



White Masculinity in the Recent South (Making the Modern South)

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From antebellum readers avidly consuming stories featuring white southern men as benevolent patriarchs, hell-raising frontiersmen, and callous plantation owners to post--Civil War southern writers seeking to advance a model of southern manhood and male authority as honorable, dignified, and admirable, the idea of a distinctly southern masculinity has reflected the broad regional differences between North and South. In the latter half of the twentieth century and beyond, the media have helped to shape modern models of white manhood, not only for southerners but for the rest of the nation and the world.

In *White Masculinity in the Recent South*, thirteen scholars of history, literature, film, and environmental studies examine modern white masculinity, including such stereotypes as the good old boy, the redneck, and the southern gentleman. With topics ranging from southern Protestant churches to the music of Lynyrd Skynyrd, this cutting-edge volume seeks to do what no other single work has done: to explore the ways in which white southern manhood has been experienced and represented since World War II. Using a variety of approaches -- cultural and social history, close readings of literature and music, interviews, and personal stories -- the contributors explore some of the ways in which white men have acted in response to their own and their culture's conceptions of white manhood. Topics include neo-Confederates, the novels of William Faulkner, gay southern men, football coaching, deer hunting, church camps, college fraternities, and white men's responses to the civil rights movement.

Taken together, these engaging pieces show how white southern men are shaped by regional as well as broader American ideas of what they ought to do and be. White men themselves, the contributors explain, view the idea of southern manhood in two seemingly contradictory ways -- as something natural and as something learned through rites of initiation and passage -- and believe it must be lived and displayed to one's peers and others in order to be fully realized.

While economic and social conditions of the South changed dramatically in the twentieth century, white manhood as it is expressed in the contemporary South is still a complex, contingent, historicized matter, and broadly shared -- or at least broadly recognized -- notions of white southern manhood continue to be central to southern culture. Representing some of the best recent scholarship in southern gender studies, this bold collection invites further explorations into twenty-first-century white southern masculinity.



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