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Bury me deep down below: Masculine sentimentality on the turn-of-the-century Australian frontier

Journal article

Bellanta, Melissa. (2014) Bury me deep down below: Masculine sentimentality on the turn-of-the-century Australian frontier. Outskirts. 31, pp. 1 - 11.

Authors [Bellanta, Melissa](#)

Abstract

The idea of a 'feminisation of sentimentality' taking place over the long nineteenth century has a long currency in Anglophone scholarship. Many historians of masculinity have indeed argued that white masculinity was defined in opposition to sentimentality by the turn of the twentieth century: as sexually aggressive, militaristic, racially competitive, and characterised by a lack of sympathy for 'blacks'. White men certainly did use an anti-sentimental rhetoric to ridicule women and their political adversaries in this period. We can see this in turn-of-the-century Australia, where conservative settlers often juxtaposed masculine practicality and effeminate sentimentality in debates over the treatment of Aborigines. In this article, I challenge this rhetoric by showing that rugged white men engaged in many forms of sentimentality in this period. A key Australian example of this was the 'dying bushman' tradition. It made the suffering of rugged white men into a source of pathos. It also ensured that frontier violence and tender masculine feeling were interrelated, giving the lie to the notion of a 'feminisation of sentimentality'.

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Australian Catholic University acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and work, and we pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

Preppers at the Turn of the Century is an email in *Death Stranding*. You came back! Thanks, Sam. I really feel a whole lot closer to you since I signed up with Bridges. My grandfather was born on the cusp of the new century – a century a lot of folks thought we might not live to see. More than ever were taking up our way of life, and lo and behold, Prepper Village became Prepper Town overnight. 'Bury Me Deep Down Below: Masculine Sentimentality on the Turn-of-the-Century Australian Frontier', *Outskirts*, 31 (2014). The idea of a 'feminisation of sentimentality' taking place over the long nineteenth century has a long currency in Anglophone scholarship. Many historians of masculinity have indeed argued that white masculinity was defined in opposition more. Focusing particularly on notions of masculinity in the brass band movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, I find a strong linkage between the construction of masculine ideals in Victorian society, in terms of the value placed on economic independence and moral behaviour, and the expression of those ideals in the homosocial space of the band room and in public performance. *Bury Me Deep Down Below: Masculine Sentimentality on the Turn-of-the-Century Australian Frontier*. By Bellanta, Melissa. Read preview. Academic journal article *Outskirts*. An opposition between sentimentality and practicality appeared repeatedly in debates over humanitarian issues in turn-of-the-century Australia. This was especially the case when the debates were about settlers' treatment of Aborigines (e.g. 'The Blackfellow's Luck'; 'Missions to Blacks'; 'The Aborigines Bill' 1892; 'The Aborigines Bill' 1899). Those who most often used 'sentimental' as an insult were rugged conservatives with experience of Australia's frontier districts, which by the late 1800s were located in the centre and north

of the continent (Banivanua-Mar et al 358-65). The Killing Times counts the human cost of more than a century of frontier bloodshed – with stories told by descendants on all sides. Photograph: Aletheia Casey/The Guardian. Special report: Shootings, poisonings and children driven off cliffs – this is a record of state-sanctioned slaughter. Of the attacks on the map, only once were colonial perpetrators found guilty and punished – in the aftermath of the Myall Creek killings in 1838. In NSW and Tasmania between 1794 and 1833, most of the 56 recorded attacks were carried out on foot by detachments of soldiers from British regiments, and an average of 15 people were killed in each one. The weapon most often used was the “Brown Bess” musket, which was issued to British forces in the Napoleonic wars.