Engendering Loyalties: the construction of masculinities, femininities and national identities in South Australian secondary schools, 1880-1919.

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Graduate School of Education,
University of Adelaide, August 2000.
# Table of Contents

Dedication ___________________________________________________________ ii
Table of Contents _________________________________________________ iii
Tables, Illustrations ______________________________________________ viii
Key to abbreviations _______________________________________________ x
Abstract __________________________________________________________ xi
Declarations _________________________________________________________ xiii
Acknowledgements _________________________________________________ xiv

1. INTRODUCTION ____________________________________________________ 1

Gender, national identity and the history of education 1
Gender formation and schools 2
Definition of terms 7
Parameters of the investigation 9
Methodology:
1. Areas of investigation 11
2. Sources: their nature and usefulness 13
The schools 15

2. EMPIRE AND AUSTRALIAN NATIONALISM ______________________________ 17

Nationalism - the concept. 17
Australian nationalism 21
Australia and Empire in the late nineteenth century 28

3. NATIONAL IDENTITY, GENDER AND EDUCATION: men, women and education in late nineteenth century Britain. 34

Social Darwinism, male and female roles in late Victorian society 34
Ideals of femininity and the education of girls 37
Opportunities for girls’ education 42
Empire, masculinity and the education of boys 49
Imperialism, character and education 56
Empire and curriculum 59

4. SOUTH AUSTRALIA: loyalties, men, women and religion.

The Jubilee International Exhibition of 1887: a celebration of dual loyalties 71
South Australian Britons 74
Men and women in South Australian society 79
Religions in South Australia 83
The Church of England in South Australia 85
South Australian Methodists 87
Catholics in South Australia 90

5. THE BOYS' SCHOOLS 1880-1919 - PART I: Masculinities and national identities expressed in school rhetoric and organisation.

Introduction 95

A) THE RHETORIC OF SCHOOL ETHOS
The Collegiate School of St. Peter - 'For Queen and Empire's sake'. 97
Prince Alfred College: 'inheritors of a glorious past'. 105
Christian Brothers' College: Faith and Fatherland. 111
Adelaide High School: motor cars and Christian manhood. 117
'Onward Christian Soldiers': the militarisation of masculinity in the schools. 123
### B) SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND RITUAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School ethos in scenery and symbols</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School magazines:</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial, Australian and Irish loyalties</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Images of manhood</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student models</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity militarised</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6. THE BOYS' SCHOOLS 1880-1919 - PART II:

Masculinities and national identities expressed in the formal school curriculum, 'extra-curricular' activities and physical education.

170

### A) THE CURRICULUM, recreational reading and debating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English literature</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prizes</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music and art</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-curricular activities:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational reading</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debating</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B) PHYSICAL EDUCATION: GYMNASICS, GAMES AND CADETS.

212

### Conclusion

233
7. THE GIRLS' SCHOOLS 1880-1919 - PART I:
Femininities and national identities expressed in
school rhetoric and organisation.

Introduction

A) THE RHETORIC OF SCHOOL ETHOS
The Advanced School for Girls: education and noble deeds.
The Convent of Mercy: tradition and liberation.
Tormore House School: 'Nay, little maid, be good
and clever too'.
Methodist Ladies' College: 'the standard of the women
is the standard of the nation'.
Adelaide High School: girls in a male culture.

B) SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND RITUAL
Rules, religion and the construction of the 'school girl'.
School symbols and uniforms
School magazines
Images of woman's role
War-time, women and national identity

8: THE GIRLS' SCHOOLS 1880-1919 - PART II:
Femininities and national identities expressed in the
school curriculum, physical education and extra-
curricular activities.

A) THE CURRICULUM, recreational reading and debating
The 'higher subjects'
History and Civics
English Literature
Geography
Sciences
Religion
Recommended reading
Music and other feminine 'accomplishments'
Debating
B) THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GIRLS
Exercise for health and deportment: Leschen's young ladies 330
Tormore: 'a good, clean, straight jump' 333
MLC: 'a strong, healthy body'. 335
Convent of Mercy: tennis and the Australian girl. 340
Adelaide High School: 'have a good hit' 344
Inter-school sport 345
Conclusion 349

9. SCHOOLS, GENDER FORMATION AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES: some conclusions. 352

National identities 358
Religion and gender 361
Physical gendering 362
'Schoolgirl femininity' 364
Schools and gender construction 365

BIBLIOGRAPHY 369
Abstract

The thesis is a comparative study of a selection of South Australian secondary schools during the period 1880-1919. The ideals of gender and national identity of the various schools are investigated through an analysis of archival records relating to their rhetoric, organisation and curricula. The schools in the study are girls' and boys' schools of three major religious denominations - Church of England, Catholic and Methodist - and the coeducational Adelaide High School.

The study first considers some issues involved in identifying an Australian nationalism in the imperial context and explores the possible compatibility of Australian and Empire loyalty. It then reviews education for boys and girls in late nineteenth century Britain, considering the reforms in girls' education within a revisionist historical interpretation and outlining the close relationship between imperialism and masculinity in the ethos of the boys' public schools. The question of an 'imperial curriculum' in Britain and Australia is raised. A brief introduction to South Australia demonstrates the nature of its imperial connection and provides an overview of the cultural influence of religion in the lives of South Australian men and women.

The body of the thesis is the investigation of the discourses of gender and national identity embodied in the rhetoric, organisation and curriculum of Adelaide secondary schools between 1880-1919.

A central theme of the investigation is the extent of denominational and ethnic variation in ideals of gender and national identity, which are most evident prior to about 1910. British Imperial, Irish and Australian identities in various combinations harmonised with variants of masculinity and femininity deriving from the differing religious discourses. In all schools, the Great War militarised the masculine ideal and reaffirmed the domestic role of women, thus demonstrating the historical contingency of gender and its subordination to social
needs. The study illuminates gender formation as a dynamic process, evident across all aspects of the schools. While boys' schools generally maintained a hegemonic form of masculinity, the girls' schools appeared to have more flexibility to extend or redefine femininity, though still rationalising changes in terms of a conservative gender order. For both boys and girls, gendering involved an important physical component. Girls' physical education, in particular, is seen as contributing significantly to a modernisation of gender ideals and the formation of a distinct pre-adult stage of femininity.