader disorder, by making it an integral part of the crisis of adolescence as it were, the profession managed to modernise its diagnostic regime without contradicting the anti-masturbation tropes on which it was established as a modern profession. Further, aspirations to professionalise meant that the Australian psychiatric fraternity was keen to gain authority over the adolescent subject, and the discursive subjectivity of adolescence more generally, as a means of expanding professional and public interests. To reaffirm the place of masturbation in a medical discourse while linking it with the emergent subjectivity of adolescence removed the stigma of Victorian prudery and

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masturbation hysteria from the discipline while maintaining the role of the psychiatrist as expert on preventative and therapeutic practices.

The discourse of masturbation from which I have drawn examples was primarily concerned with the retention of male strength and power from emasculating influences such as modernity. Masturbation became the literal act through which vital and non-renewable male energy was sapped. The psychiatric discussion of masturbation as a symptom of mental disease (and delinquency) in the inter-war years retained the typology of the weakened masturbator and the virile, manly abstainer. In this sphere of discourse, masturbation acts as a metaphor for masculinity. While not denying that there has been concern about female masturbation historically, it has generally operated in a frame of reference—of euphoria and the threat of hysteria—very different from that of male masturbation.

A general consensus emerged during the inter-war years that male adolescence was a time of great importance in the struggle for the achievement of responsible, respectable, and sane adulthood. The pressure on the ‘hair trigger’ vulnerability of the young mind was exerted, according to this construction, by the burgeoning, volatile sexuality of the adolescent. If a youth was to pass through adolescence successfully to adulthood, he would have to learn sublimation and deference in relation to his sexual desires. Failure at this task implied a broader failure of the maturation process. It is through this formulation that the act of masturbating came to indicate to psychiatrists the inadequacy of the masturbator to successfully control not only his sexuality, but the wide range of adolescent behaviours over which control was so vital in creating men. If the youth could not elevate his sexual instincts above the animalistic level, he would be incapable of becoming a responsible person. The discourse of dementia praecox created an adolescent sexuality which was inextricably knotted to a range of social and individual behaviours. As a result, the subjectivity of the adolescent in the modern period become intertwined with sexual vulnerability and danger as these discourses proliferated.

In these three chapters I have examined tutelary sites of adolescence and sexuality discourse. Each of these disciplinary sites drew on the knowledge of the others to contextualise and bolster their position in relation to adolescents and social management. In each, there was also a strong undercurrent of eugenics, from R.J.A. Berry’s call for sterilisation of the feeble-minded to psychiatrists’ assertions that disease was primarily transmitted through heredity. In the next chapter I will turn to this element of these discourses more directly, to examine the notion that national health
and efficiency could be increased, not only by identifying and managing young people but by the application of eugenic principles to young bodies.
chapter 5. building a national body: youth and eugenics

Eugenics casts a long shadow over the texts and conversations which comprise this thesis. In some locations, eugenic understanding existed as a barely audible whisper. In others, it was a constant refrain. That is not to say that the professionals of the previous chapters were all equally driven to use the tools of their disciplines to eliminate all obstacles in the creation of Hall's 'super-anthropoid' race. The associations a contemporary reader would make between eugenics, repression, and genocide are just that: contemporary associations that did not function in the historical setting of the inter-war period.1 Karl Pearson—mathematician, biometrist, and head of the Galton Eugenics Laboratory at University College, London—was the successor of Francis Galton, the man who coined the term and developed the science of eugenics in the 1860s. Pearson was one of the pioneers of eugenic science and neither he nor his predecessor, nor many of the Australians who will feature in this chapter saw eugenic science as institutionalised racism as we might today. In a 1909 text titled The Scope and Importance to the State of the Science of National Eugenics, Pearson defined the purpose and goals of eugenics. He asserted that eugenics was not only a science (of population health and phylogeny) but also a 'statecraft', meaning that it provided the tools and training not only to define fit and unfit bodies but to protect the nation and its most precious resources.2

Both of these men and their science are peripheral to this discussion despite their substantial contributions to the categorisation of inheritable characteristics and their correlation with heredity. For it is not the science of eugenics but its position as a form of Australian statecraft that will be the focus of this discussion. In the previous chapters I focused on the ways that adolescent males became a national resource in the scientific-legal machinery of the inter-war years. Here I will look at a form of discourse that underpinned the classification of young bodies as the nation's most precious resource and that reinforced the types of interventions I have discussed.

Although it is centred around an examination of an Australian eugenic text, this chapter does not take the form of an historical case study. The discussion will engage with eugenics more on the level of a discursive milieu than an historical artefact per se. It is, therefore, an interlude in both the approach and handling of the subject matter. There are two reasons for drawing the eugenic element of various sites' discursive intensity into a single location. First, the subject matter of each earlier chapter and those following this one is already complicated enough without dragging in an element of discourse that

implicates (and is implicated in) many issues peripheral to my main discussion. While it perhaps would be less disruptive to have retained discussion of eugenics in each site of its expression, for the sake of clarity I decided that an engagement with eugenic discourse, uninterrupted by the intervention of particular histories, was the best way to approach the subject.

Secondly, the primary link between the chapters of this thesis is their shared vocabulary of sexual and social reform as it hinged on the concept of adolescence. Here I would like to break momentarily with that conversation to suggest that the inter-war cultural vocabulary of masculinity, sexuality, and indeed adolescence itself, was shared with another. Moreover, the strategic mobility of the eugenic vocabulary of sexual discourse enabled it to diverge from and intersect with a variety of sites, despite the distinct and oppositional political meanings embedded in each of those discourses. Eugenics will be taken here not as a specific site but as a discursive setting for the knowledges discussed in the chapters that surround this one.

I will begin with a brief discussion of the historiography of eugenics in Australia and a schematic history of its function in the discourses of nation, identity, and sexuality in inter-war Australia. I will then turn to a broader conceptualisation of eugenic aspirations, inspired by a Foucaultian theoretic of blood, sex, race and subjectivity, and consider the implications of race theorising on historical modes of eugenics. Finally, I will turn to a central text in the Australian literature that crystallised the eugenic milieu which characterised inter-war Australia. Written in 1934 by psychiatrist John Bostock and psychologist L. Jarvis Nye, Whither Away? A Study of Race Psychology and the Factors Leading to Australia’s National Decline represents both the science of eugenics and the social science of managing everyday life using eugenics. It sold out two editions in two years and represents one of the most thorough engagements with eugenic discourse in Australia between the wars. By taking this as my central text, I do not mean to suggest that eugenics was not a form of science, simply that it was at the same time a social phenomenon, and that this social incarnation of eugenics led to specific interventions into the national and individual body that used sexual behaviour as the main axis for eugenic intervention.

good in birth

‘Good in birth’ is the translation of the Greek ‘eugenes’, the word chosen by Francis Galton in 1883 to christen his new science of eugenics. Galton saw the mission and meaning of eugenics to be a fairly simple one. Eugenics was to be a branch of the applied sciences devoted, in his own words, to:
improving stock, which is by no means confined to questions of judicious mating, but which ... takes cognisance of all influences that tend in however remote degree to give the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had.³

Of course what Galton was attempting to apply the rigours of science to were the most nebulous, protean and un-science-like areas of individual and cultural understandings of self: the drive for improvement, fear of disease and degeneration, racism, and the desire to make rational the confusion of pleasure, responsibility and sexuality.

The definition of eugenics itself, even in the work of Galton, was polymorphous; at one point Galton refers to it as a science, at another as a "secular religion".⁴ As modern society became more humane and protective of its weaker members, Galton believed, the weaker members of society were passing on their genes and thus imperilling progress. The science of eugenics was constituted around understanding the principles of heredity and rationally applying them to the reproductive lives of citizens. The social science (or 'statecraft) of eugenics, on the other hand, took knowledge of heredity as its starting point and aimed to teach individuals how to incorporate the scientific knowledge of eugenics into their personal behaviour at every step along the path of life, from mate choice, to reproduction, to rearing conditions and policies that would encourage correct management of each of these steps. Despite contemporary understandings of the movement that are organised largely around coercive policy and Hitler's practical application of eugenic principles, the key element of the social movement of eugenics, particularly in its earlier years, was to promote scientific and rational administration of the state with what Australian historian Judith Bessant has called, "a view to ensuring national efficiency".⁵ The impetus behind Galton's and Pearson's research and that of the many other eugenicists who used these principles to manage the Australian population was a profound optimism that eugenic knowledge could productively influence social and national progress through science and scientific management of all elements of reproduction. Efficiency and progress through eugenics was considered a two fold process. First, eugenic science was utilised to encourage superior, healthy individuals to procreate carefully and abundantly. This has often been referred to by historians as 'positive' eugenics. The second type of eugenic practice was the identification and restriction of those deemed hereditarily inferior, or 'negative' eugenics. In this interlude I will be focusing on the former.

stream of discourse to look particularly at the ways and means of encouraging individuals to actively utilise their sexual bodies for the state.

The spread of eugenic principles rested (as much as it did on new scientific knowledge) on a particular understanding of the state’s relation to individuals and their private behaviour. To the extent that eugenics aspired to state intervention into the reproductive sphere it relied on the cultural assumption that the state had an interest in the sexuality of its citizens. After the social reform movements of hygiene and birth control had established strong links between state and bedroom, the willingness to engage the state in hitherto private areas of life had been proven.6 The discourse of eugenics was then enabled to engage with a wide range of social, political, and moral concerns organised around sexuality and reproduction in an effort to better the nation. Sexuality—reproduction specifically but also prevention of immorality and venereal disease—was a primary organising point for eugenic discourse, particularly in relation to those deemed fit to carry the nation. I would argue, therefore, that eugenics was more solidly fixed to modern notions of sexuality than any other single factor, be it heredity or race.

building a national body

The history of the eugenic bettering the nation has generally been sketched through two sets of Australian organisations: eugenics organisations and a number of other, similar organisations that, while omitting eugenics from their titles, fostered eugenic links between the state and the body of the individual citizen. The only explicitly named eugenics organisations operating in the inter-war years were Richard Arthur’s Eugenics Society of New South Wales and the Eugenics Society of Victoria. Arthur’s organisation was founded in 1912, six months after the First International Eugenics Conference, held in London. The Victorian society was founded late in 1936 by a group of progressives who agreed on the principles of hygiene, heredity, and reproduction. Members were middle class, professional intellectuals drawn from the disciplines of education, zoology, law, medicine, and the clergy and included K.S. Cunningham (Director of the Australian Council of Educational Research at the time) and the University of Melbourne’s Physical Education Director, Professor Fritz Duras.7 While the Victorian organisation was the most successful at bringing the


7 Other members included the Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University, Sir John Medley, Sir Keith Murdoch of the Sun and Herald, and Justice J.V. Barry of the Supreme Court of Victoria: Bessant, “Described, Measured and Labelled”, p. 19.
importance of eugenics into the public eye, its members never managed to influence politicians to pass a state or federal law concerning eugenics. Many organisations called something other than eugenic that were most definitely organised politically and philosophically around eugenic understandings of the body and society; so much so that one Australian historian on the subject has stated, “without hyperbole we can see the first half of the [twentieth] century as the ‘age of eugenics’.” These groups have been intensively studied over the past twenty two years by a diverse group of historians, including Carol Bacchi, Helen Bourke, Stephen Garton, Elizabeth Kwan, Mary Cawte, and Judith Bessant. In discussing their interpretations of the eugenic movement I would like to draw attention to the problematic way that eugenics was initially constituted in the Australian historiography as a phenomenon associated with a particular social politics. Instead I would suggest that the eugenic discourse was intrinsically politically and culturally mutable.

In an early investigation of the eugenics movement in Australia, historian Carol Bacchi used evidence such as this to theorise that eugenic ideals struggled in Australia in the years of social progressivism immediately before and after World War One. In an article titled “Nature/Nurture in Australia 1900–1914”, Bacchi argued that Australian social professionals regarded the nation as the ‘social laboratory of the world’ and were thus more inclined during these years to validate theories of environment rather than heredity regarding the mental and racial health of the population. This view claims the ascent of a hereditarian view of national and personal fitness to be the result of increasing social pessimism following war, depression, and the growing health threat of venereal disease. As a crisis of confidence swept the Australian professional classes, their attitude to eugenics was marked by a shift from environmental hubris to gloomy hereditary determinism. Positioned by Bacchi as a political response to economic and cultural uncertainty, eugenics, according to this view, only began to gain popularity as the depression heightened social anxieties and insecurities.

Soon after the publication of Bacchi’s work, Helen Bourke, in a history of the social sciences in Australia, demonstrated that prominent reformers and academics were drawn to the prospects of eugenic social intervention even before World War One and its socially disruptive aftermath. Only six months after the first International Eugenics Conference in 1912, one of the participants arrived in Sydney from London to lecture on ‘Eugenics, or Scientific Race Culture’ at the Hyde Park Unitarian Church.


The lecturer, Rev. George Walters, explained that had the lecture been a sermon, it would have been titled, “Ye shall be perfect”. In Melbourne less than two years later, a provisional committee of the Eugenics Education Society was formed by three medical officers, among them Harvey Sutton.

Bourke’s work also points to the proliferation of eugenic study circles in the Worker’s Educational Association (W.E.A.) that, by 1921, had led to several eugenics studies and a lecture series on such topics as ‘The Future of the Race’, ‘The Segregation of the Unfit’, and ‘Heredity’. Already by 1918, a sex education conference organised by the W.E.A. of New South Wales had featured plenary sessions emphasising the social importance of proper eugenic sexual relations and referred to its task in the eugenic vocabulary of sex ‘hygiene’. As well in 1925, Melbourne University’s first sociology professor turned a whole term of his course over to the study of eugenics and the “urgency of such matters as the propagation of the unfit, the havoc of venereal disease, the evils of prostitution and alcoholism, [and] the threat of mental deficiency”.

Bacchi’s contention that environmentalism was superseded by hereditary pessimism because of social crises casts the history of eugenics as one of contest between environment and heredity, with related contests between optimism/pessimism and progressive/conservative interventions into the (sexual) lives of Australians. Bourke’s evidence that heredity was a prominent feature of social scientific discourse from the beginning confounds the notion that environmentalism constituted a discursive regime that was replaced by a eugenic one sometime after 1929 and points to a way of viewing eugenics historically that does not omit its multiple concurrent functions.

Since that time, a range of scholarship has emerged on the subject that further contests the historiographical formulation of eugenics. The numerous articles that have been published on the subject of eugenics in the last decade have attempted to move the eugenic debate out of an adversarial paradigm and into a discursive one. This work confounds the simple notion that hereditary discourses are represented by pessimistic, conservative social policies, and environmental ones by optimistic, liberal policies. Stephen Garton has usefully argued that debates over the relative influence

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of heredity versus environment were less the result of liberal versus conservative discourses than debate within a particular social discourse about degeneracy. Garton goes on to suggest that the strength of eugenic discourse came from its ability to attract adherents across conventional political divides.

In a history of medical politics in Australia, James Gillespie makes a similar claim that, at least in the first half of this century, eugenic discourse had been flexible and protean rather than static. Gillespie argues that the language of eugenics was a persuasive discourse, positioned at the centre of a debate about the relationship between the health of the individual and the national welfare, that could, “accommodate radically different mixtures of environmental and genetic determinism.” This is not to suggest that the discipline of eugenics was situated outside politics or political regulation but merely that the relationship between eugenics as an interventionist discourse and its socially oriented followers was not wholly constrained by the party politics of progressivism or conservatism.

This view of eugenics contributes something previously missing from the Australian historiography: the conception of eugenics as a discursive formulation that constructed particular understandings of the social, the social body, and the individual body in conjunction with its own construction. A corollary to this is that the social was already embedded in the logic of eugenics as it emerged from the texts and debates of Australia’s eugenic organisations. It is this aspect of eugenic discourse that is most significant for my purposes: that eugenics, whether liberal or conservative, represented an engagement of the social with the personal lives and sexualities of the population. Not only did eugenic discourse draw the state into the bedroom but it positioned the state, and its social science caretakers, directly at the centre of the activities that occurred there and suggested that those activities were not just sexual but social. As a result, sex could not exist merely as pleasure: its organisation and use had become a national interest and national duty.

If one begins with the formulation that eugenics represents an ongoing social discourse rather than a fixed historical/scientific artefact, then the scope of what constitutes eugenics is immediately broadened. As I have shown already, and will discuss again in chapter six, educational psychology and sex and parental education programs in the inter-war years linked the scientific givens of eugenics (anthropometry, classification of feeble-mindedness, for example) to social/sexual efficiency principles in their own varying policies of social progress. One of the most

prominent of these, and one that demonstrates the links between the discourse of
eugenics and other social efficiency movements is the mental hygiene movement.

*the mind that found itself*

The mental hygiene movement (which was reborn as the Intellectual Disability
Service in the 1980s) caught the attention of several prominent Australian intellectuals
and social professionals and contributed significantly to the discourse of eugenics.
The international mental hygiene movement was founded by a wealthy American,
Clifford Beers, who had himself spent five years in and out of mental institutions after
a 'mental collapse' in 1900. In 1908 Beers published *The Mind That Found Itself*; he
formed the National Committee for Mental Hygiene shortly after. Although initially
intended to draw attention to conditions in mental institutes, Beers' organisation
quickly expanded its focus to the mental health of the wider community. The first
international congress of National Committee for Mental Hygiene in 1930 invited
three thousand delegates from over forty-one countries, including E. Morris Miller
and Ralph Noble of Australia. Miller was unable to attend so Dr. Ralph Noble, who
had visited Beers in America in the 1920s and was a close friend, became Australia's
official delegate to the mental hygiene movement. While Miller had consulted the
Sydney and Melbourne medical and reform fraternity in 1922 and 1923 regarding the
establishment of a mental hygiene movement in Australia, the message of mental
hygiene was carried furthest into professional and public discourse by Noble.

Some of Noble's contributions to the discourse of mental hygiene have been
discussed in the previous chapter. Along with spreading the word of mental
efficiency in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Ralph Noble encouraged his medical and
intellectual peers to consider the case for mental hygiene's welfare and education
reform possibilities. By 1932 Mental Hygiene Councils were established in Victoria
and New South Wales and included on their membership roll Drs J.W. Spingthorpe,
Henry Maudsley, W.S. Dawson, and Harvey Sutton along with other prominent
professionals, including K.S. Cunningham of the Australian Council of Educational
Research. As had characterised the approach to mental disorder in the psychiatric
discipline, members of the mental hygiene movement in Australia refused to put all
their aetiological eggs in one basket. Ralph Noble and John Bostock had pioneered
the composite theory of mental illness in the psychiatric discipline and were quick to

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16 The names of those Miller consulted read like a roll call of Australian medical and psychiatric
professionals and included H.T. Lovell, W.S. Dawson, R.J.A. Berry, Eric Sinclair, and Professor Elton

ensure, in their eugenic work, that the causal factors of mental deficiency included environmental, hereditary and organic. Eugenicists admitted that their transmission theories of hereditary defect were not always supported by evidence. They also seemed to waver over the question of which deficiencies were solely hereditary and which caused by the ‘exciting’ factors of bad morals, environment and training. The most prominent members of the eugenic and psychiatric fields admitted that their knowledge in the field was not nearly as strong as their enthusiasm. W.S. Dawson, who was a member of the Mental Hygiene Council and a regular contributor to the Medical Journal of Australia on issues of mental and moral deficiency, conceded as much in 1935:

On the issue of sterilisation of moral defectives, I quite agree we are still ignorant as to the precise qualities which we propose to study in heredity. Even our conception of general intelligence is distinctly vague and as regards any physical aspects, there is nothing which so far appears to be closely associated with nervous individuals.18

Regardless of whether the cause of degeneracy was located in body, mind or society, the results were clearly imprinted on the body. Eugenic discourse turned on the notion that the body needed to be understood and known for the national good. In the same way the disciplinarian strategy of eugenics focused on the body. Although causative weight teetered between heredity and a more pluralistic interpretation, the shadow cast by eugenic discourse fell wholly across the individual body. How individuals chose to use their bodies in the public arena of work and courtship as well as in the privacy of their bedrooms was seen as a legitimate site of investigation by professionals interested in employing those activities in the service of racial purity and national efficiency.

Certain bodies, of course, were of greater interest to the eugenic community than others. In the pursuit of objective truth about mental and physical fitness, the young body was the testing site. Through school testing of mental ability (largely instigated by R.J.A. Berry and discussed in chapter two) and the testing and classification of juvenile delinquents according to categories of mental deficiency, the young body had become a site of knowledge acquisition. The educational discourse of eugenic training of the body and its social life that emerged from the ‘objective truth’ obtained through testing of young people also focused its attention back on that segment of the population that was seen as situated at the juncture between biology and sociology and between child and man. By this time, adolescence had begun to function as a metaphorical doorway between the biological building blocks of

individuals and the social building blocks of humanity. The choices made by adolescents who were paused in that doorway were seen to determine whether individuals (and humanity) would surpass their purely biological destiny and become virile men (and nation). As G. Stanley Hall had noted in his major contribution to the study of adolescence, the development of the adolescent stage of life is "the bud of promise for the race." As a result, adolescents provided perfect targets for the social application of eugenics. As Eugenics Society of Victoria secretary Victor Wallace noted, "Any Eugenics society should set out to appeal to attain its objectives by teaching the youth of the nation, and to have as many young members as possible."20

**race and 'race safety'**

Despite all contemporary associations between eugenics and racism, race has been significantly absent from this discussion thus far. This is not to suggest that Australian eugenics was marvellously free of racism. Because I did not want to sacrifice the clarity of meaning I have ascribed to eugenics, I have held off commenting about the aspect of eugenics which has historically been so unnerving: the attention to and categorisation of race as a worthy or unworthy attribute to pass to offspring. In the inter-war Australian discourse of eugenics, the issue and nomenclature of race was as flexible and slippery for its users as any other element of the protean discourse of eugenic science.

The central text of this chapter, *Whither Away?*, will be discussed in detail in the next section. Here I wish to use it to illustrate the multiple meanings of race in this period. *Whither Away?* is divided into two broad sections based on the type of threat constituted, internal or external. In the first section, internal threats are defined largely on the basis of class and respectability. Menace arises from the under-employed, the lazy, the self-indulgent. When the authors do finally mention race in this section it is in reference to what they term the increasing number of 'poor whites'. In a chapter titled 'Increasing inferiority', *Whither Away?* draws upon statistics of births in private and public hospitals. The rise in inferiority, it is suggested, is directly linked to the large number of women 'of public hospital class' giving birth. The trouble with this group is their poorness, their parasitic relationship to the 'life-blood of the State'. The implication is that individuals should know better, should behave better, and should feel the burden of responsibility for pushing the nation forward.

Elsewhere in this section, Bostock and Nye even praise the solutions to unemployment utilised by "races whom we consider 'backward'", such as Asians.\textsuperscript{22} Yet at the end of this section \textit{Whither Away?} refers to the "factors leading to our racial extinction."\textsuperscript{23}

What exactly this means becomes slightly more clear in the second section of the text which addresses the external factors leading to Australia's national decline. At the beginning Bostock and Nye point with admiration and trepidation to what they consider the strong nationalism of Japan and China. Both here and in relation to the Australian nation, the authors use race as a substitute term for nation. A typical example of this usage comes when the authors turn to the subject of 'race pride':

It is surprising to find that whereas every firm, school and organisation does its best to strengthen its \textit{esprit de corps} or team spirit, there exists a large group of people who decry any attempts at fostering race pride and race interest. Wallowing in fantasy amidst the green but distant fields of internationalism, such dreamers forget the hard home truths of current affairs ... in order to ensure race safety there must be maintained in continuity, a national spirit impelling the race towards a definite object.\textsuperscript{24}

This sentiment is followed not by an attack on what the authors consider the inferior races but by an extended Rousseauian lament about the dangerous and futile path away from nature that man has followed. \textit{Whither Away?} questions the democratic process, party politics, socialism and capitalism, and is scathing about atheism and the aristocracy of wealth. In their fretting over Australia's geographical vulnerability and false sense of security, the enemy most loathed by Bostock and Nye appears to be not a type of human (i.e. 'race') but a human quality (i.e. laxity, or lack of discipline).

In these particular circumstances, Bostock and Nye mean the \textit{nation} when they call for the safety and discipline of race. Except for scattered oblique references and one occasion on which they refer to 'the noble ideal of a white Australia', the authors of \textit{Whither Away?} offer no details of what they mean in these sideways references to the Australian race. Indeed, 'national spirit' and 'racial spirit' are used almost interchangeably throughout the text. At other points in the text, race refers to the human race, or the 'race' of Western civilisation. Indeed, the ways that the word is used suggest that Bostock and Nye attached no intrinsic value to the word, demonstrated by their willingness to use it as a signifier of what we would carefully distinguish today as nation, humanity, or class. This does not mean, however, that this text, and others in the eugenic mode, are not coded with particular understandings of

\textsuperscript{22}Bostock and Nye, \textit{Whither Away?}, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{23}Bostock and Nye, \textit{Whither Away?}, p. 65.
\textsuperscript{24}Bostock and Nye, \textit{Whither Away?}, p. 73.
race. A close reading drawing upon a Foucaultian understanding of race, blood, and identity can help unravel the discursive skein of nation and identity offered in the writing of Bostock and Nye and other Australian eugenics commentary.

In this task I will be relying particularly on Ann Laura Stoler's work in her 1995 text, *Race and the Education of Desire*, to illuminate the mechanics of Foucaultian thought on the subject of race and nation. Although Stoler's attention is focused on the particular politics and discourse of colonialism, her finely honed argument regarding the unities of race, sex, nation, and degeneracy provides a useful way of framing the discussion of a post-colonial Australia. Stoler draws on Thomas Laqueur's assertion that the social taxonomies of race and sex were mutually constructed by a "more comprehensive history of exclusive biological categories", 25 to suggest the myriad ways that racial thinking (like knowledge of sexuality) has been harnessed to various cultural projects, one of which was the creation of a strong modern Australia. During the inter-war years, race meant not one but many things depending on the circumstances of its use. To say that eugenics is a science of race is true only insofar as race during the inter-war years meant the human race, the Australian race, and the various categories of good and bad bodies that were identified and used in eugenic practice. In relation to some categories of people, Aborigines for example, race (as we understand it today) was the issue of concern, and university departments arose to deal specifically and eugenically with the elimination of this human obstacle to national progress. 26 In relation to other, normative bodies, however, race was only one axis of intervention and not a particularly useful one. More solid an axis was provided by sexuality which in itself drew together race and class on a grid of intelligibility and provided a solid point of entry for eugenic discourse into personal life. It is for this reason that I have referred to sexual eugenics—that mode of the discourse which took sexual behaviour as its point of social implantation into the body.

If we return to the Bostock and Nye text with this notion, the unity of discourse in its pages becomes more clear. While the authors point to an enormous number of diverse social, economic, and cultural circumstances in making their case for eugenic social discipline, the underlying theme, whether in relation to public hospital babies, poor whites, or races thought 'backward', is that each and every one of these social phenomena points to a decline akin to the fall of Rome described in the book's opening pages. This decline is described in various ways in the book but each draws


on a language of lost national vigour, or a withering away of the individual and national body. The trope of degeneracy conferred abnormality on individual bodies, cast certain practices and subjectivities as both "dangers to the body politic and as inheritable legacies that threatened the well being of a race". Concerns about degeneracy here crystallised in eugenics, which Stoler posits as a "national and class-specific project that converged with wider purity campaigns for improved natality and selective sterilisation." In Australia, despite attention to national degeneracy and 'race extinction', the discourse of eugenics is most firmly linked to nation (one form of 'race'), rather than a particular ethnic 'race' as we would understand it today. Foucault motions to this linkage in the *History of Sexuality, volume 1*, in a way that makes it worth quoting at length:

The series composed of perversion-heredity-degenerescence formed the solid nucleus of the new technologies of sex ... Its application was widespread and its implantation went deep. Psychiatry, to be sure, but also jurisprudence, legal medicine, agencies of social control, the surveillance of dangerous or endangered children, all functioned for a long time on the basis of 'degenerescence' and the heredity-perversion system. An entire social practice ... furnished this technology of sex with a formidable power and far-reaching consequences.

The bio-politics of degeneracy had multiple targets; the language of degeneracy was used throughout the discourse of eugenics to define those individuals who veered off the normative course in their domestic arrangement, sexual choices, public behaviour or hereditary inheritance. Here again is the idea that the vocabulary shared between eugenic discourse, sexual discourse, and social reform was strong and elastic enough to withstand being used for divergent social interventions. The discourse of degeneracy not only allowed this political diversity, but also linked what Foucault calls the disciplining of the individual body—exemplified by the sex education advice of the inter-war years to fastidiously train one’s anatomy—with the type of regulatory controls offered in eugenic discourses which addressed the anatomy of the nation as a whole. This management approach to individual and cultural life encouraged what Etienne Balibar has called an obsessive quest for a 'national core' based on criteria of race and social class and, one might add, sexuality.

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The Australian discourse of eugenics is, at times, indistinguishable from a discourse of nationalism. The two are similar in a number of other ways and these similarities have been noted by a number of historians, most eloquently by George Mosse in relation to Germany. In his work on nationalism and sexuality, Mosse remarks that the alliance of nationalist ideology with bourgeois morality made it an engine difficult to stop. The collusion of the two co-opted the eugenic movement along with most other movements of the age. Further, Mosse argues, nationalism has functioned historically to:

absorb all that men thought meaningful and held dear even while holding fast to unchanging myths and symbols. It reached out to liberalism, conservatism, and socialism; it advocated both tolerance and repression, peace and war—whatever served its purpose. Through its claim to immutability, it endowed all that it touched with a slice of eternity. But however flexible, nationalism hardly wavered in its advocacy of respectability.31

I would suggest that the inter-war discourse of eugenics was a synecdoche of this type of ideology. It was the nation for which the eugenicists of this chapter held the deepest concern. ‘Race’ could compromise one’s ability to achieve respectability, to be useful in the eugenic advancement of the nation, and even to think eugenically, but it was not the point around which the discourse revolved. Indeed, with the goal of national improvement at its core, eugenic discourse did not need to focus its attention on race per se. As a nationalist ideology, this discourse of social improvement was already coded with racism by exclusion.

The ‘truth’ of one’s body, a truth which was crucial to the project of national improvement, was known through numerous taxonomic variations of race, sex, and class. Those taxonomic variations did not determine eugenic practice, they coincided with it, and here I want to highlight the ways that the sexual truth of one’s body sat within a eugenic milieu. The eugenic milieu provided the mechanism for a lexicon that, while not new in itself, enabled new forms of bio-political intervention. That is to say, in the years after a new professional understanding of the relation of the individual to the state had come to dominate Australian intellectual and professional interest, bodies came to be coded in a new language as racial bodies, sexual bodies, healthy bodies. While the implications of that lexicon for racism cannot be underestimated, it is the other taxonomies of health and sexuality that dominated eugenic discourse in inter-war Australia and which, in turn, will dominate my discussion of eugenics.

building a national body

whither away?

One characteristic of the eugenic discourse of inter-war Australia was its strong presence in the professional arenas of medical and social science. A young person was most likely to be drawn into the discourse of eugenics and his own body's relation to society and self through the intervention of the law, education, or medicine, as we have seen in the previous three chapters. Examples of eugenic discourse that were oriented outward into the community, rather than simply pulling individuals into the professional community that created it, are rare. Yet having suggested that the inter-war eugenic impulse sought to educate all of society in knowledge of self, it is necessary to turn to a textual example of that work. Victor Wallace wanted the youth of the nation to be educated and they certainly were not going to get a proper eugenic education if the knowledge uncovered by eugenicists remained their privilege alone.

Physician John Bostock took on that challenge in 1934 when he and co-author L. Jarvis Nye published a monograph titled Whither Away? A Study of Race Psychology and the Factors Leading to Australia's National Decline. Opening with an appeal to "the youthful members of the community whose minds are fit for the making and in whose hands lies our destiny", the text provides an example of the ways that eugenic discourse was situated in relation to issues of nation, health, sexuality, youth, and masculinity. Although a eugenic undercurrent runs through many of the texts used throughout the research used in this thesis, Whither Away? provides an excellent example of eugenic discourse at its most outwardly explicit and inwardly embedded with cultural knowledge.

Whither Away? opens with a brief narrative of the rise and fall of the Roman empire, and suggests that modern Australian society bears a remarkable resemblance to Rome in its declining years. Bostock and Nye consider the move towards industrialisation, the increase of administrative civil service, and the 'calamitous' practice of birth control among the intelligent classes as indicators of a society in danger of destroying itself through decadence. Of particular concern to Bostock and Nye are the implications of birth control, which they predict will produce an inferior humanity. Marie Stopes, a British sex educator whose advocacy of birth control was linked to her own strong concern for eugenic betterment, comes in for harsh criticism. The authors note that while her aims in protecting women from unwanted children are worthy of praise, Stopes' methods could lead to a race disaster:

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It is probable that she has created the greatest menace that our Western civilisation has ever faced... Her scientific methods have been used principally by those sections of the community which are best fitted to rock the cradle of the race, since it is the intelligent provident man or woman who will endeavour to learn her methods, while the unintelligent and thriftless will continue their uninterrupted breeding.  

This assertion engages the conservative impulse of eugenics, its fundamental fear of the uneducated, unrestrained, and disreputable. But it also exposes one of the main principles underpinning eugenic movements—be they socially progressive expressions or class-based conservative ones—and that is an attention to the body and its reproductive/sexual practice. Of course, Stopes was not unquestionably progressive nor Bostock conservative. The work of Ellen Holtzman on Marie Stopes suggests that Stopes’ attention to women and their pleasure may have represented a conservative effort to encourage women to remain passive and domesticated. This one instance demonstrates ably the difficulty of attributing party political orientations to the discourse of eugenics, for the same statement about the breeding habits of the ‘unfit’ has been spoken with every political implication.

The main text of *Whither Away?* is divided into two broad sections delineating the dangers to the Australian race from within and without. The first section highlights the scientific background of the authors, demonstrated in their view of individual fitness. Bostock and Nye implore readers never to forget that “the foundations, both mental and physical, of every living organism, are laid in hereditary endowments, and that environmental influences can do nothing more than collaborate in their development.” Yet the purpose of their book was, by the authors’ own admission, to “educate the youth of both sexes to think eugenically when selecting a matrimonial mate.” Thus *Whither Away?* while placing responsibility for the race on biological factors, at the same time impelled readers to use the tools of social management to improve the nation. The science of eugenic discourse—anthropometry, biometrics, classification of bodies, diagnoses of disorder—was only useful insofar as it impelled subjects to engage with the social science of body management. The Bostock and Nye text (and many others in the Australian discourse) is marked by this two fold task. The tools of the scientist—stethoscope, measuring tape and so on—were, although invoked, used on the Australian population only in certain circumstances, *i.e.* in school testing and the

33Bostock and Nye, p. 29.  
36Bostock and Nye, p. 41.
assessments of the children’s court. Bostock, Nye and others relied more on the social imperative and the tools of the social scientist: prediction, theory, and rhetoric. These tools were used to socially (and strategically) mobilise the young male in particular.

*the child is father to the man*

Robert Dixon has suggested that eugenics locates the body, and especially the male body, as the site where, “anxieties about racial and cultural degeneracy were inscribed.” I would add to this that it is even more so the young male body upon which anxieties and hopes are inscribed. In the first modern explanation of adolescence, G. Stanley Hall noted that the child is father to the man, a sentiment repeated by Bostock and Nye, and countless others concerned with the welfare of the race. Although Hall did not self-identify as a eugenicist, his theory of puberty and adolescence intimately associated the growth of the individual adolescent with the growth of the nation. Indeed, the purpose behind Hall’s careful cataloguing of adolescence was to utilise that stage in the service of creating a higher evolutionary form of manhood, a ‘super-anthropoid’ man. Adult men, in this discursive scheme, were not a worthy vessel of hope, for they had already, by reaching manhood, come to the apex of personal, and thus national, development. Young men, on the other hand, were seen as pure potential for a better version of manhood, and a better version of the nation. As these hopes were placed on the young male body, so too were the fears of eugenic failure, of failing to exploit the masculine/national potential inherent in the still pliable flesh of young men.

In Hall’s work the degeneration of modern society rested largely on the degree to which young males resisted indulgences of passion on the way to manhood. Like Hall, Bostock and Nye’s anxieties about the dangers of degeneration lurking within Australian society (and the bodies of young men) were certainly many: perpetuation of the unfit, the increasing ranks of neurotics, the decline of public morality, the destructive psychology of unemployment, and the growing criminal class are the titles of sections of the text. They suggest that Australia was in a terminal decline toward apathy, degeneracy, and complacency. Any psychologist looking upon the ‘spectacle’ of Australia, the authors note ominously, would do so with a foreboding sense of a rude awakening lurking in the near future of the nation. Just as fears of degeneracy were discursively inscribed on the body in the discussion of eugenics and corporeal

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38G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence*, Volume 1, pp. 71, 89, 94; Volume 2, pp. 73, 103.
39Bostock and Nye, p. 88.
discipline, so too were the heartfelt hopes for the race pinned on the male body, in particular the 'malleable' body of the young male. One of the only groups to receive sympathy in Bostock and Nye's catalogue of modern types, the young male is seen as both malleable and sensitive, as "the most important element in any civilisation, for upon [him] depends our future progress." The Australian boy is lauded as "probably equal to the best in the world". Yet he is not immune to the disease of modernity which they see as capable of bringing down civilisation as they know it. "However great this human material", Whither Away's authors argue, "it can be spoiled, if not irretrievably ruined, by the failure to provide employment." 40

The solution offered by Bostock and Nye is discipline, both external and internal, which they argue is the best means to assure mental and bodily health. As with other discourses of adolescence and masculinity, social (and self) discipline is seen as the glue which will not only hold together the boy (seemingly regardless of his hereditary disposition), but the society which will be his to lead. As Bostock and Nye phrase it:

Since our youth of today are tomorrow's citizens, and the child is the father to the man, we can no longer afford the national tragedy of allowing these young minds to drift into the by-paths of abandon and sloth. 41

To avoid such a tragedy Bostock and Nye suggest that boys heed the ideals of the Boy Scout pledge: on one's honour to do one's best to do duty to God, King and country, to help other people at all times, and obey the Scout Laws, and last but not least, always to be clean in thought, word and deed.

The conclusion made by the authors in Whither Away? constitutes an appeal to young men to behave well and accept responsibility and the discipline required for social success. While they opened the text with references to sterilisation of the unfit and removal of public health infrastructure—the latter, they argued, would reduce the tendency of free medical service to magnify minor disabilities into serious maladies and thus incite a dependent and neurotic state of mind in the population 42—Bostock and Nye end on a very different note, pointing to the education system and its treatment of young men as the key to future survival. They suggest that the focus of teaching, which they claim is the greatest service to the community, should be towards

40 Bostock and Nye, pp. 56–57.
41 Bostock and Nye, p. 89.
42 "We have no hesitation in saying that free medical service is a strong incentive to this undesirable frame of mind. So long as a patient pays something, however little, for his medical attention, there is a natural safeguard that he will not seek a cure till his complaint is worthy of attention.", Bostock and Nye, pp. 42–43.
inspiring "the following qualities which are most needed by modern man: sound judgement, moral and physical courage, self-discipline, endurance."\textsuperscript{43}

It is not simply because they used 'father' rather than 'mother' that I suggest that Bostock and Nye were interested in the discipline of the male body specifically and not the female. Throughout their text, references are made to the devastating effects of unemployment on boys, the trouble caused by slothful father figures and so on. Nowhere is a specific reference made to young girls, or the need for them to practice eugenics in their personal lives (as is consistently remarked in reference to boys). Adolescence—as an experience of becoming a man—was used in eugenic discourse in a way that, in conjunction with professional interventions and popular understandings, came to govern a particular section of the male population.

I would like to suggest that each of the discourses of this thesis was mutually creative and constructive within the discourse of eugenics. The discourse of each certainly utilised the idea of a social body, and encouraged young men to properly use the energies of that body. The drawing together of the social and the sexual in the notion that proper management of the latter can improve the former characterised the discursive forms of eugenics that dominated Australian thought between the wars. This element of eugenic discourse constructed understandings of the body's role in relation to its (now semi-public) sexuality. In turn, this constructed an understanding of sexuality, the body, and masculinity based on the age of the individual. If the individual was young, he was assumed to be both malleable and receptive to various social management interventions which, in turn, were the key to creating a new and improved manhood and nation.

I am not suggesting that eugenic discourse in the inter war years represents a beginning point to this way of viewing and understanding sexuality and/or masculinity; if my topic were cosmology this would not be the big bang theory. Instead it would be the opposite, the theory that clouds of swirling particle matter were drawn into closer and closer proximity until they grew dense enough to form a cohesive universe. In this case the swirling clouds of matter are the discourses of adolescence and male sexuality, of youth and national vigour, the proclamations, discoveries and cultural conversations which swirled ever tighter during the inter-war years and that created a unique being—the adolescent—with a similarly unique and cohesive sexuality and masculinity.

One result of the social orientation of eugenic discourse is that it is not so much oriented toward the removal of the 'other' (differentiated by race, intellectual ability, or other hereditary failure) but to the careful examination and training of the self, the

\textsuperscript{43}Bostock and Nye, p. 100. Emphasis in original.
normative young male. In the most prominent eugenic text of the inter-war years readers were encouraged, more than anything else, to utilise their own bodies in the service of the nation. The education of the senses and the training of the sex instinct were to be oriented toward the public good. The result was a eugenic discourse that was focused on sexuality and reproduction for it was this behaviour more so than any qualities of race (in any of its multiple meanings) that was seen to determine the future of the nation.

*Whither Away?* was far from alone in its use of sexuality in both its science and the social interventions it recommended into the lives of individuals. In 1937, John F. Williams, psychiatrist of St. Vincent's and Melbourne Children's hospitals, published an article in the *Medical Journal of Australia* on the prevention of nervous and mental disorders. In the article he endorsed voluntary sterilisation for the ‘defective’ while at the same time suggesting that the mechanisation of modern society, by increasing both accidents and nervous stress, is to blame for nervous and mental disorders. Thus Williams offered two drastically different solutions for the prevention of disorder. The first suggestion is the medical reconfiguration of individual sexuality; the second to re-configure the machinery of modern society. Williams suggested that the achievement of eugenic potential requires co-operation between the medical profession, social agencies, insurance companies, the clergy, “and so forth”. 44 This appeal reinforces Williams' second strategy and suggests that eugenics in Australia functioned primarily in the service of sexual intervention and that interventions into the body would be conducted for the purpose of reconciling sexual lives with social goals.

It is important here to explain what I mean when I suggest that the social efficiency discourse of sex and mental hygiene organisations represented a eugenic understanding of the social and the individual. Judith Bessant has called eugenics the skeleton in the closet of twentieth century intellectual history. Bessant argues that although eugenics as a term and movement has been retrospectively discredited, discursive practices profoundly linked to eugenic understandings historically went from strength to strength, especially in the first fifty years of this century. 45 The intricacy of the links between the type of discourse which termed itself sex hygiene, that which was termed mental hygiene and that which was bluntly called eugenics is apparent in a statement of the secretary of the Eugenics Society of Victoria. Recalling a 1936 meeting of the organisation, Victor Wallace later wrote that, “The people who attended the meeting were interested in various aspects of education and social

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welfare, particularly in sex education, the prevention of venereal disease, the formation of family planning clinics and the dissemination of ... eugenics.”

I would suggest that each and every one of those tasks already discursively constituted a eugenic concern. The activities and successes of Australian eugenic organisations came in the form of social reform policies that promoted rather than punished in the search for national health and efficiency. The successes claimed by eugenic organisations were things such as the increase in testing IQ and other intellectual abilities in schools and the education of the young in the proper use of their sexuality. Each of these drew individuals into the social and asked them to consider their private behaviour as it affected the nation. Rather than focusing on those who were socially deficient, this strand of eugenics focused on how respectable, normal people could further increase their social utility and efficiency. To use the historians’ term, sex education, family planning and so on constituted a positive forms of eugenics.

Moreover, I would argue that eugenic discourse did not have any inherent characteristics—political, scientific, or moral—other than an understanding that sexuality and reproduction passed on the potential of an improved, or weakened, nation. What followed from this notion of course was a wide range of progressive and regressive social policy that elevated certain bodies, castigated others, and drew attention to all. Eugenics was referenced in the work of G. Stanley Hall—the first modern description of adolescence—and was hinted at, and explicitly spoken of, in all of the professional discourses aimed at socially mobilising the bodies of the young. The particular engagements of these professional discourses have been discussed in the previous chapters. Here I would like to add an element to that discussion by suggesting that those professionally discrete interventions into the body were united not only in their focus on the young male, but in their location within a discursive milieu, one that suggested that physical and mental characteristics represented a process of selection and that individuals—through the choices they made—could influence that selection and, thus, the state of the nation. The discourses of this thesis collide, not only because they share subject matter, but because they share a way of organising knowledge for a social purpose.

My use of the term discursive milieu refers to a receptivity toward a particular mode of thinking. In this case, to say that inter-war Australia was characterised by a eugenic milieu suggests that, across the professional domain, eugenics provided a general setting for particular investigations into truth and national health. The Foucaultian theory which underlies this is that modern talk about sexuality and the

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body brought the individual into a new and different relationship with the social world and thus with itself. What I am suggesting further to this is that, with the rise of professions attending to these relations of body to mind and body to self (such as psychiatry and health welfare), the principles of these professional knowledges were attributed to the body of the individual. The desire to improve, to make efficient, to know, classify, and inculcate positivist rationalism for the benefit of knowledge and society characterised the modern scientific approach to the world. Apply these tenets to the body and the result is a desire to classify the faults, obtain the truth, and improve the body and its machinations for the benefit of society. When this is linked to knowledge of heredity and the transmission of characteristics through sexual reproduction it already constitutes a type of eugenics, a tool offered to the population to be good in birth.

I have suggested in this interlude that eugenics is a milieu within which specific discourses enlist the instrument of sexuality as a transfer point of responsibility: individual to state, individual to the body, body to state, body to body. While other disciplines were created around the ways that that responsibility was racially marked—and utilised race (in specific forms) as their primary instrument—the disciplines that embraced the type of eugenic discourse I am referring to were more interested in utilising sexual technologies of self to transfer these responsibilities. Sexual eugenics in Australia has historically presented itself as social investigation and influence, a means of training and disciplining certain volatile and visible bodies through social intervention. As Bostock and Nye noted, the visible body is also a malleable body, especially in its youth. The proper instruction of this body in its national potential and duty was thus invested with the power to improve or destroy the nation. In becoming the object of scrutiny for professional investigators, different versions of the young male body were constructed out of the proclamations, theories, guesses, and conversations of those who studied him. The eugenic milieu in which these different versions of the male body were constructed ensured that each of them would have social meaning, and a social obligation.

In the next section I will turn to the way that those social meanings and obligations were presented by contractual forms of discourse. First I will look at inter-war sex advice texts that encouraged young men to see and treat themselves in certain ways. The final chapter will address popular depiction of the forms of masculinity young males were offered in inter-war magazines and journals. In both, there is an attention to the proper management of the body as strong as in the sites examined in the previous section, although it manifested in a different way: through the offering of
a particular idealised version of the self and sexuality to emulate through consumption, presentation, and particular codes of behaviour.
chapter 6. sex advice and the quest for virile manhood

With the absence of mating, the love of home would be impossible; without the home and the family, the communal spirit, the needs relating to progression, peace and civil power, would not be evolved; without communities, there would be no deep-lying elements of cohesion sufficient to bind large bodies of people together; therefore sex attraction is one of the cosmic forces in the foundation of every nation.\(^1\)

Of the many arguments presented in defence of research into the history of sexuality, not one is as eloquent or succinct as the one quoted here. These words come from the pages of a small booklet with a glorious Art Nouveau cover written by the eminently sensible sounding 'Mrs. A. Scott Broad'. As Mrs. Broad so gracefully observes above, everything—from the family to the nation and the cosmos—'put upon its simplest footing' is about sex. Mrs. Broad made her pithy comments in 1911, well before the sex-sells era, and nobody accused her of prurience. In fact, quite the opposite was true. Broad was a staunchly conservative moralist whose writings emphasised racial purity, discouraged female education, and stressed female modesty and male self control, and her views were considered uplifting rather than degrading to either the mind of readers or to the sex act itself.

The sex advice authors who published concurrently with or after Mrs. Broad ranged all over the political spectrum but they were united in their belief in the vital importance of sexuality and the moral imperative to instruct others in its use. In doing so, the authors of sex advice texts created a realm of modern sexuality in which new discursive frameworks were built around male and female subjects, and, at the same time, around adolescent and adult sexual subjects. In the matrix of modern sexuality the adolescent was constructed as a unique being who required his own genre of advice: the coming of age manual. In this chapter I will focus on this genre of advice and the behavioural contract it offered young men on the path to mature sexuality and sexual maturity. The field of sexual advice literature is much broader than this, of course, and includes contraceptive information, venereal disease, prostitution and masturbation warnings, marriage and homemaking manuals, and parenting guides, all of which engage the sexuality of their subjects. Texts that specifically engaged with adolescence/ts and the process of sexual coming of age offered one stream in a deluge of protective knowledge (that complemented the protective discursive mechanisms discussed in the first section of this thesis) and it is this stream that most effectively illuminates the way that adolescent males were constituted as particularly sexed (and sexual) subjects.

I will examine several Australian texts that drew explicitly on the knowledge of professional sites of adolescent intervention. These texts drew the contractual discourse of advice into closer proximity with the social science of sexuality and adolescence and, in doing so, strengthened the claim of advice authors that proper management of one’s body and sexuality was a social and scientific imperative. By social, I refer her to the social, classified by Donzelot as “a particular sector in which diverse problems and special causes can be grouped together, a sector comprising specific institutions and an entire body of qualified personnel.”

In this chapter, the ‘problem’ is the sexuality of the young and the ‘cause’ is the training of the young body to properly function as part of a modern sexuality that was constructed in aid of the social. The knowledge presented in coming of age manuals did not comprise an institution, nor the types of social technologies described in the first section of this thesis, but qualified personnel certainly sought to situate their contribution to the social encirclement of adolescent subjectivity within a similar framework of observation, surveillance, and discipline. Although the extent to which this was achieved cannot be known, the coming of age manual does reveal certain historical understandings of the young male body, its form, its purpose, and its needs.

To understand the discursive positioning of the adolescent in the milieu of sexual knowledge, it is crucial first to examine the realm from which age excluded him. While liberalisation or modernisation of sexual mores was widely proclaimed as the pinnacle achievement of modernity by early twentieth century sexologists, the ‘modernisation’ of sex has been a process considerably more fraught and complicated than such a trope allows. The metaphor of throwing open the doors and letting the light of inquiry into the bedroom has frequently been used (and is undeniably appealing), but here I will argue that inter-war discourses of sexuality in Australia did not have foundations substantial enough or space enclosed enough to constitute a room whose doors could be flung open.

Through an analysis of marriage manuals I will trace a discourse of sexuality that was to be the inheritance of the first generation of young men in Australia known as adolescents. The texts of this first section, which are primarily Australian authored (although some popular and widely available American and British texts will also be included in the discussion), addressed young married couples rather than a specifically adolescent subject. Although it could be argued that these young married or betrothed men, by virtue of their age, were adolescents, the questions taken up in marriage manuals were ones of pleasure, mutuality, and the elevation of (hetero)sex within the conjugal relationship. I will argue that, through the experience of marriage,
the sexually maturing body of the adolescent was culturally transformed into the mature sexual body of the adult. While adolescents by definition of age, these young married men were culturally defined very much by their marital status. Sexual advice that did not specifically target the adolescent subject is important, moreover, for the ways it outlined a sexual world that was to be the inheritance of modern youth: the pleasures of manhood, heterosexuality, and sexual discipline.

In the second substantive section of this chapter I will turn to the specialist advice that was created for such a generation of men-to-be. Again, my sources will primarily be Australian texts although in some cases, where there is evidence of wide readership, overseas texts will be included in the discussion. As with general sex and marriage advice, the ‘experts’ on and counsellors of adolescents wrote across an enormous political and moral spectrum. My discussion will also traverse this range of texts, focusing on those that were popular, controversial, or highly regarded by professional and tutelary bodies between the wars, without privileging the discursive sway of a social scientific text over one offering ‘advice to the lovelorn’. I will divide these texts into two general types: first, I will consider moral guidance books directed at coming of age successfully and often written in association with young men’s social organisations. Secondly, I will turn to sexological texts, those focused on creating new knowledge and understanding, more than helping readers.

The intention of each of the texts examined here was essentially the same: to protect young men from danger while they navigated their way through adolescence, to nurture nascent manhood, and to encourage what the authors saw as the proper use of bodies and sexuality. In many cases, such a goal included the desire to ward off the dangers associated with an inexperienced or undisciplined sexual body. Masturbation, venereal disease, prostitution, and promiscuity were discussed in many texts used here, and I will be turning my attention to each of these threats to manhood individually to explore the being and behaviours excluded, as well as those included, in the promise of virile manhood.

Before I turn to the subject of advice, however, I would like to address the question of how to read the texts on which this chapter is based. Advice texts can arguably reflect more of the position and politics of the author than the intended (and supposed) reader. In order to reconcile the inconsistency between intent and effect of the advice text, I will devote the first section of this chapter to the question of reading advice and writing its history.
Advice is a discursive mode that highlights the tangential connection between prescription and behaviour. In general, prescriptive suggestions given informally by friends and acquaintances, or even through more formal channels of media and text, impinge only on the borders of our minds much of the time. When we are given advice, we realise that its importance lies as much in the feeling of the giver that she is contributing or helping as it does in actually following through with the advice offered. This is not to suggest, however, that advice texts are as useless and irrelevant to the historical discourse of adolescence—and indeed to the writing of histories—as the advice we receive on a daily basis in our lives may at first seem to be.

Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, in their history of conduct books and desire, have called the operation of advice discourse the 'ideology of conduct'. They argue that conduct books (including texts explicitly presenting advice but extending as well to instructive literature in the form of journalism, novels and so on) strive to reproduce, if not revise, culturally approved forms of desire. The means by which conduct literature participates in regulating desire is through the discursive technology of desire itself, a technology whose language they claim is as political as that of state institutions. When an advice text suggests to a reader that they may increase their pleasure by practising a specific mode of sexual expression, it constitutes not only what that pleasure is but how it is best used. If sexual relations can uphold specific forms of political authority, as Armstrong and Tennenhouse argue, the terms and dynamics of the discourse of sexual relations are necessarily spoken and written in a political language. Or, to return momentarily to the formulation of Donzelot, the transition to modernity and a government through families (and members of that family) created new forms of political speech, one of which was the discourse of sexual relations.

The texts of this chapter construct a male sexuality not only in relation to the individual body (although they certainly do that) but as well in relation to the pleasures and dangers of sexual intercourse, both in a figurative and literal sense of the word 'intercourse'. Particularly in the texts of the first section of this chapter, advice givers emphasised not the relation of body to mind but the relation of body to body, male to female, desire up against desire. Both in the discourse of conjugal sexual interaction and the advice that guided young men towards becoming the type of man who enjoyed such pleasures, the overt politic varies. Armstrong and

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Tennenhouse use the term political; they and others also tend to favour the use of ideology as a term to describe the function of conduct discourses. Although I will use both of these terms on occasion, I would suggest that, given the entanglements and attachments of both these words, a return to the formulation of the contract (discussed in chapter one) makes the following discussion more precise. Advice texts serve, more than simply as ideology or politics, to compel their subject into a type of social contract. Readers are shown versions of themselves that could be realised, both in terms of personal pleasure and social suitability. They are also presented with versions of themselves they would want to avoid: the deviant, the unfulfilled, the unloved and unsuccessful. The prescriptions of advice bring normative subjectivities, and those that deviate from them, to the attention of the subject. The contract does not bind with external and formal rules. Instead it wraps the subject in an awareness of himself, and encourages self-application of the mechanisms that the contractual text offers as the way to a more actualised form of oneself. To posit advice texts as a contractual form of discourse does not mean that they were followed blindly, or that readers of sexual advice in the 1920s and 1930s rigidly applied textual prescriptions to their lives. I am suggesting only that, in reading advice texts in whatever mode, individuals recognised themselves, saw a formulation of 'I' and carried that image of the self into their lives.

In the framework of adolescence this discursive power is obvious. Texts written even twenty years earlier than those I will be discussing would not have mentioned adolescence; its absence meant readers would not have been able to consider the notion that they occupied such a subjective space. Yet in the inter-war years, scientific and popular formulations of truth—heavily structured around the normal and the deviant—rested such formulations on the notion of a natural, intractable trial of adolescence that needed to be undertaken with guidance and care. Each of the chapters before this has explored sites in which adolescence appeared in the cultural discourse. In the discursive site of advice, the appearance is overt: a new genre of writing, the coming of age manual, emerged specifically to guide young men through the transition from boy to man.

writing the sexual text

I have mentioned previously, and in varying contexts, the claim of moderns to sexual emancipation, at least at the level of discussion and investigation. In this

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section I will be examining these claims in relation to the sexual text. In particular, I will be using sex advice texts to re-evaluate the transformation to sexual modernity, which has been suggested in these texts and by many of the historians who have used them. Historian Karen Lystra has argued that the progression from the nineteenth to the twentieth century generated a transition in sexual relations "away from [sexuality] as something that a woman's father owned, and then her husband, toward something that only she possessed." As commentators, historiographically and historically too, trumpeted the liberalisation and emancipation of sexuality statements such as this one by Lystra have functioned to reify certain assumptions about the sexuality of women, and the men who no longer 'owned' them. While she alone possessed her sexuality, both hers and her husband's sexuality were also 'owned' by the social machinery of the modern (twentieth century) culture which viewed sexuality as a legitimate, and indeed necessary, site of social understanding and management. The effects of this social intervention into the spheres of sexuality and the body have been discussed in the previous chapter on eugenics. There I suggested that social technicians and experts used knowledge of sexuality to demand that individuals use their bodies in the service of the nation. Here I will argue that sexuality represents a transfer point of knowledge about the smaller social units of family and couple that form that nation.

To understand the sexual contract offered to modern men and adolescents, it is necessary first to examine the ways in which the parameters of the contract were constructed. The sex manual, written to educate ordinary people in the facts of life, is not, in itself, a modern invention. Roy Porter has argued that sex advice literature was common from the early modern period, when printing enabled the dissemination of knowledge on all matters from medicine to manners to sex. The history of the sex advice manual tells, at least partly, the history of sexual knowledge, and of the ways such knowledge was translated from professional scientific language and idiom into experientially grounded knowledge. Sexologists talked amongst themselves and largely directed the more professional forms of their discourse at those who were considered able to read and comprehend their work: doctors, scientists, biologists, and anthropologists. Some of these, like biologist and sexual agony aunt Marie Stopes, used their position in such a sphere to direct the expert knowledge of sex into popular cultural spheres. Others, like Theodore Van de Velde, moved in the opposite direction, using the popular vernacular of sex to establish the legitimate study of it as

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a science, and did so by drawing on established science credentials to bring sex into legitimate (and legitimating) realms of inquiry.

While some historians have viewed the development of popular sex advice as evidence of a conspiracy amongst the medical profession to intervene and control reproduction or, more explicitly, women, a more nuanced approach can unravel the numerous professional, political, moral, and cultural anxieties and expectations that imbued early twentieth century discourses of sex and one of the primary tools of its expression and knowledge transmission. As we have seen in chapter four, conduct books have a history perhaps as long as that of writing itself. Texts openly addressing the correct use of the sexual body (like Tissot's *L'Onanisme*) were common before the modern era. Yet in the 1920s sex advice coincided with a reconsideration of the cultural place of marriage and of the sexual roles of man and woman within that bond. The result was a different form of advice, one that constructed the evolution, the biology, the desires, and the responsibilities of married couples as both divergent and interdependent.

The late nineteenth century rise of sexology instituted a reordering of previous knowledge about the relationship between sexuality and pleasure and between women and men. Havelock Ellis, a British pioneer in the field and one with whom most other sexologists agreed (on this point at least), argued that women's and men's evolutionary history was divergent, and that this divergence was expressed in the different types of sexual energy contained in the female and male body. These energies were 'catabolic' and 'anabolic', or spending/destructive energy and conserving energy, expressed by males and females respectively. Ellis was the first of many sexologists to liken the union of these energies to an art form, suggesting that the coition of man and woman symbolised the universal dialectic of life. Ellis also viewed conjugal sex as an art form that required learning, control, and practice. Although they were considered to be out of alignment with their male counterpart, in Ellis' formulation women were acknowledged to have sexual desires. This acknowledgement represents the first of several transformations in the construction of sexuality in the twentieth century, and one that far removed modern sexual discourse from the complicated Victorian nexus of denial and control of female and male sexual/bestial impulse. Three pamphlets published by the U.K Society for the Study of Sex Psychology delineated Ellis' program for sexual fulfilment: *The Objects of Marriage*, *The Erotic Rights of Women* (both 1918), and *The Play-Function of Sex*, 1921. Though not widely read outside the medical field the rationale used by Ellis quickly found its way into other discursive forms.

9This formulation can be found in virtually all of Ellis' writing, although the earliest of his references to it is in *Man and Woman: A Study of Human Secondary Sexual Characters*, Scribner, New York, 1904, p. 57.
One of the most important of Ellis' British adherents and popularisers was Marie Carmichael Stopes, a trained biologist who wrote two best selling marriage manuals in the inter war years. Stopes was thorough in reiterating Ellis' ideas in a popular style; the *Lancet* commented in 1929 that Stopes had taught a generation how to copulate.\(^{10}\) Although readership numbers in Australia are not obtainable, both of Stopes' major publications in the advice genre—*Married Love* and its 'sequel' *Enduring Passion*—were well reviewed in both medical journals and popular serials and newspapers in Australia. *Married Love* was regularly advertised for mail order in journals such as *Truth, Beckett's Budget*, and *Table Talk*. Stopes also referred in her own work to the correspondence from Australian readers, suggesting that her advice was being carefully considered and her expertise solicited by Australians.\(^{11}\) In the United States, Margaret Sanger made similar assertions about pleasure to Stopes' and Ellis', opening her 1926 *Happiness in Marriage*, with the proclamation that, "husbands as well as wives today realise the importance of complete fulfilment of love through the expression of sex".\(^{12}\)

The idea that women and men both desire and deserve sexual fulfilment as part of a successful marriage quickly became part of the Australian discourse as well. Failure at the task of sexual pleasure, or at the task of educating men and women in pleasure techniques was seen as a threat to the sanctity of marriage and society itself: "to allow a girl to enter marriage with the feeling that sexual life is debasing gives results almost as harmful [as] to allow a girl to grow up without knowledge, or with a warped knowledge, is a crime against that individual and against society.", asserted one inter-war advice text.\(^{13}\) Ettie A. Rout, a birth control and sex hygiene advocate working in Australia and New Zealand, drew the same conclusions in her 1923 publication *Safe Marriage*, arguing that both men and women have sexual desire, want sex for health and happiness, and regard romance, reciprocity, and permanence in sexual relations as essential.\(^{14}\)

Statements such as these not only recreated the female body as sexually desiring; they also emphasised the mutuality of the sex act. One historian has coined

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11For reviews of Stopes' *Married Love*, see Medical Journal of Australia, Vol. 1, No. 22, June, 1923, p. 611; The Australian publication *Safe Marriage*, by Ettie Rout was also given a glowing review in the journal in September 1922, p. 415, and both were advertised regularly in Beckett's Budget, an Australian weekly journal, see August 30, 1928, p. 12. Stopes mentions Australian correspondence in *Married Love*, and it is used in Lesley Hall's historical study, "Somehow Very Distasteful: Doctor's, Men, and Sexual Problems Between the Wars", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1985, pp. 553-574.
the slogan ‘from unfortunate necessity to the cult of mutual orgasm’ to characterise the transformation in sexual knowledge in the early twentieth century. Mutual orgasm was considered by most advice givers as essential to the perfect experience of sex, and was occasionally presented as necessary for conception. Historian Lesley Hall, who has done a considerable amount of research on Stopes, sex advice and constructions of masculinity, suggests that the ideal of companionate marriage and sexuality had become the socially accepted ideal by the end of World War One. The result, Hall argues, was that, “Sex [had become], perhaps, like the family car, one of the good things of life which couples should share; and while the driver’s seat was the husband’s, the wife had increasing say over where they went and what for.” In order to ensure that the sex art was expressed as art and not, in the words of Margaret Sanger, in a form as graceless as an ‘orang-utan playing the violin’, advice authors offered a range of erotic tools, which required not only new skills but new understandings of the meaning and purpose of one’s sexuality.

The idea of female sexuality as an inherent drive gained considerable impetus from the ideas of Freud, whose work prefigured and underscored many of the texts that will feature in this discussion. While many sexologists disagreed on many specifics of female sexuality (and, through it, male sexuality) Freud’s grounding of sexuality in every individual was generally an accepted standard in the sexological field following Freud’s research into the subject. While most of the authors discussed here tried to channel this drive to useful, sociable, and healthy ends, none disagreed that sex was to be viewed as a given, a priori element of each individual, be it troublesome or worry free.

Readings of sexual advice texts have emphasised the ways in which female bodies were constructed by the discourse of mutual pleasure. Pamela Haag suggests that modern sexual discourse of the 1920s posited a female self whose sexuality belonged to the subconscious realm of sex desire rather than a proprietary, rational self capable of claiming and acting upon desires. The female body of modern sexology was, although sexual, a passive one. The responsibility for pleasing it was not given to the woman herself but rather her sexual ‘driver’, her husband. The wife

was simply a violin, an object brought to life by her husband’s sexual energies, which, unlike her own slowly roused energies, were viewed as explosive and uncomplicated. Both Margaret Jackson and Sheila Jeffreys have taken this argument one step further, suggesting that the goal of the marriage manual and its doctrine of sexual mutuality was to counter the threat of feminism and lesbian sexuality. By eroticising marriage, sexologists conspired with cultural conservatives to establish the heterosexual household as the only legitimate site for sexual pleasure, to institutionalise male domination and female submission, and to control the sexual bodies of women.  

While it is easy to read misogyny into sexology, this kind of interpretation ignores several important features of sexological discourse. For not one of these marriage texts placed the failure to enjoy sex on women. Instead the failure, or success, of the act was considered entirely the responsibility of the male. While women’s sexuality was constrained by the classification of her desire as passive, men’s sexual energies required as much, if not more, training and attention in order to function acceptably within marriage. Moreover, women’s erotic ‘troubles’ were given due consideration and explanation in every aspect. Although their bodies were rendered problematic and intrinsically abnormal in the process, they existed at least as an object of discussion. Men’s bodies and sexuality, on the other hand, while definitely at the centre of the discourse of pleasure and control (they were, after all, considered responsible for both), were considered to be so open, so natural and untroubling that even the scientifically motivated rarely considered difficulties men may have had in relating to their bodies in the acceptable manner. It was the male body receiving the rules and constraints, yet comments abound in the literature to the extent that, as Havelock Ellis put it, “to deal with it [the male sex instinct] broadly as a whole seems unnecessary if only because it is predominantly open and aggressive”. If feminism and lesbianism—and the cultural controls introduced to combat them—provided the sole checks on men’s misogynist, aggressive sexuality, why was the theme of male self discipline so central to the doctrine of the marriage manual?

**virile manhood**

In the drama of love, according to Margaret Sanger, the first essential rule is that the husband must be the master of his passion instead of its slave:

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21Havelock Ellis, quoted in Lesley Hall, “‘Somehow very Distasteful’”, p. 556.
The successful husband-lover will, during every act of the love drama, seek to redirect all egotistical impulses, and, like a skilful driver, at every moment hold himself under intelligent control.22 If a wife fails to experience sexual joy, or is sexually cold, it is the product of ignorance of the husband.23 This formulation put profound demands on the ‘naturally animalistic’ sexual energy of the male. Not only was he solely responsible for his wife’s and his own pleasure, but the giving of such pleasure demanded that he contradict the natural sexual instincts of his body. And while marriage advice texts addressed women in large part, or couples, there was little a woman could do about the success or failure of her sex life other than allow her desires to be awakened and her climax ‘produced’ by her husband. The husband, on the other hand, was responsible not only for bringing his partner to orgasm (simultaneously with his own preferably) but to “give the object of his wooing self-esteem, to transmute her world, [and to] awaken her desire for him”, all while being ‘aggressive yet chivalrous’ and constantly in complete control of his own sexuality.24 Marie Stopes’ Married Love is dedicated by the author to ‘young husbands and all those who are betrothed in love’; perhaps in acknowledgement of the mighty task she and others like her were demanding of those young husbands.

Awakening desire in the female is presented in inter-war marriage literature as a relatively uncomplicated business. Explicit technical advice appears in the manuals rarely and is often expressed vaguely; only a few tips were available to men on how to bring their wives the ‘joyful ecstasy which is the legitimate fruit of marriage’. In a self-published 1935 text, F.C. Tucker declares that to deny the clitoris ‘the function for which it is so elaborately designed’ is in opposition to God’s will. In order to avoid such a sin, he recommends manual stimulation of the clitoris and suggests that ‘novel positions’ can increase women’s pleasure while at the same time lamenting the inconvenience of the ‘badly placed’ clitoris.25 Other texts suggest that the male partner play the phallus on the clitoris for a few seconds, or attempt what Stopes charmingly referred to as the ‘genital kiss’ (without, of course, ever explaining exactly what she meant by this or offering any instruction on how to do such a thing properly).26

All of this constrained women to sexual passivity and denied them autonomy in a profound way, just as Jackson suggests. At the same time, however, it demanded that men perform a sexual tightrope act: constantly controlling their own sexual resources while attempting to rouse the guarded sexual reserves and satisfy the

22 Sanger, Happiness in Marriage, pp. 122–23.
23 Storer, Sex in Modern Life, p. 188.
24 Sanger, Happiness in Marriage, p. 48.
26 Storer, Sex in Modern Life, p. 181; Stopes, Married Love, p. 176.
desires of their partner. Passion may have 'come of age' but so too had a form of sexual pleasure in which the onus for producing pleasure was firmly placed on men. While Victorian sex advice literature taught men to fear their potency, modern sexology taught men to fear not only the animalism of their sexuality but their own clumsiness in using it. Impotence, low desire, and quick orgasm joined over-aggression and brutality as marks of an 'unsatisfactory husband' who needed to rectify his 'deficiency'. A sexuality that was too aggressive and uninhibited had been considered a masculine failing for several decades, but the twentieth century is perhaps the first time in which the opposite—deficient masculine sexual energy—has been considered as great a problem.

The solution to problems of both extremes lay in the careful and consistent management of male sexuality. Men were told to fall into step with the sexual rhythm of women. What had previously been presented as her wifely duty and his sexual right was now reversed as sexual pleasure became his duty and her right. Sexual relations were to occur at a frequency decided by the wife to ensure that sex be an "acme of joy for both husband and wife". At the same time, refraining from sex was considered by Ettie Rout to be a 'mocking absurdity' of normal adult behaviour, and by F.C. Tucker to be responsible for more unhappiness than over indulgence in sexual relations. In the right of women to enjoy sexual pleasure then, there is also a duty: to have desire, and to want sex. Again there is a discursive reversal here of previous sexual formulations. Now, rather than a degrading necessity to love, sex was positioned as the physical embodiment of its sanctity:

What husband and wife who love one another seek to achieve in their most intimate bodily communion, and whether consciously or unconsciously, recognise as the purpose of such communion is: a means of expression that makes them One. And this means of expression is the only perfect one that nature puts at their command.

While Theodore Van de Velde may have expressed it more forcefully than most, this general idea dominated marriage manual texts. As Elizabeth Powell put it in her Australian text The Need for Love (1935), "the sex life is the real life ... when sex dies, life dies, in its essential." As a consequence, male sexuality had to be trained to

29 Rout, Safe Marriage, p. 85.
30 Rout, Safe Marriage, pp. 79, 87; Tucker, The Story of Life, p. 32.
fit with these high modern expectations that, while endorsing pleasure wholeheartedly, provided strict prescriptions for its achievement. The beast had not only to be tamed but trained to perform on command.

In *Hidden Anxieties*, Lesley Hall uses the enormous volume of correspondence received by Marie Stopes to analyse the effects of marriage advice literature on cultural understandings of masculinity. She suggests that the success of such literature came not through providing readers with an encyclopaedic array of erotic skill but by opening up communication and providing couples with a sexual vocabulary through which to articulate their thoughts and feelings. In doing so, manuals such as Stopes’ enabled husbands and wives to see each other in particular ways and contributed to the way in which each was viewed and understood by each other and themselves. Whether or not the sexual subjectivities created by this type of discourse created misogynist repression of female sexuality, or caused the emotional flight of men from domesticity (as Margaret Jackson and Kevin White respectively argue), is not the point of this discussion. What interests me is the way advice literature, emerging from the marriage genre and the coming of age genre, created new sexual subjectivities out of old behaviours and new knowledge.

The thoughts and feelings of men who wrote to Stopes requesting advice seem to focus on their inability to satisfy their wives sexually and their remorse at this failure. And how could it not? Told of their profound responsibility but little of how to carry it out, the ideal of manhood presented by advice literature was a deeply and intrinsically contradictory one. This contradiction can be summed up in the words of one of the texts, which urged men to “make haste slowly ... he cannot trust to blind instinct”. If he could not trust his instinct, the young husband would need all the advice and training he could possibly glean from the literature in order not to forfeit his chance at attaining the highest joy known to him. The solution offered to him in marriage literature is the thorough training of an uncontrollable urge. It is in this task that adolescence becomes such a crucial element of the literature of advice. For without the early training of the male body, the complex achievement of sexual pleasure is bound to fail. It is in the training of instinct during adolescence that the contention between eroticised love and sexual control is eased and the quest for virile manhood is begun.

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33Hall, *Hidden Anxieties*, chapter 3.
34Sanger, *Happiness in Marriage*, p. 90.
The Methodist Young People’s Department 1924 publication *The Facts About Sex* opens boldly with the assertion that, “it is absolutely essential that clear simple instruction on this subject be frankly given to every boy or girl over the age of 15.”35 That year, and in those preceding it, instruction from that particular organisation would be available only to boys despite this opening gambit; a similar publication directed at girls had not yet been published. For the boys and young men who read advice for amusement, pleasure, or instruction, their pages brimmed with hyperbolic stories of the pleasures to inherit and the dangers to avoid along the path to sexual maturity. While the Methodist Young People’s Department and others stressed the importance of educating the young of both sexes, the number of tracts directed exclusively at young men outweigh similar publications for girls. Texts with female targets more often than not included discussion of what a young girl could expect over the course of her entire life, including tips on how to marry well, raise children, run a household, and educate their offspring in the same, respectable way that such texts were attempting to educate them.36 Texts directed at young boys, on the other hand, focused on the ‘dangerous’ time of life—adolescence—and left the nuances of adult life to other publications. In doing so, these texts constituted a new genre of advice, one that relied for its very existence on ideas and knowledge of adolescence and sexuality that was being established in many spheres of Australian life.

While admitting that adolescence is a time of stress for both sexes, the author of a 1934 Racial Hygiene Association of New South Wales sex education pamphlet argued that males carry an added burden of danger during the adolescent years. Because I am suggesting that adolescent advice was unique and distinct it is necessary, as much as it is possible in this context, to specify what was meant by adolescent. Many of the texts I will be using here were written in association with young men’s organisations. These organisations had age restrictions on membership, the parameters of which suggest the age range to which authors were speaking. The Methodist Young People’s Department (or Methodist Comradeship as it was later called), whose publications I have mentioned, opened its doors to anyone between fifteen and twenty five years of age for participation in its ‘seniors’ section. Likewise, the Young Christian Worker’s Movement, the Young Men’s Christian Association

35R.A. Willis, *The Facts About Sex; For Boys and Young Men*, Methodist Young People’s Department, Melbourne, 1924, p. 6.
36See Rout, *Safe Marriage*; E.J. Bamford, *The House Not Made With Hands: Talks to Older Girls*; Elizabeth Powell, *The Need for Love*, Midget Masterpiece Publishing Co., Sydney, 1935, for Australian examples. Marie Stopes’ and Margaret Sanger’s texts both have marriage in their titles but the attention they pay to the ‘development’ of the female sexual instinct and courtship suggest they were intended for a broader (female) audience.
(YMCA), and the Boy Scouts (each of which was established in most Australian states prior to World War One) offered membership to boys up to age twenty five. Participation was often divided by age: boys fifteen to eighteen and boys eighteen to twenty five formed two distinct groups within each of these organisations.37

Occasionally, youth organisations referred to the former age group as boys and the latter as young men. Talks to ‘adolescents’, however, constituted an important aspect of youth organisations’ work and, given the assertions that the dangerous period extends from fifteen to twenty five (or to twenty eight in some cases)38, I take adolescence in the context of advice texts to refer to this range of years. The titles of some of these texts use the form of address ‘to boys and young men’. I take this to mean that such publications were intended for careful use by each of the two age-defined sections of boys’ organisations. Because most of the organisations which published manuals were open only to single men, advice such as how to enjoy the sanctity of sexual (conjugal) love rarely featured in the coming of age manual. For all young unmarried males, however, sexuality constituted a power and a danger that demanded full awareness and thorough vigilance to navigate correctly.

During this stage of life, burgeoning sexuality was usually constructed through advice literature as not only a burden but a potential threat to the transition to manhood and to the pleasures that come with its achievement. The Racial Hygiene Association pamphlet An Open Letter to Young Men explained the danger in overwrought tones: “the primitive sex instinct may lead to everything good, but if uncontrolled may lead to all that is evil, selfish, and even bestial.”39 Because of the ‘urgent and imperious’ nature of the sex instinct within, the misdirection of its power is presented as dangerous and real.40 While such a formulation may seem unremarkable coming from an organisation devoted to moral purity instruction, similar sentiments—in an array of colourful language—were made by authors who claimed to be interested in scientific management of sexuality rather than moral management. In a survey monograph of sexual life in adolescence and marriage, R.V. Storer prefaced his research with the assertion that, “the sex impulse is the driving force which produces pioneers, statesmen, business magnates, and leaders of men in every walk of life ... if repressed or arrested in development, it produces neurasthenics, perverts, and social misfits.”41

38White Cross publications situate the ‘dangerous bit’ between the years sixteen and twenty eight. See J.E.H., True Manliness: A Purity Booklet for Young Men, George Robertson & co., Melbourne, n.d.
41Storer, Sex in Modern Life, p. 9.
The emphasis placed on the importance of the sex instinct in every facet of life was as prominent in texts directed at adolescents as it was in those directed at young marrieds, with one major distinction. Whereas texts for newlyweds and the betrothed stressed that sexual pleasures were best enjoyed by a disciplined sexual body, the texts of the coming of age genre invoked the profundity of sexual pleasure in order to proscribe. Australian authors asserted again and again that the "whole excellence of life depends upon the right direction of the sex instinct".

For adolescents, the direction offered by advice texts was very different from that offered to their older brothers.

As I just mentioned, advice texts for young men were written most often by fathers and heads of youth organisations and were intended to guide the young safely to the point at which reading sexological literature would be of benefit and not detriment to their bodies and minds. Although readership figures cannot be known, authors of the moral instruction type of advice made bold claims relating to the circulation of their work across Australia. P.J.L. Kenny, founder and director of the Father and Son Welfare Movement in New South Wales, former school teacher and YMCA serviceman, and author of *The Guide to Virile Manhood*, claimed to have lectured from this text and shown moral purity films to over one hundred thousand boys and young men throughout Australia between 1925 and 1930.

The accessibility of moral instruction texts—priced from one to three pence per booklet—and their direct address to adolescent boys makes these texts central in the discourse of advice and sexual instruction between the wars. I will now turn to the 'guides to virile manhood' and the particular path to pleasure they offered the adolescent. The main texts I will be using in this discussion are the Kenny text mentioned above, The Racial Hygiene Association's *An Open Letter to Young Men*, the White Cross penny pamphlet *True Manliness*, and *The Facts About Sex* published by the Methodist Young People's Department.

Metaphorical language abounds in inter-war advice to young men. One instance of this—an extended metaphor offered by the White Cross on the relation of the body to the boy—is worth quoting at length as it beautifully, if obliquely, expresses the main anxieties and the intent of this particular discourse. The relation to one's body is likened to that of a man to a horse:

[L]earn how to manage him, and make him feel that you, and not he, were master; and then the strength and swiftness of the beautiful creature would become yours. Just in the same way that you—the real self in you—have to master the animal body, and make its instincts serve the purpose of man. There is nothing low or vile

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in the animal body in itself, just as there is nothing low or vile in the horse in itself; as long as the man is uppermost and the beast is undermost, both are equally good on their own plane, and the lower serves the higher. It is only when the animal throws his rider and drags him through the dirt at his heels, only when man obeys the beast instead of the beast obeying the man, that death and disorder ensue.44

This statement is fascinating not only for its extraordinary use of metaphor, but for the way it signals all of the major axes through which the discourse of adolescent male sexuality was constructed in the post-World War One era. J.E.H., the quasi-anonymous author of the above, asked the reader later in this text to make a decision about the form his manhood was to take: “man or the maddened beast, which is it to be?”.45 This question, and the formulation that preceded it, represents an interesting form of knowledge that manages to retain elements of the Victorian construction of sexual purity while invoking modern tropes of sexual development. It offers two sites of self-policing to the reader: of the body in itself, and of the body in relation to the female body.

In the first of these areas—the control of self in relation to oneself—advice was fairly consistent, not only across a range of authors but across the twenty year temporal range of this discussion. Texts like True Manliness and The Guide to Virile Manhood were reprinted throughout the period without change or addition, and continued to be published in unchanged editions until well into the 1940s.46 This mode of discourse also preceded the period of this investigation if not in publication dates of particular texts, then in the use of terms such as ‘true manliness’ and a more general discussion of moral/sexual purity.47 The content of these texts was not new but their address to a particular audience, and their understanding that such an audience constituted a unique type of being certainly was. Moreover, their language was reproduced by texts which did have an agenda of social reform and, through this mode of address, moral guidance texts became associated with a modern formulation of sexuality, although they themselves were part of a more old-fashioned trope, one of man and beast.

44J.E.H., True Manliness, p. 5.
45J.E.H., True Manliness, p. 13. To the historian reader, the use of a horse/rider metaphor evokes Freud’s discussion of Ego and Id but there is no indication that J.E.H. was familiar with that particular framing of such a metaphor.
46The Father and Son Welfare Movement, for example, published the same version of Kenny’s text The Guide to Virile Manhood as late as 1951.
In this section I will turn to the specific means that were offered by authors of parochial texts to prepare one’s body and mind for what Douglas White called the ‘intimate bodily union’ of love to which the young man looks forward. Given that marital sex (and sexual pleasure) were generally considered to be one of the most crucial elements of life, advice authors asserted that young men would require preparatory maintenance on their bodies and sexuality in order to fully realise the joys of sex. R.A. Willis, author of *The Facts About Sex*, classified three forms of immorality that adolescents needed vigilantly to keep in check: impure sexual thought, impure sexual word, and impure sexual act. The implication here was that a failure on the first count increased the likelihood of failure on the second count which then led to a spiral of degenerate behaviour in the third mode (sexual action). In the case of impure thought, authors could offer little in the way of practical advice despite the fact that mental stimulation was considered dangerous even in the absence of accompanying behaviours: “you set up a misdirected excitement and cause nervous derangement which may, if you go on doing it, lead to an unhealthy and morbid state, that may cause you serious trouble.”

Texts suggested mental diversions—“whistle a tune, jump up and shake yourself, repeat your multiplication table, almost anything will do that instantly changes the current of your thoughts”—the second, with its overtones of self-touching, seems less than appropriate in the context.

Young men were also encouraged not to think too much. David Walker’s work on seminal loss and national identity has revealed the cultural connections that were made between modernity and degeneracy in the inter-war years in Australia. Underlying the assertion that too much thinking causes sexual debility (or, in the case of the young, cause the mind to wander into dangerous sexual territory) is the suspicion that modern society was demanding too much of the male body. Douglas White warned of the dangers inherent in the sedentary modern occupations of office work or study and the White Cross discouraged mental stimulation without limiting the warning to any particular kind of stimulation; presumably too much thinking of any kind could lead to a weaker body, one more vulnerable to sexual misdeed.

As for sexual deed, moral instruction texts turned their attentions to general bodily discipline before addressing the discipline that would be required of the male

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body at adulthood (within conjugal, heterosexual relations). Although the equine metaphor of *True Manliness* suggested the consequence of death and disorder following sexual incontinence, generally advice concerning auto-eroticism was not in the Victorian discursive mode of masturbation insanity. *All* texts mentioned and admonished the practice but primarily did so in a way that was similar to that used in professional medical practice at the time. The Methodist Young People’s Department was most dire in its interpretation of the practice, exhorting in *The Facts About Sex* that:

*Self abuse or masturbation* is quite a common but disgusting practice in which, by an impure train of thought, or with his hands, a boy or young man excites his own sex organs and provokes a seminal emission, with its characteristic sensations ... This is a most debasing and dangerous habit and, if persisted in, will cause nervous exhaustion, neurasthenia, and other physical, mental, and moral evils.53

Note that the author regards masturbation as an action that need not involve manual stimulation, suggesting that wet dreams are a form of masturbation. Other texts carefully noted that wet dreams (or ‘nocturnal emissions’ as it is often termed in the literature) were not damaging as long as one practised vigilant discipline in waking hours.

Also interesting is the fact that, despite the open affiliation of texts such as *The Facts About Sex* with religious organisations, admonitions of masturbation were not framed in scriptural terms, nor was Biblical doctrine regarding the practice, or sexuality in general, used. Even White Cross literature, which encouraged boys to emulate the purity of Christ and presented them with a form at the back of each publication with a list of pledges and the declaration “Blessed are the Pure of Heart” (see Plate 1), referred to Biblical condemnation only obliquely. That authors used the language of the psychiatrist and not the Bible suggests an attempt to place advice texts closer on the discursive map to a professional, social scientific knowledge, rather than an evangelical or moral one. The insinuation that advice authors were connected with professional disciplines such as psychiatry and medicine extended the legitimacy of the contract being offered to the young reader. Each of the texts in discussion here emphasised the need for body management for its own sake (and for the sake of the nation’s future) as much as for the sake of morality. The self mastery that results from careful management of the adolescent body, argued Kenny, “is one of the supreme satisfactions of life, and one of the greatest helps towards full self development and the respect of other people.”54

In *Young Manhood*, a Kenny text, young men were encouraged to rid themselves of mental stimulation, which leads to introspection, solitude, and, presumably, the

desire not only to look inward but to touch inward, in favour of physical activity. As he put it, there can be “no great physical achievement without firmness of muscle and complete muscular control”. Moreover, without the ability to control yourself, “you will never successfully control a business, a piece of machinery, or influence others.” Not all physical activities were encouraged however, even if they were socially contextualised and thus free from the dangers of solitary temptation. The use of alcohol was stridently discouraged because of the weakening effect it was seen to have on the muscular (and, by extension, sexual) control of the drinker. Further, if a man failed in controlling his body and became sexually active, alcohol was said to weaken his physical resistance to venereal disease, to make latent v.d. active, and treatment more refractory. As an alternative to these dangerous pleasures, physical exercise was heartily endorsed by all, not just as a means to distract from sexual thoughts but because firm muscular control was equated with an equally firm sexual control.

Young men were encouraged to avoid all sexual thought and deed in order to store vitality for “greater power and fuller use of it in maturity”. No doubt this would be a time consuming task but also an imperative one, if one held to the formulation that a man’s bones are not ‘set’ until between twenty five to thirty years of age. Not only the bones, but the entire body of an adolescent male was seen as physically compromised by the process of sexual maturity and thus vulnerable to damage if engaged prematurely in sexual activity. “What injury”, wondered a sex hygiene speaker at a 1916 conference, “must result physically to a youth who begins the sexual life at sixteen and seventeen years of age!” The potential for damage to a sexually active sixteen or seventeen year old was considered especially grave because a boy this age, with his exploding juvenescent sexuality, is made vulnerable by the task of controlling it and has weakened resistance to dangers. This points to another aspect of the discourse of sex advice. While the emphasis, particularly in parochial advice texts, was the importance of internal discipline and control, another threat to virile manhood came from outside the body of the adolescent in the form of girls and disease.

It is no surprise that sexual behaviour edged into public discourse following World War One. After all, one seventh of all Australian enlisted men had returned from their service carrying venereal disease. The imperative not to blame the

56See Margaret Sanger, Happiness in Marriage, p. 33. Sanger suggests that the first twenty three years of life be exclusively used to ‘build life forces’ for this purpose.
nation's heroes—honourable men who climb higher and therefore fall lower into ditches—meant not only that blame had to be located elsewhere but that sexual interaction, and not just personal sexual fastidiousness, needed to be addressed by advice givers and sex education and hygiene teachers.

It is through sexual interaction that the spectre of death and disorder favoured by advice givers begins to appear more substantial. Masturbation, it was admitted by authors, in and of itself could not cause debilitation. It could, however, open the floodgates constructed by moral guardianship and let loose sexual temptations that flow from masturbation to sexual promiscuity, debauchery, and disease. While the task of “stiffening youth’s moral fibre against the pitfalls that await the sexually ignorant” was the main task of the authors I am addressing here, prostitution and venereal disease were considered important secondary threats to the constitution of the adolescent and the achievement of manhood. Prostitution, both professional and casual (the latter included, in the view of at least one author, any sexual union outside of marriage), was considered to threaten the ability of the young male to see the importance of ‘individual love’. It was argued by a panel of ‘experts’ on prostitution and the teaching of sex hygiene in 1916 that boys needed to be shown the anti-social character of intercourse. Masturbation had already been constructed as an act contrary to the social order. Under the guise of protecting boys from disease and debauchery, pre-marital sexual interaction was deemed as threatening to social development, at least for adolescents, as personal perversion.

Here again, the emphasis was on the ways that the ‘great elemental force’ of sexual energy could be redirected into more useful channels. The most common suggestion was that energies be consumed by sport or recreational activities. One writer on the subject favourably cited the work of an unnamed German sexologist, which suggests that sexual force and mental/spiritual force have a positive relationship in which an act of will can transform lust into community good. Not only could channelled sexual energies create firm bodies and minds, but it was hoped that the proper direction of sexual desire could create a firm and strong Australian nation. The obvious implication here is that, if un-transformed, sexual force will cause community harm, through the ‘disease’ of weakened manhood and morality and also through disease itself.

59 Worker’s Educational Association of NSW, Teaching of Sex Hygiene, p. vii.
60 I use the term ‘casual prostitution’ here in the way the Judith Walkowitz does. See City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1992. In 1932, R.V. Storer used a similar formulation to highlight the social threat of promiscuity: “the professional prostitute is rapidly being supplanted by the amateur, who yields her body for the price of good clothes and a good time.”, Sex in Modern Life, p. 23.
61 Worker’s Educational Association of NSW, Teaching of Sex Hygiene, p. 18.
G.W.R. Southern was Australia’s only member of the World League for Sexual Reform, which was established in Berlin in 1921 and included delegates from twenty-five nations. The 1934 publication of his text *Making Morality Modern* attracted the attention of Sydney’s Deputy Post-Master General, who refused to transmit the ten-shilling text by post. In response, Southern solicited the opinion of his World League for Sexual Reform colleagues Havelock Ellis, Edward Westermarck and William J. Robinson, each of whom responded that the controversy over the book was excessive. In *Making Morality Modern*, Southern waxed eloquent on the problem of prostitution in a comment on the sowing of wild oats:

> Instead of being allowed to seed in every ditch and vacant allotment, and thus to harbour diseases which may infect the best cultivated crops, they must be brought into the orderly fields of matrimony, where they can be properly sprayed with insecticides when occasion demands.62

Southern is presumably referring, at the end of this statement, to birth control (which he heartily endorsed) but what is of interest to me is the way that the threat to the ‘best cultivated’ men comes from the dubious cleanliness of prostitutes and promiscuous women. Young men in particular were seen as vulnerable to sexual danger because of their adolescent condition; even if they avoided it internally, dangers could get at them from outside themselves. Southern’s concern was social problems, for which he attempted to find solutions through the reform of individual behaviour. For moral guidance counsellors, the problem was constituted the other way around: individual sexual behaviour was the starting point. Poor self-management created the kinds of problems identified by Southern. Because the authors of moral advice to young men were uninterested in addressing the social problem of prostitution, or even addressing the phenomenon itself, the dangers that Southern and other social hygiene experts located in the prostitute were relocated onto the individual body of the young male. While for authors like Southern the discipline of the male body was required to counter the devastating social effects of prostitution and venereal disease, as far as moral advisors and authors of coming of age texts were concerned, prostitution and venereal disease were the result of a lack of personal discipline. Morality, more than the alleviation of social problems, was the focus of guides to virile manhood. Thus prostitution was alluded to only vaguely and only after thorough attention had been given to personal control and discipline.

Throughout the post-war period, disease notification acts were passed, venereal disease was the subject of a Royal Commission, and public clinics opened in every

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state to deal with the effects of the scourge. Yet in advice texts of the coming of age
genre discussion of venereal disease appeared, like prostitution, only as a post script or
addendum to the main body of discussion. This is not because of any prudery or
squeamishness on the authors' part, for they trumpeted the 'ignorance does not equal
innocence' doctrine as well as any in the field of sex advice literature. Yet addressing
venereal disease, as with prostitution, was largely left to different genres in the field of
advice: those which focused on the prevention of venereal disease, such as the Earl
Kitchener authored White Cross pamphlet A Straight Talk to His Men, directed at
soldiers, or Marion Piddington's Eradication of Promiscuity and Venereal Disease: Sex
Training, Sex Education and Parental Metaphylaxis, directed at parents. The mode of
address and focus of these texts differentiates them from the genre that is the focus of
this chapter. Advice manuals directed at young men took the coming of age process as
the primary concern, presenting bodily self-discipline as the means to avoid engaging
in the particular problems addressed in other types of advice text. For the authors I
have discussed, the young man himself constituted the problem, not the particulars of
venereal disease, contraception, or prostitution. These were all evils that could be
avoided by properly applying the proffered strategies of the coming of age text.

It is not hard to argue that the reason for the discursive marginalisation of
prostitution and venereal disease in coming of age texts was because of a reluctance to
present a less than idealised version of masculinity. I would like to suggest as well
that such a discussion did not fit with the understanding of sexuality used by these
texts. Parochial advice conceded to the modern notion that sexuality is an omnipotent
force. As they explicitly admitted, the authors of coming of age manuals saw the task
of adolescence as the taming of the beast within. To suggest that the 'beast' was
actually a disease or another person would displace responsibility from the young man
and thus remove the urgency of his task. The main form of advice to young men was
to protect, to hoard, and to contain their sexual energy until their sexually mature
bodies were transformed into mature sexual bodies and marriage provided them with
erotic pleasures.

modern sex(ology)

In this section, I would like to turn briefly to a set of texts which, while less
explicitly guidance oriented than the coming of age texts discussed above, do offer
advice and information about, and to, the adolescent male. In the field of sex literature
the texts examined in this section represent a different genre of sexual knowledge than
those previously discussed. These texts are framed by scientific rationality and
professional expert knowledge, and claim to classify and understand sexuality according to those scientific truths rather than a moral agenda. In many ways they are closer to the professional discourses discussed in the first section of this thesis than they are to the advice of organisations such as the Fathers and Sons Movement, they invoke the expert, tutelary mode of the psychiatrist or educator more than the fatherly counsel of the coming of age genre. This emphasises the way that certain forms of sexual knowledge and advice drew on the alliance between scientific knowledge and social welfare (constructed in the professional sites examined in the first section). The main texts representing this discourse will be F.C. Tucker’s 1933 publication *The Story of Life*, the 1932 survey and advice text *Sex in Modern Life* by R.V. Storer, and G.W.R. Southern’s *Making Morality Modern*, published in 1934.

In 1933, F.C. Tucker’s *The Story of Life* was taken to court for obscenity. It was later vindicated under the *Obscene and Indecent Publications Act* of 1901 and went on to be released in seven successive editions before the end of the 1930s. Tucker’s text quotes P.J.L. Kenny of the Father and Son Welfare Movement but it is not a moral guidance text for how to survive adolescence. Tucker considered topics from the physiology of the sex organs to contraceptive fallacies in his sprawling narrative and encouraged readers to write to the editor with any problem they considered germane. Tucker’s text is interesting in relation to a discussion of adolescence in the way that it reaches out to both the moral authority of authors such as Kenny and to a scientific knowledge in order to establish its professional legitimacy. The Storer text is characterised by the same double task and together these texts represent a genre of advice that openly sought to classify adolescence scientifically as much as to advise on behaviour management.

These texts cover much of the same ground as the guidance texts discussed above and they too emphasise the dire need for the sex instinct to be utilised in non-sexual ways in adolescence. Tucker declared it a known fact that “sex energy can be ‘sublimated’ into other useful channels”.

Tucker’s text is marked throughout by oblique references to Freudian conceptions of sexual development, which are frequently situated within quotation marks. The Storer text, *Sex in Modern Life*, is the only mainstream source across the range that explicitly mentions Freud’s theories of sexuality and sexual development. While other ‘scientific’ texts analyse concepts such as ego, libido, milieu and psychotherapy without mentioning the connection of these concepts to Freud, Storer not only uses the explicitly Freudian interpretation of sublimation (although its conceptual similarity to terms such as ‘diversion’ and

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'direction' used in coming of age guides should not be underestimated) but also the Freudian formulation of the stages of sexual development. This sets Storer's work apart from the others, all of which present sexual desire as a spontaneous eruption at puberty.

In Freud's formulation, the adolescent stage of sexual development is dominated by emotional and intellectual development and is characterised by the bisexual orientation of the adolescent. Storer addressed both these concepts with a forthrightness that makes his text unique. His survey research indicated that twenty seven per cent of his male subjects had experienced homosexual relations between the ages of fourteen and twenty, primarily through mutual masturbation or coitus interfemora (frottage). Storer suggested that such a finding indicates a manifestation of the 'normal homosexual trend of puberty', which, he argued, "must not be confused with true homosexuality, which is congenital." Moreover, Storer found that ninety per cent of his surveyed adolescents admitted to masturbation (ninety of one hundred subjects) which he considered dangerous only if the act was followed by excessive feelings of guilt. The shame of masturbation, rather than the act itself, was considered damaging to the development of male sexual responsibility.

These findings, and Storer's reaction to them, demonstrate the disparity between this type of advice text and coming of age texts. Storer and Southern, both of whom were most explicit in their use of Freudian theory, were the only authors of sex advice texts to mention homosexuality and were certainly alone in their suggestion that it is part of normal adolescent development. Yet in one important way there remains a discursive resonance in both of these textual, sexual genres. This is in the way in which sublimation, either its Freudian or pseudo-Freudian construction, was considered the best, most constructive way for an adolescent boy to pass successfully into manhood. For, after all his talk of revolution and free love, the best advice Southern had to offer to teachers of sex education was that they follow an explanation of the 'practice and significance of normal sexuality' with the advice, "now boys, you can see that the manly thing to do is to keep yourselves virile for the women you will have when you grow up." 67

Other than employing the plural of the noun 'woman', there is little to distinguish this sentiment from those of The Guide to Virile Manhood. The exception is, of course, the fact that the Southern positioned his text within a specialised scientific body of knowledge. The guidance offered by these texts was not for the morality of

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65 Storer, Sex in Modern Life, pp. 60, 118.
66 Storer, Sex in Modern Life, pp. 113, 118.
67 Southern, Making Morality Modern, p.58.
the boy but for the progress of the nation. When Havelock Ellis was informed of the distribution problems plaguing Southern, he responded with vehemence:

It is terrible indeed to hear of the restrictions that have been placed on liberty and thought in literature in Australia ... It was there that I received the inspiration for my life work in the psychology of sex. I knew nothing of the restrictions as you describe. Australians would not have tolerated them. I hoped indeed that Australia would help to lead the world. I never imagined that so beautiful a land would merely raise a race of slaves. It is more than time that some voice appeared among you to raise the call: Australia arise.

Indeed responses to Southern’s plight were unanimously dismissive of the conservative climate that constrained discussion of sexual matters in Australia. Anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski wrote that he was strongly opposed to the, “stupid and obscurantist hush-hush attitude which obtains so much in Australia—a country which, as you may realise, I know from personal residence”. It would seem that Southern’s colleagues in the World League for Sexual Reform found nothing shocking or even mildly provocative in his text and that far more radical texts circulated freely in Europe and the United States, although it certainly is the most radical Australian text from the period. This points back to the anti-modernist discursive hegemony of inter-war Australia that has been noted by many, both historians such as John Williams and historical actors like Southern who were attempting ‘radical’ reform.

William Robinson noted that Americans were well past the point at which such books would shock even a conservative censor. It would seem, however, that the reiteration of moral guidelines in sexological terms was as much reform as inter-war Australian culture would allow, with the obvious exception of Norman Haire, although as with Southern, Haire’s work was more freely circulated and accepted outside his home country.

Although it was freed for circulation after some legal consideration, Southern did not exactly raise the call in a way which had significant effect on the public discussion of sexuality in this country. Although he presented himself to the World League for Sex Reform in Berlin, his text sold only one thousand copies throughout Australia in the first edition. In terms of its influence, Making Morality Modern is a

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68 Southern, Making Morality Modern, p. iii. Ellis’ comments appear at the front of Southern’s text abridged from a letter received by Southern after requesting comments from fellow members of the World League for Sex Reform regarding his censorship struggle.

69 Southern, Making Morality Modern, p. xiv.

70 This is with the possible exception of the work of William Chidley, who published and was taken to court several times before and during World War One over his sexual philosophy. I have not included his work in the discussion here because I consider it to engage in a different form of discourse from that discussed here, and also because the publication dates and controversy predate the years in consideration here. For discussion of Chidley, see Mark Finnane, “Sexuality and Social Order: The State versus Chidley”, What Rough Beast? State and Social Order in Australian History, Sydney Labour History Group (eds), Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1982.

peripheral text in the discourse. It is important, however, for the way it demonstrates the intersections between sexological science and the trope of moral guidance offered by coming of age manuals.

While they were presented as science and intended for a specific target audience, the comments sexological texts made on adolescent sexuality reflected the language of the advice text and reaffirmed it in the language and idiom of science. By extension, these texts reflected the knowledge of science back onto those texts that had used similar language and concepts. Although the leaders of the Father and Son Welfare Movement would surely bristle at the suggestions that auto-eroticism, masturbation, and homosexuality were a necessary step in the development of a mature sexual being, their own versions of sublimation drew closer the associations to the scientific text through their common, if varied, use of the language of sublimation. Although it is far more likely that boys could get their hands on a guidance text than a sexological one, the latter genre drew coming of age manuals into new discursive territory that changed the ways adolescents were seen, and were able to see themselves.

I have used a range of advice discourses here to demonstrate the ways that sexual discourse can encircle a subject and constrain or police his behaviour. In the case of advice discourse, the text can offer no mechanisms for actually restraining the sexuality of the young man. As Storer’s survey shows, despite the almost universal condemnation of masturbation in coming of age manuals, ninety percent of an inter-war sample of adolescents admitted to doing it. As an isolated discourse, the advice text may have been ineffectual in containing adolescent subjectivity and constraining sexuality. When such texts appear to express the knowledge of the expert (with whom young people would be familiar through institutional tutelage in spheres of education, medicine and psychology), however, the contractual effects of the advice text on the reader become stronger and more culturally evident.

Advice texts, scientific and parochial, etched sexual norms onto bodies. As a contractual form of discourse, they offered those norms as the ideal version of self. In the case of adolescent boys, this self was not only defined by age but through a particular relationship to the body and sexuality. The governing ideology of post-World War One sexual discourse (and of sexology in particular) was one of liberation, honesty, and pleasures, none of which extended further than the conjugal bed. By suggesting that an age specific subjectivity constituted a unique sexual body, sexologists and moral guidance counsellors managed to extricate the modern discourse of sexual pleasure from one that would encourage universal sexual
indulgence and thereby threaten the institutions of marriage and legitimacy. The discursive construct of adolescence helped to narrow the gap between the modern eroticisation of sexuality and the cultural necessity of codes of sexual behaviour, between the belief that sex expression is an art and the coincident belief that self mastery is one of the ‘supreme satisfactions of life’.

Self-mastery was also a common theme of another sphere of discourse: popular representations in inter-war magazines and newspapers. It is these representations and the particular images of masculinity and youth they presented that I will turn to in the next, and final, chapter.
chapter 7. (re)presenting masculinity and youth in popular culture

On March 6th 1924, readers of the journal Bulletin, had their weekly stream of political news and cartoons interrupted by a large advertisement for Plume brand motor oil (see Plate 2). Dominating the visually striking advertisement is a woodcut depicting a muscular man in a loincloth. Strongly muscled, hairless, and near-nude, the young man restrains a salivating lion with a chain-link leash; the effort causes him to lean backward at a considerable angle. Superimposed in the top right corner of the image are the words “Power in Reserve with Plume”. The advertisement appears to have been unexceptional; it appears in several other editions of the Bulletin and other Australian journals, and is not dissimilar in format from numerous other advertisements for a variety of consumer products. Near nude men were used in the inter-war years to sell products as diverse as tyres and sparkling wine, as well as fitness regimes, for which the figure of a shirtless muscled youth is perhaps a more logical visual choice.

I have opened this chapter with the image of man restraining lion because of the way it reproduces almost exactly the popular image of the man and beast that I discussed in the previous chapter on sex advice manuals. Those texts offered young readers the image of the man riding a horse as a metaphor for the relation of their bodies to their (masculine) sexuality. The Plume advertisement substitutes a lion for a horse but the text and image of the advertisement, with its myriad references to power and volatility, could arguably have appeared in one of the coming of age manuals that

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1The tyre advertisement appears in Bulletin, April 23, 1930, p. 15, Seppelt’s used the image of a young man clad in what appears to be a g-string operating a wine press to advertise its Great Western Sparkling Hock in Bulletin, March 6, 1924, p. 8, see Plate 3.
were the focus of the previous chapter. In a way, the two texts say something very similar: power, whether sexual or vehicular, is best kept carefully stored in reserve for all 'emergencies'. In the previous chapter I examined the effects that such a formulation had on discourses of sexual pleasure and coming of age. In this chapter, I will be broadening that field of view, to look at what types of body images were most accessible to young men through their appearance in popular newspapers and magazines. While these images did not draw as specific an image of adolescent masculinity as did the claims of professionals and the pleas of moral advisors, popular representations positioned male bodies and behaviours into various subject categories.

The range of representations examined in this chapter are not offered as examples of the way a professional understanding of adolescence trickled down into popular understandings. On the contrary, I wish to show that popular representations do not simply act as passive translators of formal convention into popular mores. Instead, they interact with a wide range of professional discourses and contribute to the understanding of coming of age and male sexuality that has characterised the twentieth century. A brief discussion of this function of advertising and popular representation will situate this examination in a theoretical framework that allows for the multiple and slippery functions of popular representation. I will then turn to the representations themselves, examining first the options of identification offered to adult men. The figures of the idealised or demonised adult male of popular culture, while not explicitly courting the immediate identification of an adolescent cohort, nonetheless instruct the young male in self-identification and behaviour. The types of men represented in Australian popular journal and newspaper advertising and editorials signal the realised (or squandered) potential embedded in the struggle for manhood. I will be arguing that these representations of masculinity affected the formation of the self-identifying adolescent subject by presenting the young male with the inheritance of his manhood. Whether good, bad, or mad, the men presented in popular discourse were those whom adolescents were set to become.

In the final section of this chapter I will turn to representations of the young male himself. Although the range and intensity of representation of adolescents was modest compared to those of adult men—and are minuscule compared to the barrage of commercial representation of contemporary adolescents/ce—some models of adolescence and masculinity were explicitly presented in Australian popular culture between the wars.

Age intervened critically in the construction of the maleness and the sexuality of that subject. It is easy to snicker at the seemingly obvious sexual undertone of
Plume's advertising appeal to the 'volatile power' of the 'precious fluid'. It is also tempting to suggest that such an image is an obvious cipher for collective inter-war anxieties about masculinity and male sexuality but it may be that it is more our cultural and historical position than any inherent textual qualities that allows us to do that. How then, can we disentangle the contextual from the historical, how can we 'read' an advertisement or popular representation without compromising the historicity or undermining the historical integrity of such a representation?

**image and representation**

The simplest answer to the above question is undeniably that we can't. No historian, or even someone working with contemporary cultural representations, can completely unpick the knots of culture, interpretation, intention and realisation within any given representation. W.J.T. Mitchell argues that forms of representation are always constructed politically and semiotically in a triangular relationship: a representation is always of something or someone, by something or someone, to someone. When dealing with historical representations, wherein only the 'something or someone' subject of the representation remains fixed (while the passage of time makes the 'to' target of the representation, if not the 'by' creator, unknowable), it would seem the best a historian can do with representations is to avoid them altogether. Yet this is neither an easy nor satisfying response. For the very same reasons that representations are so complex, they are also invaluable for historical study; in at least the three ways described, representations always involve the historical actor; as the someone creating, the someone viewing, and the someone being viewed.

In the opening chapter of his *Les Mots et les Choses* (*The Order of Things*), Foucault offers an analysis of the Velasquez painting *Las Meninas*. The analysis provides a mode of exploring representational systems as apparatuses of power. Foucault posits in this analysis (and elsewhere in his studies of image and representation) that representations do not hold power because they are appropriated by those in power for the purposes of serving a political function. Images and representations are not, in other words, simply conduits of the types of power possessed by those who create or use them. Nor does his analysis interpret the implicit content of an image or suggest that images and representations are inherently powerful. Instead, by offering a presentation of the subjective self back to the self,

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representations can crystallise, symbolise, metaphorically encode, and transmit meaning to what Foucault terms the 'political anatomy'. Such an approach views representation not simply as an expression of power but as an integral part of the social process of differentiation, exclusion, incorporation, and rule.

The obvious problem with this investigative strategy is that, in Mitchell's words, "Every representation exacts some cost, in the form of lost immediacy, presence of truth, in the form of the gap between intention and realisation, original and copy." This cost becomes even higher when dealing with visual representation, or images. As Roland Barthes has noted, images are widely suspected to be, in at least two ways, too resistant to interpretation to offer any discursive meaning; they are both too vague and too ineffably rich to wield discursive power. Yet, Barthes argues, such forms of representation have an ontology; we can see in an image a process of signification. While his work is indispensable to the project of reading images, there is not time here to go into the language of code Barthes has created for interpreting the rhetoric of the image. Suffice to say that although images have their own specificity, their own linguistic and semiotic code, their own language and signs, they also have meaning beyond the edges of the frame. It is this meaning—the cultural rather than the implicit—that a spectral discursive reading of representation can tease out.

That images, or texts of representation, have meaning beyond the inherent is obvious when we return to the image of the man and lion that opened this discussion. In advertising such as this, the image has emphatic intent. The advertising image is created in order to sell a product, therefore the attributes or signifieds of that product have to be transmitted as clearly as possible. Advertising is created for optimum accessibility and readability. Whatever the visual content of an advertising image, the meaning will be conveyed as clearly as possible. If it is not, the advertiser compromises his ability to incite consumption of the advertised product. If the image of a man and lion did not culturally signify the qualities mentioned in the linguistic message of the Plume advertisement—strength, reliability, and so on—it is unlikely that such an image would have been relied upon to convey the message that Plume motor oil should be the consumer's desired choice. That an advertising executive approved the image of the man and lion to sell motor oil and that the advertisement continued to run in magazines suggests that there was some level of cultural

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4For a thorough explanation of this function of post-structuralist discourse, in particular how it differs from traditional readings of representation, see Craig Owens, Beyond Recognition: Representation, Power, and Culture, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1992.
5Mitchell, "Representation", p. 21.
understanding that such an image would indicate the qualities of the product and not just of the man in the image himself.

Advertising also performs a specific and identifiable task: it asks the individual to buy a product. In doing so, and in the twentieth century in particular, this task encourages the individual to experience what Stuart Ewen, in his history of advertising, calls “a self conscious perspective that he had previously been socially and psychically denied.” 7 The historical reader of the Plume advertisement is asked not only to buy that particular brand of oil then, but also to understand himself (meant gender specifically here) as aspiring to or embodying the characteristics of the lion tamer. My intent is to use these types of visual advertising representation in conjunction with linguistic/written ones as Janice Winship describes: to conceptualise representations “in their external relations, especially in their relation to the social reader and to other discourses.” 8 Both advertising and editorial modes can be seen as extending the invitation for self-realisation identified by Ewen. While editorial representations do not, strictly speaking, sell a product, their inclusion in popular culture forms is arguably as much to sell the product of the newspaper or journal as it is to present information.

If the historian reader pays close attention to context, to the historical specificity of the ideological fields within which representations work, then the task of identifying the ‘intelligible body’ from the image of the individual body, becomes, if not less complex, then less fraught with difficulty. 9 As such, I will now turn to the specific historical and cultural context in which images of man and lion, of boxer and beast, emerged and drew together understandings of masculinity and the (sexual) body.

(im)printed culture

In a contribution to a 1988 Australian cultural history collection, historian John Rickard suggests that the historical tropes of ‘high’ and ‘popular’ should be dispensed with when examining cultural artefacts. Rickard suggests that although certain cultural forms (the theatre for example) addressed specific socio-economic class audiences, they were widely attended. Thus, despite any restrictive cultural pretensions, events such as these constituted popular forms of cultural performance. 10 An alternative

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9 The term ‘intelligible body’ comes from Susan Bordo, “Reading the Slender Body” and I use it to refer to the normalised, socially useful form of the body which is presented in a range of discourses, as the goal of self-management.
term to describe entertainment forms, one that avoids the presumptions of the use of 'high' and 'popular’ is mass culture, although this is accompanied by its own problems of presumption. Here I will rely mostly on the term popular for the sole reason that inter-war serial publications and newspapers were widely accessible and widely read by many segments of the Australian population. By the turn of the twentieth century, Australians had reached literacy levels of ninety-five per cent and at least one oral history project has shown that a significant number of Australians received at least one weekly, and often one daily, newspaper. Pinning down the readership of newspapers is a near impossible task. Circulation numbers—such as the 200,000 figure trumpeted by Smith's Weekly in 1927—do not accurately represent a newspaper’s social currency. Consumer purchase is only the start of a paper's circulation, not the extent of it.

In the print industry, the establishment of the fast rotary press in the last years of the nineteenth century meant that, by the twentieth, the modern visual format of the newspaper with its spacious layout, mass reproduced photography, and cheap cost was adapted by most Australian serials. Throughout the inter-war years daily newspaper sales increased three per cent per capita for the period overall. While wireless was rapidly becoming established in Australian homes after 1921, and has a complex history of its own as a cultural product (along with movies), I will be focusing exclusively on printed images, rather than audio or celluloid ones. One reader remembered of an Australian daily, “wherever you went, in the snooker rooms, barber shops, any sporting venues, The Labour Daily was always there.” The power and significance of representations does not accrete as a result of quantity as much as a result of the extent to which a representation symbolises the anxieties and desires that surround it. Nonetheless, a widely repeated image is likely to be one that, according to its creators, was assessed as effective, one that struck a chord. Thus popularity and power often (but not always and not thoroughly) implicate each other.

The newspapers and serials I will turn to shortly were ones that were ‘always there’. The Bulletin, Daily Telegraph, Sun, The Arrow, Truth, and Smith's Weekly—the main sources for this discussion—published throughout the inter-war years and had fairly wide general circulation, primarily in urban areas. The last three of these journals were less widely distributed but certainly had strong cultural purchase.

15 Lyons and Taksa, Australian Readers Remember, p. 76.
Readers interviewed by Lyons and Taksa recall *Truth* and a similar journal *Beckett’s Budget*—that had a shorter print run, from 1927 to 1930, but massive notoriety—being banned from respectable homes. Each of these journals at one time or another during the 1920s and 1930s was subject to censorship and obscenity trials. Although they were seen as illicit reading and caused occasional community uproar—or perhaps because of this—*Truth, Beckett’s Budget, and Smith’s Weekly* were still widely accessible and often read and circulated through communities on the sly.\(^\text{16}\) For all sources used here I examined a sample of issues from each year between 1920 and 1938, unless otherwise noted.

### advertised man

Central to the production of newspapers and serials in this period and for the first time was mass media advertising. Major companies rapidly monopolised the publication of newspapers in Australia after World War One and advertising increasingly became the financial backbone of serial publications.\(^\text{17}\) In most daily and weekly publications, advertisements ran in columns at the edge of each page. These advertisements positioned audiences as consumers, not only of the newspaper but of the products it promoted. The first Australian Ad. Men’s [sic] conference was held in 1918. At the second two years later, an address was given by Elton Mayo, a Queensland University psychology professor who later went on to an illustrious career in the United States as an industrial psychologist. Mayo identified a role for the advertising man that, while certainly an undercurrent in pre-twentieth century advertising, was now considered openly as the priority of the industry. He addressed his audience with the following:

> The ad. expert is an educator in the broadest and highest sense of the term. His task is the persuasion of the people to be civilised ... It is necessary to understand the fear complexes that are disturbing our social serenity. It is not the slightest use meeting Satanism or Bolshevism by organised rage or hate. Your only chance of dealing with these things is by research, by the discovering first and foremost of the cause of this mental condition.\(^\text{18}\)

Thus the ad. man positioned himself as a social scientist, using the knowledge of ‘scientific rationality’ not only to define his reader but to incite the reader to identify himself in the ad’s representation and thus to buy the product that was offered.\(^\text{19}\)

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\(^{16}\) Lyons and Taksa, *Australian Readers Remember*, pp. 166–78.

\(^{17}\) For a detailed history of the structure of Australian mass media in this century, see Humphrey McQueen, *Australia’s Media Monopolies*, Widescope, Camberwell, 1977.

\(^{18}\) Quoted in Stephen, “Agents of Consumerism”, p. 82.

\(^{19}\) Although it has been suggested by historians, including David Walker and Lyons and Taksa themselves, that reading was seen as an effeminate practice, and by Ann Stephen that female consumers were the main
social reach of the ad. man/scientist was considered to be vast; in 1924 the *Australian Advertiser's Manual and Newspaper Directory* informed its readers that "Practically half of the inhabitants can be reached through the principal metropolitan newspapers." The professionalisation of advertising was rapid as well; in the same year that Tasman Lovell became Australia's first chair of psychology at Sydney University he entered the debate on how to advertise effectively and efficiently. In a statement made in the 1923 *Advertiser's Manual and Newspaper Directory* and re-published the next year in *Business Efficiency* magazine, Lovell urged his advertising men:

> Become versed in the study of instinctive urges, of native tendencies for the need to assert himself, 'to keep his end up', which is an aspect of the social instinct that causes him to purchase beyond what is required.

What types of representations were used to achieve this goal and what did they say about how men and their bodies were perceived by Australians? Images range from family men who provided and enjoyed the pleasures of heterosexual family life (a type that would be familiar to adolescents from the sex advice literature discussed in the previous chapter), and the family man who is so thoroughly domesticated as to have lost his sense of masculinity, also known as the 'man I pity most', to normative and deviant versions of an alternative masculinity, represented by the 'dynamic' man and the 'brute'. These representations focused on the vitality of manhood, the former representing proper use of the essence of manhood and the latter—the brute—representing masculine vigour gone awry. Across this range there is a continuity in the focus on the proper and improper use of the male body: whether in relation to women, to other men, or just to his own image in the mirror the male viewer of these images is encouraged to view his body and its uses as something vital to his sense of manhood and social importance.

Two types of imagery of maleness dominated advertising in the Australian popular press: men in a family setting and men alone. The type of presentation of masculinity that dominates in today’s mass culture—young, (hetero)sexually situated men, monogamous perhaps but certainly not married—appear much less frequently in the inter-war literature. I would suggest, however, that representations of adult men appealed as much to men-to-be to the men who had, through their own journey of adolescence, already decided which type of man they wanted to be and the means to achieve it. For adult viewers these images may have acted as reinforcements to the

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type of masculinity they had achieved. For male viewers who had not yet achieved mature masculinity (and were in the process of defining themselves in relation to such a subjectivity) these images represented the possibilities that flowed from a successful journey to manhood. Adolescents were encouraged in particular (through the disciplinary training of tutelary discourses and the incitements of contractual forms of discourse) to see themselves in relation to the social as it is and the social as \textit{it will be} when they reach adulthood. It is for this reason that much of the discussion of this chapter will focus on representations of adult masculinity. These virile and weak men were those who the adolescent was constantly encouraged to keep in mind as models of what to strive for and what to avoid. As a result, their significance lies not only in the types of adult masculinity they exemplify but their engagement with young men and the possibilities of adolescent males' journey to manhood.

The act of defining these representations in schematic categories such as 'family man' makes them more ideologically rigid and simplistic than they appear in the context of the newspaper or journal itself. Yet a large number of advertised products in inter-war publications utilised very similar imagery to sell their 'philosophy of life'.22 While not suggesting that other forms of representation did not appear, it is what I term the 'family man' and the 'dynamic man' that dominated the type of advertising imagery that presented an ideal subjectivity.

\textit{the family man}

The family man was depicted as just that: happily situated within domestic life, attending to children, and gaining social approval from family members rather than male peers. It is possible that such a form of representation targeted women, who were likely the primary purchasers of the products associated with such an image. This form of advertising appeared in male-oriented journals such as the \textit{Bulletin}, however, as well as in advertising for products such as pianos and cameras. Major purchases such as these would have necessitated the involvement of the family breadwinner in the purchase decision. The 'family man' image also sold products for which men were undoubtedly the purchaser, tobacco for example. In one instance, a tobacco advertisement presented the image of a man contentedly smoking after dinner. The man is not alone in his den or 'male space' but surrounded by a wife and several children, one of whom sits on his knee as he puffs away.23 This suggests that the 'family man' was seen to hold the attention of men as much as women.

\footnote{Walter Pitkin, a professor of marketing at Columbia University, introduced this term in his writings in the 1920s on modes of advertising. See Stuart Ewen, \textit{Captains of Consciousness}, chapter 3.}
\footnote{\textit{Bulletin}, February 20, 1922, p. 15. This ad appeared regularly throughout 1922.}
One interesting example of the family man representation comes in the advertising of Lifebuoy soap. Lifebuoy developed a series of advertisements in the early 1930s that depicted short narratives of either a woman or a man struggling with, and overcoming the social embarrassment of, body odour ('B.O.'). Running in the Melbourne and Sydney editions of Truth (and elsewhere) throughout the 1930s (and in later years as well), the ads were drawn in a cartoon style and consisted of a three frame narrative in which the problem of B.O. is solved for the protagonist by the suggestion that he or she use Lifebuoy soap. Print ads for Lifebuoy soap that targeted women suggested that the woman who uses that brand is rewarded for her choice with romance. Imagery of 'before and after' shows a single woman being sneered at behind her back by her peers, who lament that the woman's body odour prevents her from getting romantically involved. After the woman uses Lifebuoy she is depicted dancing with a handsome man. In another, the final frame depicts a suited man making a romantic overture to the freshly scrubbed woman.

In contrast, Lifebuoy offered males a very different kind of heterosociality. It is one that represents not the promise of, but the logical conclusion to, the dance with the handsome stranger offered in the female protagonist's narrative. The 'B.O' conscious male user of Lifebuoy is rewarded, in one ad, with a fiancée. Instead of emphasising the sexual possibilities of such an outcome (as the female directed advertisement obliquely does), the final frame of the advertisement depicts the next door neighbours' child acting as a surrogate child for the couple, who now form the family trinity. This final frame is the clincher, it is where the promises of Lifebuoy are shown fully realised. Other versions of the Lifebuoy advertisement—all written by 'Steve'—show the male protagonist obtaining traditional masculine success through a promotion at work. Responsibility and respectability is indicated in each of these narratives; the achievement of the soap user is adulthood, marriage, fatherhood. Interestingly, it is the Lifebuoy narrative of the male rather than the female in which the hetero-normative sexual and social subject—married with child—is depicted explicitly.24

Stead's Review was a bi-weekly journal that published until 1934 and declared itself, "an expression of the Australian ideal; it is the harbinger of the dawn of a New Era, and shadows forth the ideals of the Commonwealth in literature and in Art, in Social Progress and the conduct of life".25 In a 1930 editorial, the journal laments the status of the married man:

24Truth, January 28, 1933.
Fatherhood, on the usual plan, places man in a false position. To his family he appears a hybrid worthy of Greek mythology; he is half God almighty, half beast of burden. However worthy his intentions, he must appear as the giver of bread, the enforcer of un-explained laws; half-familiar, half-unknown, a being of another plane. 26

This suggests that men may have been perplexed by their status in the domestic household, but the reference to 'beast of burden' indicates that men certainly saw themselves as bearing a domestic burden of some type. Despite Marilyn Lake's assertion that men in this period were strangers in their own homes, this lament demonstrates that men were a practical and emotional presence in domestic life although perhaps a tentative and bewildered one.27

In advertising, men's domestic role was not nearly as tentatively portrayed as the above comments suggest. Copious imagery of happy fathers sold products both domestic and non-domestic. A 1928 advertisement in the Sydney publication Smith's Weekly, which called itself a defender of the people and was primarily aimed at a male readership, proclaimed "Men Are Changing". While the smaller type noted that the change was in relation to the choice of shaving cream products, the prominent positioning of eye-catching headline indicates that re-presenting men was a worthy project in which advertisers were engaged. The embrace of the domesticated man and widespread use of the idealised image of family life was not out of context with publicly expressed attitudes about masculinity. The judgement of the commissioners of the 1928 Royal Commission on Family Allowances that "distaste for the national duties of husbandhood and fatherhood" was "unmanly" tied masculine success with domestic bliss.28 The Royal Commission criticised the findings of an earlier basic wage commission as having been too lenient on single men and on fathers who shirked their bread winning commitment. Single men, the report of the 1928 commission stressed, earn more than their fair share at the expense of the married man and thus threaten the 'unity of interest' of men and women to marry and procreate.29

'the man i pity most'

The family man was one of several popular representations of masculinity in inter-war periodicals. Another image of man that was often positioned as a companion image to the family man frequently appeared in editorial commentary alongside the

idealised advertiser’s image or as a set-up in advertising a product that would guarantee a virile manhood. The unsuccessful form of the family man was subjected to enormous ridicule in editorial and cartoon commentary in mass publications. A 1928 advertisement for a physical training book in *Beckett’s Budget* referred to him as “The Man I Pity Most”.

This man was portrayed as naive to the manipulations of young women, emasculated to the point of slavish devotion to females, and as a victim of modernity socially, physically, and economically. In 1922 Sydney’s daily newspaper the *Sun*, published a reader’s poem that expressed the lament of the pitiful, and pitiable, man. Its final lines read:

> Ah! husbands all, could we recall
> That paradise he made
> When women did as they were bid
> And actually obeyed!
> By husbands free, all wives could be
> In Ina’s time coerced.
> Today, alack! they all hit back,
> And often do it first!

Such an image was used for comic relief and is not necessarily contradictory to the image of the happy and secure domestic man. Indeed, if ‘The Man I Pity Most’ was to induce laughter in its audience, that audience would have to recognise the type of man being lampooned in order to identify the reasons why the image was comical. The emasculated man does not have so much a different subjectivity than the family man as an exaggerated version of the same. The ‘family man’ and the ‘Man I Pity Most’ represent two versions of the socially productive masculinity of breadwinner and domestic presence, the former a successful, disciplined and moderate version and the latter an excessive, weakened, and indulgent version. While the idealised family man—who taught his children how to use a Kodak Brownie camera and needed a mintie to get through the dramas of tending to a wailing baby—responsibly balanced the duties of bread winner and beast of burden, the pitiful man was distinguishable only by his lack of success at such a task.

Images of the type represented by ‘The Man I Pity Most’ regularly featured on the cartoon pages of the nation’s newspapers. In advertising images, however, the pitiable man was used to sell only one type of consumer product, although it was a product that was promoted relentlessly. The product, in various forms of lotion, potion, pill, or physical regimen, was, put most simply, male vitality. Through the advertising of vitality restorers, Australian newspaper and serial readers were presented with two images of masculinity very different from the idealised family

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31 *Sun*, March 10, 1922, p. 6.
man. The first, who appeared often as a sort of 'before' figure in advertisements that juxtaposed images of users and non-users of the offered product, was the pitiful man mentioned above. ‘The Man I Pity Most’ tagline headlined a full page advertisement for a product (which, from only vague allusions, seems to have been a booklet) that revealed the secrets of muscular strength. It was only in the cause of vitality restoration that the pitiful man appeared in advertising representations although a similarly feminised and weakened image of masculinity was common in cartoon depiction. What the pitiful man image in personal improvement advertising drew the reader into, however, was a very different version of masculinity, one in which success is signified not through the achievement of domestic success but by the use of the male body to signify that perfect behavioural balance between emasculation and brutishness.

come on man, get mad at yourself! 32

Advertising for personal products and personal improvement frequently used the imagery of before and after to highlight the restorative qualities of the advertised product. It is here that the pitiful man (the image representing men’s fears of what they are really like) and the dynamic man (representing what men aspire to be) can be seen to exemplify the physical effect of masculine self discipline (and the disciplining of consumption). One example that appeared in many of the sources used is an advertisement for Eno Epsom salts, headlined “Mr. Can’t and Mr. Can.” The former is depicted as an overweight, badly dressed man asleep in a deck chair. ‘Mr. Can’, meanwhile, is shown perched atop a high diving board, muscled chest proudly puffed as he prepares to dive. 33 Promoters of personal improvement products used a similar strategy. In The Australian Journal, a weekly publication of short stories aimed at a sophisticated readership that claimed to provide, “amusing and instructive literature, science, and the arts,” an advertisement for a ‘personal vibrator’ for men appeared throughout 1923. Touted as a cure for the classic modern maladies neuritis and lost vitality, the advertisement shows a man at a cramped office desk with his head helplessly in his hands. After using the vibrator, a well muscled, bare-chested version of the former man luxuriates in a pastoral setting. 34

A series of advertisements that utilised the image of the pitiful and dynamic man particularly effectively appeared in almost every edition of the weekly journal the Bulletin between 1920 and 1922 and then less frequently until 1928. In their variation

32 This was the tag line for an exercise program advertisement in Labour Daily, January 16, 1932, p. 1.
34 The Australian Journal, December 1, 1923, p. iii.
and juxtaposition of images of masculinity as well as text and photographed image they speak to a public imagining of the male body and the character of the masculine. The product on offer was a series of postal order booklets. One of these booklets was presented as a "postal course in health and strength culture"; another promised to teach purchasers how to box. In each, there appeared a photograph image of Reginald 'Snowy' Baker who had been a champion boxer before the war and was now a Hollywood movie star. In each advertisement his image is captioned with the words, "All-Round Champion Athlete of Australia". In some photographs Baker wears a singlet, in others he is shirtless. In each, even though reproduction quality of photography of the period was still relatively poor, his considerable musculature and flexed pose provide the visual draw of the advertisement. Secondary to this image in terms of visual pull, is the headline that appears at the top of each of these advertisements. In a June 1920 issue of the Bulletin, the text reads "Don't Be a Tailormade Man". Below, the textual blurb admonishes modern men who rely on clothes to make them look manly. The next week, another image of Snowy Baker in a fighting pose clad in a white singlet appeared (see Plate 4). Here the text praises the type of man who can rely on the manliness of his body when he needs to. A week later, another admonishment to the modern, feminised man: "Why Don't You Learn to Use Your Hands?"35

Both of these advertisements juxtapose an image of a modern, urban Australian man—a weak, feminised 'brain-worker' who has lost touch with his ability to achieve physically—with the barely contained muscularity of the poised boxer. A later image in the Bulletin reiterates the scorn for the 'tailor made man': in a cartoon titled "the weaker sex", a man asks a female book shop assistant, "Have you got a book called Man the Master?". The young woman replies, "Fiction department on the other side, sir."36 There is certainly an element of misogyny in this and in many other cartoons and editorials in the Bulletin. That the focus in many of these representations is on the weakened masculine, however, rather than the overbearing feminine, should not be underestimated.37 While there are many examples of humour arising from the modern, masculinised woman's attempt to control men in the cartoons and editorial commentary of Australian inter-war publications, there are as many that play upon the implicit weakness of the modern man.

In the same month that Snowy Baker's advertising men proclaimed disdain for tailor made men, readers and editors of Sydney's Sun newspaper were debating the

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36Bulletin, April 23, 1930, p. 28.
physical virtues of male beach goers. While there was some debate about the quality of male bodies on the beach, the most widespread sentiment, and one that the paper’s editorialist ‘Philosophy Jack’ officially endorsed, was that male seaside resort goers were physically smaller and less impressive because they were brain workers.38 Many advertisements for vitality restorers explicitly addressed business men, presumably because it was these men who would be feeling most strongly the nervous strain and weakening effects of brainwork, modernity, and lack of physical activity.39 Snowy Baker’s solution was to teach the followers of his physical health courses to ‘become a dark horse’. The 1920 advertisement that has this as its headline goes on to venerate the “quiet, inoffensive kind of chap who, under the spur of necessity, could administer a thorough and artistic thrashing to a big, blustering opponent.”40

The goal, it would seem, was not to actually become that blustering opponent; such a man was loathed as much as the modern man was pitied. The attribute that was presented as most admirable in the advertisements of Snowy Baker as well as many other ads for vitality potions and devices was not sheer masculine strength but the ability to draw upon it when necessary and to contain it at all other times. One of Snowy Baker’s ads refers to this quality as, “the secrets of those happy exceptional days when everything seems to go right, when you have an unwonted sense of vigour.”41 Male readers were urged to be prepared to meet the bully; to have the masculine resources to defeat such a character without becoming one oneself. If a man held that quality of vigour in his body, he was seen to have protection against both the feminising effects of his modern, urban lifestyle and the dangerous, out of control masculinity of the blustering bully. Protection against both of these qualities—want of, and excess of, masculine physical potential—was equally important. Advertisements emphasised the ‘gentlemanly qualities’ of strength and fighting ability; as one advertisement for jiu jitsu instruction declared, “You Don’t Have To Be a Brute.”42

The prevalence of this kind of advertising and product in inter-war publications suggests that anxieties about modernity, and its effects on men in particular, were a vivid part of the cultural imagination. Advertisements for nerve tonics, electric vibrators, pills, extract of monkey glands and physical regimens like Snowy Baker’s directed explicitly at men as consumers of these products (or, at least, as the subject requiring them) appeared in every edition of the journals and papers

38Sun, March 11, p. 4; March 13, p. 6; March 15, p. 6. See Introduction, pp. 1–5.
41Bulletin, January 25, 1928, p. 34.
42Beckett’s Budget, August 3, 1928, p. 22.
discussed here. In some—Beckett's Budget, Truth, and Bulletin—this kind of advertising framed virtually every page. Not surprisingly, these were the journals with the strongest male oriented readership. In each, sports pages appeared well before arts or domestic pages.

While issues of class readership intervened in the representation of brute masculinity, it is interesting that the advertising of masculinity enhancers (or restorers) featured across the range of mass publications discussed here. Appeals were framed slightly differently depending on the source, but the basic appeal—that one should cultivate one’s body in a way that would command respect and signify both strength and self discipline—was the same. The tag line “get mad at yourself”, for instance, appeared only in the working class paper Labour Daily. Other publications advertised the same exercise program with a different text, one that emphasised the weakened condition of the white collar worker. Instances of textual disparity in advertising are far less common, however, than ones of affinity across publications between a variety of products that drew on the fear of being short on the essential volatility of masculinity, and on the kind of development and discipline that controls it.

Through the appeal to his masculine needs, advertising and representational strategies re-configured the male reader into what Ann Stephen calls a ‘massified’ individual. The male reader who viewed Snowy Baker’s inflated torso situates himself in relation to that image and may have become “beset by anxieties over his ... youth, sexual desirability, marital relations and social acceptability.” Stephen goes on to argue that the dominant character of this individual is powerlessness: “the subject was defined only in terms of the judgement of others and affirmed through consumption.”

This argument has two important contributions to make to an understanding of the commodified individual: one in relation to the represented individual and another in relation to the process of commodification. Post-World War One, an enormous number of male consumers returned to the Australian domestic marketplace, a shift that reconsolidated men's position in the emerging twentieth century mass market for goods and services. As the production line and scientific production management massified a market, advertising too massified their strategies of selling such goods to what they perceived as a particularly soft market. What I want to focus on here is the constitution of such a masculine subject less in relation to the field of consumption than to that of masculinity and femininity.

Histories of advertising suggest that a change occurred in the nature and context of advertisements after the First World War. I have already discussed the

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application of social scientific theory and models to the business of advertising, and the targeting of consumers. Historian Grant McCracken suggests that the information and influence available to consumers after the opening of the twentieth century engaged new sexual aesthetics and motifs to add value to products. This concept has been explored quite thoroughly in relation to the advertising of femininity and female products. A plethora of scholarship reiterates Stuart Ewen’s assertion that advertisements act as, “a constant reminder to a woman of the primacy of her sexuality, which was central to her economic survival as well as a source of insecurity and competition.” Although rarely articulated, this statement is no less applicable to the male subject and respectable masculinity than it is to women and femininity. In an historical moment when bread winning was widely promoted as the prime task of manhood, the achievement of a particular type of masculinity—through the success of bread winning without compromising one’s masculine vigour—contributed to the economic success of the male. While not constituting a representational hegemony, the image of the domestic breadwinner was one of a number of representational participants in the contest between images of dynamic men alone (and the related image of the adventurer, which I will not engage with here) and men fully engaged in the social machinery. Both sets of images presented self-discipline as the means to achieve success.

While I refer to the twenty year period of the inter-war years as a moment, I do not wish to suggest that representations of masculinity were uniform over that period. This will become more obvious in the next section of this chapter, which looks at the representation of out of control masculinity, the ‘lust maniac’ or ‘brute’. In the field of advertising, however, there was considerable conformity of representation across the period. In the early 1930s, the advertising of male vitality products decreased somewhat from the saturation levels of the 1920s but this change does not necessarily indicate a shift in representational strategies. In 1934 the Federal Health Council passed legislation that curtailed the advertisement of ‘extravagant or misleading advertisements’ for therapeutic devices, patent medicine, and venereal disease cures. Although space prohibits anything approaching a comprehensive discussion here of Australian censorship history, moral panic and concerns over the enormous numbers of American pulp publications entering the country in the late 1920s and early 1930s led to an increase in censorship of both domestic and imported popular publications. By 1935, censors were blacking out half a million advertisements a month in Australia’s circulating publications. While this had the strongest effect on imported

45Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness*, p. 179.
American publications (the elimination of which was the target of the legislative changes), the advertising content of Australian domestic publications also changed as a result.\textsuperscript{46}

Censorship of the advertised image of man reduced the frequency of the pitiable and dynamic man imagery. Despite this externally imposed constraint, the array of images offered to inter-war newspaper and journal readers was remarkably consistent across publication audience and time. Images of masculinity that do not accord with the categories above did, of course, appear. I do not wish to suggest that dynamic, pitiful, and family men were the only types of masculine images available in inter-war representations. One such discordant masculine representation will be discussed shortly. Heterosociality without domesticity (and with sexuality), which dominates today's advertising imagery, was also used to sell a limited range of products. This type of representation appears most often in magazines that had a self-consciously high-brow readership, or a strong appeal to both sexes, magazines such as \textsl{Table Talk} and the \textsl{Australian Journal}. The former, billed as 'a journal for men and women', devoted its pages to society gossip, turf, and fashion and was incorporated after its 1939 demise by the \textsl{Australian Women's Weekly}. The latter transformed itself from a cultural magazine to an almost exclusively literary one soon after 1920.

In the images offered by these publications, and in other representations of heterosociality without domesticity, the scenario is desexualised. No loincloth-clad young men appear in these representations. The muscular dynamism that characterises images of men alone can represent something quite different when in a heterosexual context. The vitality of the dynamic man is separated from male brutality only by self control. If, through the temptations of the heterosexual scenario, a dynamic man forgoes his control he quickly slips into quite a different subject category, one that came to prominence in mass publications in the latter 1920s and into the 1930s and which contributed to the cultural imagining of men othered by madness and badness.

\textit{the brute}

In 1928 an anonymous writer in the \textsl{Bulletin} asserted that boys' interest in newspapers develops in the pubescent years, and for particular reasons: "his first concern is with the daily record of fatalities and accidents. Of course this is merely another example of the savage lurking in us all, but more on the surface of pre-

\footnote{\textsuperscript{46}For a thorough discussion of the history of government censorship in Australia, see Peter Coleman, \textit{Obscenity, Blasphemy, Sedition: Censorship in Australia}, The Jacaranda Press, Brisbane, 1974.}
adolescent years." By this time, the ‘savage’ not only lurked in the mind of readers but positively stalked across the pages of Australian daily and weekly newspapers. This new image of aggressively out-of-control male sexuality provided what United States historian Estelle Freedman has called a “focus for a complex redefinition of sexual boundaries.” In her work on the Depression-era cultural panic spurred by the male sexual psychopath, Freedman suggests that the cultural presentation of the male sexual self as a predator helped to recast sexual boundaries of pleasure and danger.

Here I would like to make a similar argument regarding the positioning of an out-of-control rendering of masculinity in inter-war Australia. The image of a man—labelled a lust murderer, sex brute, or lust maniac—focused attention and moral concern on the behaviour of men rather than women. This was not only a significant departure from the nineteenth century emphasis on maintaining female purity but also an important contribution to the modern understanding of sexual order and disorder on a personal and cultural level. I do not want to suggest that ‘the man I pity most’, identified in David Walker’s work as the neurasthenic, was wholly superseded by an image of brute masculinity. As mentioned, an image of neurasthenic man, although more strongly associated with pre-World War One advertising imagery, carried over into the ‘man I pity most’ of inter-war advertising strategies, mostly to contrast a vitality lost with a type of masculinity now able to be captured in a bottle. More importantly, the neurasthenic man was no longer reconstituted as a family man, but more often than not as a new imaginary breed of male, able to hold down a breadwinning position as well as box successfully when the situation demanded it.

As with the sexual advice texts to marrieds discussed in the previous chapter, images of brute men implicated the behaviour of adolescent males as well. Because the path of adolescence was being constructed during this time as one from which there was no return (and no detours that were not dangerous and deviant), images of men who were deviant in adulthood related back to the process of adolescence that got them there.

Historian Carol Christ has foreshadowed this investigation with her question, “If woman in fact should be a sexual creature what kind of beast should man himself become?” The image of the brute that was so popular during the inter-war years

introduced the kind of 'beast' modern man might become if unbound from the normative sexual subjectivities of the post-World War One era.

Lurid headlines were a staple feature of tabloid journals such as Beckett's Budget, Truth, and Sydney's Daily Guardian newspaper. Lyons and Taksa suggest that such publications had a substantial readership in the working and lower middle classes, as well as a large clandestine readership within a broad cross-section of Australian society. Certainly it was this section of the Australian serial publishing industry that presented its product as one for the people: Beckett's Budget proclaimed itself to be 'Australia's Weekly' and Smith's Weekly was described by its official historian as "A Public Conscience, a crutch for the fallen, the champion of the underdog". When Beckett's Budget was liquidated in 1930, after three years as the most notorious publication in the country, it was acquired by Labour Daily, which suggests the audience affiliations between the two publications.

It is certainly not surprising that populist publications would rely more heavily on representations of animalistic masculinity than those declaring their high culture affiliations. Anger, incontinence, and brute physicality were certainly culturally linked to the working class man who was seen as uneducated and unrestrained in myriad ways, among them the sexual. In the years following World War One into the 1930s the content of attention grabbing headlines slowly changed, from stories of prostitutes and 'yellow peril' to stories of deviant men. Moreover, the type of headline that had defined a certain type of Australian publication seeped into other publications and all agreed that the phenomenon of the deviant sex pervert was on the increase. Deviancy was most frequently inflicted upon women or young girls and was almost consistently sexual in presentation, if not in deed.

Brute masculinity is an important representational strategy because of the way that it situates a particular configuration of male sexuality in relation to 'normal' masculinity and healthy heterosexuality. Publications presented only certain criminals as lust maniacs, a label that was not always automatically applied to cases of sexual violence. The Melbourne edition of Truth, for example, reported on the 1922 murder case of twelve year old Alma Tirtscke for over a month. The initial report branded the crime as one of a 'lust murderer' yet nowhere in that, or subsequent, reportage was it suggested that the case involved any element of sexual violence.52

The same month, the Sydney Sun defended the morality of a chauffeur who had murdered his female employer after she made "improper advances" towards

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52 Truth, January 7, 14, 25, February 25, 1922.
him. While the cultural positioning of the victims—in the former case an innocent child and in the second a woman presumably of some wealth and with power over her murderer—should not be discounted as a factor in the way these two stories were reported, another factor is of some import as well. It is the position of the murderer. In the first case he overwhelmed a vulnerable and weak female for no apparent reason; as the Truth reportage continually insisted, this murderer was out of control. The chauffeur murderer, one the other hand, had been provoked by a woman with power over him and his actions were in defence of his sexual propriety. This was a case of a man defending his masculinity against its own bestial potential, an effort that the Sun suggested should be applauded. The different positioning of the females involved in these crimes influenced the way in which such crimes were reported, but so too did the very different framing of the motivation of the male murderers. Men who killed were not automatically lust maniacs; that label demanded a particular type of crime, a particular contravention of sexual norms.

In 1924, a Sydney judge presiding over a case of domestic assault accepted the defendant’s plea for mercy, saying, “It is not the merits of the man, but the demerits of the woman” that precipitated the crime. This attitude certainly did not disappear from the newspapers, or the culture that created them but in the following years less and less public attention was paid to the ‘demerits’ of the women involved in crime and more to those of the male perpetrators. This did not preclude misogyny in mass image or judicial decree by any means but simply cast the net of propriety into different sexual territory. Women were not suddenly ‘off the hook’ for their social or sexual behaviour. Rather, I would suggest that men were hooked into new modes of presentation and behaviour.

In a thorough history of sex crimes in Australia, Judith Allen identified a trend in legal discourse that is also reflected in inter-war newspaper and serial reportage. In the years following World War One, the age of defendants in sex crimes increased and the age of their victims decreased. As well, ‘the stranger’ became the largest group of male sex crime defendants. The focus shifted, in law and popular image, from defending adult women against men they knew to defending the outrage of innocents by a fringe member of society, a psychopathic, feeble minded or perverse male outsider. Interestingly, as the odds of male arrest, trial and conviction decreased throughout the interwar years, the odds of opening an Australian newspaper to find a sensational story of male brutality increased.

53Sun, January 1, 1922, p. 6.
54Daily Guardian, November 6, 1924, p. 7.
Publications themselves offered several explanations for this increase. In 1924, the *Daily Guardian*, hardly immune to featuring such things, blamed the salacious serial stories and film advertisements and stories that featured in its rival, the *Daily Telegraph*, for providing a moral drug traffic to the nation. *Truth* located the source of the problem a little closer to home, suggesting that the ‘alarming increase in moral laxity’ was the result of fading family traditions:

> The root of the evil is to be found in the general proneness to moral laxity. The old standards, which practice showed to be a sound basis for public well-being, have gone by the board. The things our mothers and fathers held sacred are now considered of small account. Even the marriage tie has become a fragile thing, easily broken, and falling into increasing disuse.56

This last sentence is the most interesting for it positions marriage as the binding agent of social and sexual order. As marriage becomes a discarded institution, this implies, so too are its markers of sexual responsibility, heterosexuality, respectability, and productive living thrown aside.

Following the common practice of confusing the number of sex crimes with the breadth of their reportage, *Beckett’s Budget* declared in 1928 that the increase in such crimes was a result of the ‘ephemeral lust’ unleashed by war. Once men had engaged in violent behaviour in the course of battle, newspapers and judges argued, their taste for brutality remained after the battle was over. This was also a common association made in inter-war mass publications. The glamorisation of the Digger that featured heavily in *Bulletin* and *The Arrow* immediately following World War One increasingly turned to lament as the war retreated into the past.57 The lament was not so much for the fighting men, who had once spoken for themselves in these journals but increasingly spoke (and were spoken of) no more, but for the post-War deflation of morals, energy, and social well-being of the nation.

Unlike the Victorian era, when the notion of female purity constrained men’s presumed bestiality, the legitimately (married) sexually desiring modern woman provided no check on male behaviour. ‘Lust’, or a respectable version of it at least, was an available option for women. This shifted the responsibility of disciplining male sexuality away from women and toward men themselves. Inter-war publications burst with representations and commentary that would restrain men from exercising their hidden, regressive sexual tendencies. In an editorial that attempted to answer the question, “What is a Gentleman?”, the *Bulletin* noted that the reader may complain that the offered definition was all negative. “[T]hat is so”, the author

57 *The Arrow* featured articles written by Victoria Cross recipients but had discontinued the practice by 1928. Similarly, the *Bulletin*, which covered soldier’s issues quite heavily immediately after the war, phased out that coverage after 1924.
(re)presenting masculinity 206

retorts, “for a gentlemen is himself a negation. He is one who refrains from doing things”.58 While the sarcasm here cannot be denied, it is certainly true that in the discussion of masculinity of the brute type, the manly man is distinguished by restraint of his naturally explosive masculinity.

When men acted out these ‘natural’ tendencies violently, it was reported as a fiendish return to ‘medieval savagery’. Men who directed their masculine vigour in socially acceptable ways—into body management, or expression in sport—were considered, despite the cultivation and prominence of their physical masculinity, to be ‘beautiful specimen[s] of athletic manhood”.59 These beautiful specimens—the Snowy Bakers, the anonymous youths squeezing grapes in loincloths, the young man restraining a tiger—allude to the Classical Greek image of the virile youth, an allusion implicitly connecting the male body with not only the virtue and virility or bodily control but with the culture and civilisation of the Greeks to whom Bostock and Nye so favourably compared modern society.

This use of the body image of the young male has been discussed in the context of eugenics in chapter five. It is worth noting in this context, however, the similar equation between virile young (male) bodies and the greatness of a culture (and the homoerotic undertones of such an equation). Fighting in a controlled, supervised, public space was held up to the public imaginary as the most noble and sensual pleasure of the culture. Newspaper editors positioned images of young male bodies wrestling, boxing, and preparing to swim (fighting either another male body or for control of himself over nature) prominently and with headlines that fairly screamed the association. Words such as glorious, romantic, and beatiful pepper the copy of athlete’s photos as frequently as did medieval, savagery, and cave man with photos or stories of men whose beautiful bodies had turned on them and taken control. Wrestling or boxing (or, indeed, any male-male sensual exploration) outside the ring, however, constituted ‘blood lust’ and those who engaged in such violence were taken as examples of maleness dangerously out of control, either overly or wrongly sexual.

Prostitution stories no longer captured the front pages of inter-war newspapers. The Arrow, a Sydney news weekly, pointed out in 1932, “perverts have definitely taken the place of prostitutes,”. This was true not only for the public spaces mentioned in that article, but in the pages of The Arrow and other Australian mass publications.60 The ‘perverts’ who inhabited the cultural imaginary may have been ‘dangerously common’, but they were also a particular, and uncommon, kind of

59Truth, April 30, 1927, p. 3.
60The Arrow was a weekly journal which began as a sports weekly in 1925 but had, by 1932, become a general news weekly with a sports lift-out. See March 11, 1932, p. 7.
man. An article on the 'brutes who prey on the innocence of others', carefully described and vilified this type of man:

It is different when the accused is older and of such an age to fully realise the consequences of his action. And the older he is the more grave the offence. In this category comes the sex pervert. From some abnormality of mind, which is difficult to explain, he seeks out little, unsophisticated girls to satisfy his unnatural desires. He is the man who should be punished, and is punished ... He is born a human vampire and will remain a vampire until death. 61

This statement is preceded by the assertion that blame lies entirely with the female where cases involves younger men. "It is often shown", stresses the author, "that the girl is almost entirely to blame by openly offering opportunities to young boys, who almost naturally in a lot of cases cannot resist the temptation." 62 In other cases too the age of the offender mitigated his responsibility in the crime and the crime’s significance. As J.W. McLachlan asserted in Victoria’s State Parliament, “Under twenty one a normal lad wants protection and advice". 63 After reaching the age of twenty one, these ‘normal lads’ acting in the same manner become ‘designing men’, responsible for the ruin of many women and definitely to blame for their actions. Underlying this assertion is one of the main assumptions made of adolescents: that males are not considered to have reached maturity until twenty one (or thereabouts) while girls reach mental maturity in the earlier stages of puberty and adolescence. Of another defendant in a sexual assault trial in 1928—an adult male, judge H.F.W. Fletcher of the Redfern court referred to the defendant as “this individual—to call him a man would be a misnomer.” 64 What this man was called instead was a brute, and his deviancy came through a kind of over-extension of masculinity, a hyper-sexual subjectivity that breached the boundaries of sexual order. By attacking the innocent, the brute threatened sexual innocence; by attacking sexually with physical force he threatened the sociality of the male body.

The sexual predator was a popular image in inter-war publications. Many papers featured a story of such a crime daily (or in each issue) until the late 1930s when European politics and the second World War pushed the brute off the front page. A pose of moral outrage enabled publications to get away with the salacious coverage that helped sell their product. But the image of the brute did more than that. At a time when sexual standards were rapidly changing, the brute represented popular fears about the consequences of new sexual values. The image of the brute

61 The Arrow, March 11, 1932, p. 5.
62 The Arrow, March 11, 1932, p. 5.
64 Daily Telegraph Pictorial, December 13, 1928, p. 7.
also clarified for men the responsibility of their sex and drew a boundary between normal and abnormal masculinity. Estelle Freedman has noted that the creation of a deviant figure of masculinity helped moderns adjust to a sexual system in which non-procreative sexual acts were no longer considered inherently abnormal. 65

The brute is just one image of manhood presented in inter-war mass publications. The prominence of the image without a similar rise in the actual number of crimes and convictions of this type suggests that brute masculinity reflected a cultural panic more than a social phenomenon. The strategic use of the image of the brute not only sold newspapers but, in doing so, engaged with popular notions of sexuality and masculine responsibility.

I have thus far avoided mentioning the Sydney phenomenon of the razor gang: groups of men, often reportedly involved in organised crime, who attacked their victims in public places without warning and usually from behind. The representation of the razor wielding criminal does need mention, however, not just because it is a notorious historical episode, but because it also highlights the strategic use of the caricature of the brute.

The first mention I have found of the phenomenon is in the January 1928 edition of the Bulletin, although that article mentions that the phenomenon had been occurring for some months. Razor attacks were still reported in journals in 1932, although the panic had subsided somewhat by that time. Interestingly, razor wielding criminals, while strongly vilified, were never referred to as lust maniacs or any of the other terms that constructed the criminal as a brute. Instead they were referred to as 'morons' or 'thorough going scoundrels'. 66 Perhaps because of their association with the criminal underworld social environment was also an explanatory factor in their crimes. Their deviance was situated in relation to their hereditary and environmental predisposition to crime rather than as a reflection of their ability or inability to contain their masculinity. As I discussed in chapter five on eugenics, the uses these men were making of their bodies were considered dangerous not only to women but to the progress of the nation and the ability of others to make the correct choice in using their bodies (and sexuality). The attacks of the razor gangs on women were no more or less sexual than others reported as lust crimes. Their presentation as crimes of a different order from the lust crime demonstrates that the designation of a crime as one of brutish lust was associated more with the representational strategy of mass publications than the crime itself.

65Estelle Freedman, "'Uncontrolled Desires'" , p. 211.
66See Bulletin, January 19, 1928, p. 13; The Arrow, January 29, 1932, p. 4. A story of a man sentenced to five years for slashing the face of another man with a razor appeared in Melbourne's Truth on July 16, 1927, but it was not suggested that the event was not unique, p. 9.
Like that of the contented family man, the image of the brute helped to construct the borders of masculinity. Just as the family man exemplified respectable masculinity the savage brute was an archetype of the uncontrolled desires that lurk in all men. Frequent and melodramatic descriptions of men as brutes suggest that such a representation was a warning to men of the need to tenaciously avoid excessive masculinity. The final representational border I will discuss is that which ran the discursive edge between adolescence and manhood. While I have thus far focused on the crimes of the brute, certain types of sex crimes were reported not as examples of male attack on innocence but the result of male innocence itself.

(re)presenting the adolescent

Although I have spent a considerable part of this chapter discussing advertising images, there are virtually no examples in the literature of the adolescent figure being used to promote products. Certainly the spending power of adolescents was minuscule relative to today and the market for adolescent-targeted products was non-existent. Occasionally younger males were positioned to sell products and their transition to manhood obliquely referenced. One interesting example is a full page advertisement for a Kodak camera that appeared in pre-Christmas editions of the Daily Telegraph Pictorial in 1928. The advertisement shows a wistful looking boy in a school uniform, isolated on the school ground from the other students; “In hundreds of ways it helps a boy along to better manhood,” reads the text. Advertising representations like this were uncommon and although boys may have been reading their father’s daily or weekly paper, they themselves were not yet targets of the advertiser’s imagination. One area of representation upon which the image young man did imprint, however, is editorialising and reporting on crime.

In the Arrow article (quoted above) that proclaimed certain men to be vampires, the responsibility of other men for their sexual actions was conveniently absolved. The fervent editorial scorn of the male sex criminal was prefaced with the question, “Are they [young girls] made mothers by consent or are they victims of brute passion, and is the father reckless youth or middle age pervert?” One’s age, it would seem, could define a male as one or the other of these subjects. If the accused was the former, the blame was displaced entirely from the male individual.

Journalists extended sympathy to young sex criminals who committed their crimes under a misguided notion of love. A 1923 an article in The Arrow outlined the

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67 Daily Telegraph Pictorial, October 7, 1928, p. 23.
68 The Arrow, March 11, 1932, p. 5.
details of six cases of murder and suicide then under investigation throughout the
country that were committed by smitten young men against the objects of their
affection. The author used the cases to argue that 'reason is powerless against an
overmastering desire'. Under the dominance of weak women, "Man, the strong master
of the world, becomes a reed blown by the hot winds of desire to final destruction."69
The six men mentioned in this article were all aged under twenty two, and all were
courting or newly married to the women they murdered. Two of the cases had been
resolved by trial, two were unsolved, and the final two had concluded with the suicide
of the young man involved. The last two young men—'who murdered and died for
love'—are classic examples of the romantic tragedy, a cultural trope that extends
beyond the temporal boundaries of this discussion. What is of most interest is the
sympathy given to the others—young men who killed out of (sexual) passion but who
were not drawn in representation as brutes.

By virtue of their age, young men who killed and injured women and
themselves were treated differently from their older counterparts. Not having the
external controls of female purity discourse to moderate their behaviour and not yet
having had the time to train themselves fully in the negation that characterised
gentlemen, these young men were portrayed as vulnerable. Those who committed
sexual crimes were more often presented as 'martyrs to ruined love'—victims both of
their lax environment and of the wiles of the more mature females they pursued—than
as demented and bloodthirsty wild men.70 The blame was often placed on these
knowing women. In one case of (sexual) assault, a young woman was portrayed as
'luring' the young male accused into the Domain, where the assault occurred.
Publications were also quick to place the blame on modernity and the culture of fast
cars and fast dancing:

Mrs. Grundy may have been a sour old spoil sport, but during her reign she
certainly acted as a check on youths and maidens who were inclined to lose
control of their feelings under the witching spells of bright lights and the close
personal contact of the Jazz and Charleston.71

Note that young women were presented as being as likely as young men to lose control
of themselves under such circumstances, making any subsequent crime the
responsibility equally of the young man and the young woman involved.

69 The Arrow, January 6, 1923, p. 2.
70 The headline 'martyr to ruined love' was used in the Daily Telegraph in a story of an adolescent who
shot himself after assaulting a woman who was reported as possibly being his girlfriend, October 12, 1928,
p. 2.
71 Truth, Melbourne ed., August 28, 1926, p. 14. 'Mrs. Grundy' (and less often Mr.) was a colloquial
expression branded on conservative social reformers and moral guardians.
The *Daily Telegraph* placed blame squarely on the shoulders of the parents of young people. One of the newspaper's editorials argued that the grim problem of assaults against women demanded "better guidance at home, better parental teaching, a healthier environment than some slum quarters offer", adding that such changes "may do something to inculcate restraint and lessen crime."72 Where such conditions were lacking and crimes did occur, the fact that the attacker and victim belonged to the same age cohort made the crime significantly different from the crime of the brute. In these cases, representing such a crime as a savage attack on innocence was a nonviable option. Young men had available to them the excuse that they didn’t know any better. Unlike adult men who committed crimes because they refused to accept manly precepts, young men were still learning those same precepts. If they failed it did not indicate a failure of manhood for adolescents were yet to achieve that state. They were unmarried, often un- or under-employed, and not yet fathers. Violence against an equal participant in the dangerous modern games of 'Jazz and Charleston' was not viewed as an intransigent evil, merely a misstep on the path to manhood. To suggest that the passionate young man occupied the same cultural territory as the brute was to equate masculinity as a whole with that type of bestiality, something that even the most sensationalist literature would never do.

The representation of young men ran a distant second to that of adult men. Despite this, I have argued that inter-war publications situated the adolescent in the public imagination. This occurred not only through the juxtaposition of young sex criminals with their older counterparts but in the general representation of masculinity. The world that adolescents were to enter—one of consumer power, enervating work and protective domesticity—was the world around which mass publications were constructed. In addressing the men that adolescents were to become, publications engaged in the process of defining the achievement of manhood. Whether it be a hard body and a well-oiled car or that hidden sense of vigour, the achievement of manhood was linked to proper consumption and disciplined behaviour. The representations of men in advertising and editorial sites contributed to that self disciplining knowledge.

The attention paid to men's crimes of brutality built up throughout the 1920s to a peak in the early 1930s before subsiding again in the wake of World War Two. It is worth noting the work of Andrea Friedman on morality campaigns in relation to this representational trend. Although Friedman's work is United States based, her observation that the Depression, "offered an opportunity to articulate deep-seated concerns about male sexual orderliness in a profoundly disorderly world” are as

72 *Daily Telegraph*, December 5, 1928, p. 6.
applicable to Australia in these years as they are to America. The depression hit Australia hard and increased the numbers of men who were unemployed, disillusioned, and aimlessly occupying public space. While those accused of lust crimes were as likely as not to be employed, the increased presence of men in the later years of the inter-war period drew them into a position of scrutiny and focused attention on the trajectory of masculinity and male sexual danger. Cultural anxieties about economic control during this period, Friedman argues (and I would concur), translated into gendered discourses about social and sexual control.

I have used the image of the brute, the dynamic man and the family man here to demonstrate the ways that strategic representations can engage with cultural imaginings and understandings of masculinity. Unlike Australian publications of a generation before, the mass produced newspapers and journals of the inter-war period took as their central concern the quality and character of manhood. The pitiful man and the brute represent the two feared extremes of a modern world where the guardianship of female purity no longer dictated behaviour. Without that social control the modern man was at risk of running amok (as in the case of the brute) or simply running down, as was the case with the feminised, vigour-poor, modern office worker. In other words, if woman was a sexual being in the cultural matrix of modernity then, without careful attention to self discipline and moderation, her male equivalent could become a beast or a beast of burden. The choice was no longer made for him through his associations with women but was the responsibility of the man himself, and the adolescent who wished to be that man.

I have based this discussion on a range of images and representations of masculinity. Such a collection undeniably admits many variants and, as Susan Bordo argues, the parts of the collection have multiple and mutually deconstructing meanings. I have not intended to minimise such variants nor deny that the range of images of masculinity presented in various newspaper and serial stories does not complicate the representational models that I have presented. By sheer volume, however, certain images of men and masculinity dominated the pages of Australia’s dailies and weeklies in the inter-war years. Whether they accurately represented the experience of men collectively or individually is somewhat beside the point. The representations of brute and family man stand on their own as historical evidence of a heightened cultural attention to issues of masculinity and manhood, regardless of the


74 Susan Bordo, “Reading the Slender Body”, p. 86.
commercially or politically skewed circumstance of their creation. In doing so, they provided men-to-be with archetypes of masculinity and sign-posted the consumption and behavioural patterns that would guide young men past negative models and straight into productive, social manhood.
conclusion

Over the course of writing this thesis I found myself in the position of having to explain what it was I was doing numerous times. This explanation took a somewhat scattershot form when the inquirer was someone not versed in the current vernacular of the academy. Rather than say it was an analysis of discourse which would then necessitate an explanation as to the generally accepted and current academic definition of discourse as well as the particular formulation of the concept I was using, I often resorted to schematics: 'its about bodies, sex, and danger' I would say, or 'it looks at the history of adolescence'. What I realised shamefully late was that the main contention of this thesis is not only simple but accessible and inclusive. It is that the human body is more than a biological entity; that it is constructed with words and understandings just as it is constructed with molecules and DNA. Of course, if this were the extent of it, this work would fail spectacularly to fulfil the requirement of making a contribution to understanding. The academic term for this concept, to return to Foucault, is discursive formation and he and many, many others have posed that contention from all disciplinary stages of the academy. It is this deceptively simple postulate that underpins the discrete arguments made in each chapter and that most fundamentally draws the chapters together into a coherent whole.

If the body's discursive formation is the postulate then the case study could be said to be the adolescent. It is on the body of the adolescent that I have suggested that there is a visibly etched history and discourse of sexuality, control and proper manliness. Of course, these histories in turn write the body. If I were inclined to use metaphors to précis the discursive activities of the experts who have inhabited these pages I would suggest one of weaving. The knowledge of adolescence can be represented by threads that are woven by expert hands into a tapestry of discourse on adolescence. The threads were chosen for inherent qualities of strength and utility, not because they matched some pre-ordained notion of what the whole was to look like. Indeed, expert though they may have been, the weavers of the modern discursive tapestry of adolescence had little idea of the look or density of the thing they were creating and simply added one strand to another where there seemed to be a need or an affinity. A metaphorical schematic such as this is most useful, not to capture the complexity of the discursive interactions I have traced through these chapters, but simply to strategically contextualise the cryptic work of discourse within an historical imaginary that did not itself use the words discourse or subjectivity.

The metaphor of weaving is particularly useful in steering the mind away from the idea that the discursive construction of adolescence and male sexuality emerged from
some legal/medical conspiracy against the weak and vulnerable. The scientists, doctors, and lawyers I have spoken of may have constructed a subject but they did so through the aspiration to comment on what they saw as the essential facts of nature: sex, sexuality, maturation. The scientific curiosity, social management, and philanthropy that were the mark of that curiosity helped to construct the reality they were attempting to observe, but not according to some grand extant schematic. Until their observations identified the characteristic as the hallmark of the adolescent, weakness and vulnerability were not commonly attributed to adolescents.¹

In this thesis I have briefly entered the slipstream of a number of historical discourses. The inclusion of certain, but not other, discursive currents results from the proclamations of the historical speakers I have included that their discipline, their understanding, their interpretation of adolescence was the one that would improve the world, create a stronger Australia, and help the boys of whom they spoke along to a better manhood. More than anything else, it is this attention to improving the national and individual body that shed light onto the particular (and peculiar) body of the young man and that named such a body an adolescent one. Each of the locations examined here formed their discourse around the subject of the young male in order to protect and as well to regulate. To return to the metaphor, these discourses wove together the threads of knowledge of adolescence, masculinity, and sexuality into a tapestry that depicted all three and those who occupied the subjective space of all three were, by the very threads that created them, bound to that vision of themselves.

Each of the discourses, in and of itself, was arguably of negligible relevance to the boy just out of school and wondering what to do next in Western Sydney in 1922, or one laid off from his manufacturing job in Collingwood, struggling on the family farm, agonising over (or dismissing) the pregnancy of his girlfriend, the possibility of syphilis or of not finding a job, or even looking into a mirror, any mirror in any house in Australia, and briefly failing to recognise the face of the boy-man staring back at him. As much as I felt impelled to undertake this research by the effects I have witnessed of a discourse of adolescent sexuality on real young men around me, real young men are not really a part of this work, nor are real bodies. Instead, I chose to examine the young men to whom people refer when, in a contemporary context, they mention with fear or loathing (or even, sometimes, mention wistfully or proudly) the nameless and faceless mass of young men whom they believe roam the streets, fail in school, suicide.

When our cultural commentators refer to these young men, they are referring to actual young men no more than I have here. These young men are created by and for adults; they are cultural others whose shadows fall across real young men who follow, and also who do not follow, the behaviours so carefully created for them and observed of them. The young men of this work were woven phantoms whose behaviour was carefully detailed not only by the professional scientists, social scientists, educators, moral guidance counsellors, and journalists discussed here, but by myriad other social and welfare professionals, parents, church leaders, sports coaches and so on.

These phantoms have, in the last century, shifted the position of young people from an irritant to the social machinery to a unique structure within it. Through processes like those I have detailed here, adolescents have become an integral feature of the modern social organism. This organism, I have argued, is one whose efficacy relied on the notion that individuals would use their bodies in the service of the nation. Many historians of the Australian nineteenth century fin de siècle have labelled this notion respectability. The impulse to be respectable, like the eugenic impulse identified here, encouraged, cajoled, and even coerced individuals to view their bodies as part of a larger organism (the social) and thus to behave according to the best interests of that organism. As Janet McCalman notes:

Respectability prescribed disciplines in behaviour which could alter the conception of the self. In demanding cleanliness, sobriety, extra-marital chastity, thrift, time-consciousness, self-reliance, manly independence, and self-responsibility, it promoted an ego that was self-regulating and mature.

The process McCalman describes of drawing individuals into a social web of responsibility and respectability was, by the inter-war period, well established as an organising principle for Australian (adult) society. What I have suggested is that during the inter-war years a similar process came to bear on the bodies and egos of a younger cohort. In the late nineteenth century when adults were becoming a part of what Donzelot calls ‘the social’, the divisions between adolescence and adulthood were much more permeable. In certain circumstances, related more to employment status and relations of dependence on one’s family of origin than age, a young man aged between fifteen and twenty five could assume adult roles without question. When sharp divisions came to be culturally drawn between the states of adolescence and adulthood and unique roles were offered to and expected of adolescents, the process of making individuals aware of their social function began again. For the young, it was

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not what they could or should provide to society but what potential they should not jeopardise if they were to function usefully in a society based around notions of masculine providence and self-restraint.

Because the notion of respectability is so closely linked with the earlier development of the (adult) social, I have resisted using it in this thesis to refer to the very similar process that defined and drew young men into the social after World War One. It was not respectability itself that prescribed disciplines on adolescent behaviour but the promise of respectability. No sex educators asked their students to behave as a respectable man would, for no sex educator believed that adolescents were yet respectable men. These young men were only potentially respectable men and were also potential degenerates, criminals, or sex perverts, the outcome shaped by proper or improper training on the adolescent path. Instead, sex educators and others emphasised the importance of the path that led to respectability and offered the promise that social discipline and sexual training would later provide the man not only with sexual pleasure but social purpose. As F.C. Tucker noted in his 1935 *The Story of Life*, unsatisfied sex desire causes one to seek out the opposite sex therefore leads to companionship. If one fails to discipline one's sexuality one can not enjoy this urge to the social and will thus be deprived of knowledge of the opposite sex (in all its meanings).

My study has been an Australian one not because I wish to suggest that Australians have been unique in their interpretation of adolescence but because Australia represents an excellent example of a site in which various interpretations of adolescence (emerging from the specific cultural contexts of the United States, Britain, and Europe) were collated and formed into a discourse that was both universal and nationalistic. Australian contributors to the discourse of adolescence regarded the nation as a unique template on which to build upon the best knowledge the Western world had to offer. Australians who travelled to other nations, such as G.W.R. Southern, Ralph Noble and others, did so to link Australia to an international community of scholars and experts. Similar discourses of adolescence and male sexuality were emerging in a number of nations during the early decades of the twentieth century. In Australia, this understanding was brought to bear in ways that constituted adolescence as an essential element in both nation building and human evolution. Similarly, historical work on the construction of masculinity and sexuality has featured in the context of specific national histories as well as in general histories of Western discourse. This thesis is an attempt to bring that interpretation of history to

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bear on the history of Australia as a place and as a site of knowledge that extends beyond the borders of the nation.

The question I would like to end with is that which concerned John Bostock and L. Jarvis Nye, whither away? In this case, wither away for the conceptions and subjectivity of masculine, sexed adolescence? Today, the economy of Australia, at least in part, runs the way it does because young people have generally been classified as old enough for employment but too young to leave home; thus they have relatively large amounts of disposable income upon which so much of our commercial economy relies. Adolescence exists as such a sharply defined subject category that government and university departments are created around the study of the subject, structures that in the time frame of this study were nascent. Throughout this thesis, I have argued that the inter-war discourse of masculinity and adolescent sexuality was constructed around the idea that manhood is an achievement, something to be actively pursued and carefully inculcated in body and soul. This notion enabled an edifice to be constructed around a particular group of males in order to help them achieve the goal of masculinity despite distraction or temptation. The discourses I have traced in this thesis contributed to the establishment of a way of seeing and understanding adolescent ‘coming of age’ as a physical, sexual, and cultural process. This understanding, I have argued, guided a range of interventions into the behaviour and bodies of young men that were aimed at creating better men and a better nation of men. In popular vernacular, adolescence has certainly been supplanted since its creation by the concept of teenagers in the 1950s, and again with the concept of generation x in the 1990s. What they have in common, however, is a reliance on the simple notion that people yet to leap the (shifting) boundary of adulthood are different beings requiring different attention, tasks, goals, protection, and activities than those who have passed the mark.

The discourse of manliness and masculinity that dominated during the first half of this century, and which contributed to the creation of the adolescent, has variously been referred to as having created a ‘culture of character’ or a ‘cult of manliness’. As the eugenic milieu in which this ‘cult’ was so firmly ensconced was undermined by the Second World War and de-colonisation, the powerful moral code and social imperative provided by such a culture was severely undermined. The discourse of an age-specific sexuality (be it adolescent, teenage, or generation x) has nonetheless

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proved resilient, defying scientific advancements and cultural shifts to remain a contour in the social fabric until well after the inter-war years. As a way of soothing "deep seated concerns about male sexual orderliness in a profoundly disorderly world"\textsuperscript{8}, the discourse of adolescence and male sexuality arose from a macro-history of war and social upheaval and also from a micro-history of investigations, discussions, and the creation of nomenclature and subjects of study. The micro-history of the discourse of adolescence and masculinity is specific to the inter-war years; the convergence of knowledge, circumstance, and method during those years would not be repeated in the years that followed. Yet traces of that convergence remain, in the ways that we see and speak about adolescence, sexuality, and becoming a man. In our own profoundly disorderly world, different technologies have replaced those I have traced here, just as have different concerns about masculinity and different forms of orderliness. If this work has contributed anything to that current project of reconstituting our understandings of masculinity and sexuality, it is evidence that demonstrates that the body and its processes have a history that is written in books and on bodies through the strategic deployments of knowledge and that these strategies themselves are written and can thus be rewritten.

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