Sport has been described as "an institution created by and for men." It has been argued quite convincingly that the emphasis on masculinity inherent in early modern, codified sport in Britain and its colonies was a compensatory reaction to changing gender roles and, to some extent, changing gender relations during the nineteenth century. Organised sport for men was developed in towns and cities as an essentially urban male reaction to fears of "feminization" caused by a trend toward factory and clerical work roles and away from traditional, physically-demanding labour occupations. There were, in addition, cultural and political challenges to the customarily dominant position of men, particularly those posed by the women's movement of the late nineteenth century. While male "bonding" was fundamental to the rise of organised sport, we should not overlook the importance of economic interests. Professional sport was, after all, promoted by entrepreneurs who were driven not simply by gender "insecurity," but by a desire for profit, or at the very least enhanced social status.

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Moreover, amateur sport prized codes of middle-class respectability that involved training young boys not only to "be men," but to be part of an élite group of community leaders in various fields of endeavour—civilian, religious, and military.4

In this article our concern is not so much to grapple again with why sport developed as a masculine institution in Britain. Rather, we will consider how sporting manhood developed in an outpost of empire—nineteenth-century Australia; and, within that context, we will examine two sports—test cricket and rugby football—that helped maintain cultural connections between imperial centre and colonial periphery. Internationally, there has been a considerable body of literature that has examined gender identity and sport from a historical perspective, yet, with a few exceptions, there has been little work done on masculinity and the rise of modern sport in Australia. One of our aims, then, is to contribute some of the Australian context to the international body of literature.

David Buchbinder in his book *Masculinities and Identities* argues that there are basically two categories of gender theory. The first is "essentialism," which presents masculinity (and femininity) as being constituted by innate characteristics that are transhistorical, permanent, and immutable. In this context, the common aphorism "Be a Man!" is understood to mean "There is within you a set of masculine traits that, once recognised and freed, will enable you to be a man."5

We reject this perception of masculinity, principally for its deterministic nature; instead, we base this paper around the second major category of gender theory: "constructionism." Within this theoretical framework, masculinity is learned or constructed, not innate; and different versions of gender identity are seen as contingent on social, cultural, and historical factors. In this sense, there are masculinities rather than the singular version, and at any given time there are some forms which, as sociologist Bob Connell argues, are dominant or hegemonic.6 In relation to the sporting context and the social construction of masculinities, we will address several questions:

- What have been the dominant forms of masculinity associated with Australian sport? How have these versions of manliness intersected with Anglo-Australian imperial connections?
- In what ways do settler societies, like Australia, refine or adapt imported models of masculinities?
- How have masculinities altered over time as sport has undergone the modernising process?
- Finally, what forms of manliness were evident in test cricket and rugby football, and how were they affected or exposed by major social and political events in Australian history, such as the First World War?