



Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire

By John Tosh

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In the space of barely fifteen years, the history of masculinity has become an important dimension of social and cultural history. John Tosh has been in the forefront of the field since the beginning, having written *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (1999), and co-edited *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (1991). Here he brings together nine key articles which he has written over the past ten years. These pieces document the aspirations of the first contributors to the field, and the development of an agenda of key historical issues which have become central to our conceptualising of gender in history. Later essays take up the issue of periodisation and the relationship of masculinity to other historical identities and structures, particularly in the context of the family. The last two essays, published for the first time, approach British imperial history in a fresh way. They argue that the empire needs to be seen as a specifically male enterprise, answering to masculine aspirations and insecurities. This leads to illuminating insights into the nature of colonial emigration and the popular investment in empire during the era the New Imperialism.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

Manliness and Masculinities presents an innovative series of studies in the cultural and social history of nineteenth-century Britain. The book documents the rapid emergence of a new and increasingly important field, and takes forward the definition of this new field. John Tosh addresses the big issues of theory and periodisation, exploring the relationship between masculinity and patriarchy, and between men's public role and their emotional and domestic lives. These insights inform his sensitive treatment of the history of the Victorian family. In the final section of the book John Tosh re-examines some of the major themes of British imperial history, arguing that the empire needs to be seen as a specifically male enterprise answering to masculine aspirations and insecurities.

The history of masculinity does not deal with a neglected group. It potentially modifies our view of every field of history in which men are the principal subject-matter of most of written history. History is still predominantly about men, and this book shows what a difference it makes to our understanding of history to put their masculinity under scrutiny.

This book is essential reading for students, teachers and researchers in the history of the family and of the British Empire, as well as Gender Studies.

JOHN TOSH is Professor of History at Roehampton University. He has been at the forefront of British work on the history of masculinities for the last 15 years. He is author of *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (1999) and co-editor of *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (1991).

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