

## A Short History of the Penis

**Toby Miller**

We live in an age of penis augmentation, by surgery and fantasy. It is difficult to decline the penis, so difficult that even Latinists seem confused about how to pluralize it, while acknowledging the need to do so. Because this age is simultaneously concerned with the penis as an artifact of meaning, law, and money, all those discourses must be assembled and brought together if we are to understand this penile artifact's trajectory. Most of its diverse properties are associated with particular disciplines or sciences and the territory between them. They take their form as an ensemble of techniques, institutions, modes of comportment, and methods of transmission and diffusion. But this is also and equally a conflictual ensemble. The male body is sadly dissociated in various classic accounts of the modern: torn asunder by a divide between industrial labor and organic community in sociology and Marxism, terrified by the presence of woman and her castrating tendencies in psychoanalysis, and caught in the tight jaws of discourse and the aesthetic wound of language that separates meaning from truth in aesthetics.

And men are on the agenda, or rather on a series of agendas: agendas of research, critique, investigation, seduction, consumption, revulsion, and repulsion. These agendas are to be found at a variety of sites stretching across administrative, journalistic, domestic, academic, and occupational terrain. Instead of being the implicit center of all general research in the social and antisocial sciences (via the putative universality of "man") and in place of women as a specific topic of inquiry, men are now to be considered in their particular and peculiar formations by a spectatorial, political gaze. Feminist and queer theory critiques of masculinity have clearly been pivotal in this shift. They have both problematized practices and concepts and provided the stimulus for a certain amount of self-reflexive (and frequently defensive) examination of men by pressing for consideration of "the man question" and by drawing connections between men's bodies and sexual violence.

The arena of sport has always been marked by class, gender, and race, and marked as a compelling and powerful site for the routine investigation of masculinity. For the male body is the standard currency of sporting discourse: it is on display, at work, being measured and evaluated—in short, being objectified for the purposes of pleasure—as nowhere else in contemporary life. After years of being reflexively positioned as a site dedicated to the oppression of women, the sublimation of homoeroti-

cism, the encouragement of violence through the fear of castration, and the development and sustenance of nationalistic chauvinism, men's sport is now something significantly more, a useful place to do cultural analysis. Sport has been isolated as a site of the "expression of sexuality in men" (Reekie 33). As Alice Jardine notes, the last twenty years of gender criticism directs men to address a number of issues. In calling on them to be "talking your body, not talking *about* it," she presents a research program that looks at men and war, men and textual representation, and men and sport as its axes of concern (Jardine 61). This does not have to be a self-lacerating experience for men. It might, in fact, even leaven such processes. For while pain is a crucial component of most sports, sporting pain that is produced directly from contact with other bodies remains as gendered (male) as it is violent (Synnott 166).

Despite its fashionability within left, feminist, and postcolonial literary theory, "the body" is of minimal interest to theorists when it plays sport. Yet, as the principal site for the daily demonstration of the body, sport seems a critical space in which to assess the corporal mixture of the primordially natural with the nostalgically postmodern. What does the successful body look like? How does it comport itself? Are examinations of male bodies part of a historic late modern shift towards the minute assessment of all bodies? Of course, there are other ways of talking about the male human subject than bodily contours, genetic assembly, public myth, and the cultural practices of men in sport. These ways address men's position in the labor market, their role in the processes of production and reproduction, and their ethnic, sexual, and geopolitical identifications. In considering sporting masculinity, there is a risk of reducing the analytic frame to only one of many social determinations. What I seek to do here is open up the topics of sport, man, and his penis to approaches that have rarely been deployed in cultural studies. These approaches are not beholden to the unsaid, the repressed, or the hermeneutic turn for their significance, but are positive knowledges in the sense of being productive of public truths. My aim is to provide a nasty, brutish, and short history of the penis.

### **The Male Sporting Body**

Sixteenth- to nineteenth-century Europe saw bodies progressively subjected to penology, medicine, psychology, and sexology. As well as being formed as subjects of these knowledges, bodies also became subject to a physical disciplining at the locations known as prisons, hospitals, asylums, and sexualities: subject to the power of the knowledge associated

with such institutions, and also subject, increasingly, to the power of their own means of identification with them. The distinctively modern component of institutional and discursive power was a double movement of control exerted on both the inside and the outside of the body, rendering it efficient, aesthetic, and self-monitoring. A set of exercises was undertaken by both the controllers of institutions and by those under their control, who were taught to evaluate themselves by internalizing systems of surveillance and identifying their own interests with those of the corporate. This identification was learned and expressed through the body.

Disciplining the body, making it responsible and responsive to a calculating logic of profit and loss, clearly helps to increase productivity. And yet, this control of the body cannot simply be read off against the prevailing mode of production in order to understand its operation. Standardized systems of production characterize all modern industrial entities, regardless of their economic politics. The management of time and motion is common to all. And the operation of the human sciences that define subjectivity, efficiency, sanity, criminality, wellness, and so on are relatively autonomous from the mode of economic production as systems of knowledge and effects deriving from that knowledge. Sometimes, for example, capitalism defines the conditions of operation of psychiatry, but understanding this does not explain the workings of psychiatry, the actual micropolitics of the power it exerts over bodies. Although sport is increasingly run on business-like terms, and is comprised of castes that differentiate categories of persons in violent ways, knowing this does not give us an insight into the systems of power that define and control the sporting body. A focus on the site of economic organization tells us about the overall system that creates the environment which that sporting body inhabits, but precious little about the diurnal workings of power-through-knowledge animating the intricacies of its existence (Miller 33–40).

For most young men living within industrialized societies and their successors, physical education provides the first formal training in adult masculinity—their first self-conscious address as an adult gendered subject—through a complex of physical and ethical regimes that organize the person and develop an equivalence between body and mind. Descartes was problematized and resolved on the playing field long before the advent of feminist philosophy. This complex came into being at the uneasy meeting of nineteenth-century rites of industrial modernity and auto/homo-eroticism/sociality, of “Muscular Christianity” and nature cults (Lewis 22). It derived from a regimen of knowledge set down as an all-consuming faith in the transformability of individuals through continuous exercise. “Muscular Christianity” emerged in English public schools in the 1830s as a means of binding mind and body together under the sign of

---

For most young  
men, physical  
education  
provides the  
first formal  
training in  
adult masculinity.

---

health. It sought to indoctrinate the future leaders of the nation with an amalgam of discipline, service, and authority, to be gained in part through the orderly conduct and competitive but neighborly ethos of games. The body thus became subject to a moral-scientific gaze, and pastimes were codified in a doubling move of internalized self-monitoring and externalized intersubjective government (Hargreaves 13; Elias 151).

Critically, then, the body is conceived as potentially pliable and compliant, despite a certain native unruliness. It can undergo radically managed change. And for this reason, the body is a problematic point from which to seek eternal verities, either about its inhabitant or other like figures. In short, the body is subject to historical change. Clearly, the emergence of modern capitalism—and I stress the adjective as much as its qualifying noun—is connected to the rise of the sovereign-state. And that state was concerned to deliver a docile and healthy labor force to business—but not only to business, and not merely in a way that shows the lineage of that desire. Cholera in the city, sanitation in the city, prostitution in the city; these are problems figured as the business of government in the modern era. This period sees “the emergence of the health and physical well-being of the population in general as one of the essential objectives of political power.” The entire “social body” is to be assayed, evaluated, found wanting, and treated for its insufficiencies. Most centrally and critically, the government of people means obeying the “imperative of health: at once the duty of each and the objective of all” (Foucault, “Politics” 277). This becomes exemplified in the bodies of latter-day U.S. presidents: Eisenhower the golfer; Kennedy the sailor; Reagan the rider; and Carter, Bush, and Clinton the joggers.

Part of this imperative’s legacy is the governmentalization of sport, the means by which sport is taken up as a practice for disciplining the body to be by turns orderly and extraordinary, competent and excellent, fit and capable. For Norbert Elias, the sporting subject embodies Europe’s insistence that its citizens be combinations of both “regularity and differentiation” in their daily conduct; the governmentalization of everyday life that takes place in Britain across the eighteenth century makes the pacification of sport, via the imposition of organizational and behavioral rules, a critical strut of its civilizing mission (Elias 151, 173).

Foucault discerns twin registers within what he calls the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries’ “great book of Man-the-Machine.” The “anatomico-metaphysical register” details the relationship between the body and a self. This takes the form of a philosophy founded in the notion that thought brings the subject into play and is therefore critical to its formation, and in an academic medicine founded in the notion that this body can itself be made intelligible, that it can be brought into being as an object of consideration: How does it operate and how might we analyze it?

The second register is “the technicopolitical.” It details the relationship between the body and social management, a relationship described in the concept of the population and its well-being. This register functions less in theoretical and more in auditing terms, “constituted by a whole set of regulations and by empirical and calculated methods relating to the army, the school and the hospital, for controlling or correcting the operations of the body.” Of course, these registers merge, with knowledge in the first deployed in the second, and a trend towards mutual influences and points of significance. That merging occurs in the eighteenth century with the concept of docility. Docility “joins the analysable body to the manipulable body” so that it can be “subjected, used, transformed and improved” (Foucault, *Discipline* 136).

Consider how modern sport matches up with Foucault’s litany of systems for controlling bodily activity and marshalling it: timetables were adapted from monasteries to “establish rhythms, impose particular occupations, regulate the cycles of repetition” in educational institutions, factories, and hospitals. In the twentieth century, they characterize the modern Olympics and the rise of sport’s political arithmetic, the human calculus of statistics of individual and team achievements and current form. Timetables were also historically connected to “temporal elaboration,” a process of matching time to specific physical acts. The contemporary elaboration might be timing between hurdles or the final step prior to reaching the long-jump board. The gait of a runner is carefully analyzed and corrected in accordance with sport-science fashion, much as the gait of the soldier came to be managed in the seventeenth century. A programmed rhythm is set up from without, by experts, but enacted and monitored within, by the body itself. This elaboration of time via an articulation in the body is then further developed through “the correlation of the body and the gesture” (Foucault, *Discipline* 149). Every signifying practice of the body is related to other bodily aspects. This becomes clear when each movement is guaranteed to be maximally efficient, dedicated to the best use of resources, and indicative of the rationality at work in all other parts. The angle at which the hand enters the water comes to stand for all the efficiencies of the champion swimmer. This gestural metonym is, in turn, tied to a “body-object articulation.” Here, the objects that the schooled body encounters are always subject to and redolent with the impact of discipline.

In contemporary sport, the body is invested with power via fitness regimens, training exercises, motivational talks, and dietary laws (Hargreaves 43). These are all applications from other forms of knowledge deriving from the human sciences of biology, Taylorist/Hawthornian industrial psychology, marketing, social psychology, and nutrition. There is a clear nexus between obedience and utility as the emergence of disci-

plinary knowledge exerts control over the body's timing, operation, and potential for labor. At the same moment as these knowledges enable the body by honing it to a peak performance of tasks, they also disable it through an indivisible subordination. This double effect of empowerment and entrapment occurs just as economic exploitation is driving a wedge between the ever-increasing capacity of labor to produce and the actual ownership of its products.

This general point should act as a corrective to such contemporary celebrations as *Ms.* magazine's valorization of the heptathlete Jackie Joyner-Kersey for being "just what women of the 80s have been waiting for" because "as an athlete she is in total control of her body. And as a businesswoman she plans to maximize her potential" (Kort 31). On the contrary, Joyner-Kersey might be seen to demonstrate the emphasis on the disciplining and control of the body and its subjugation in the service of particular, discriminatory, social relations. Knowledge and modes of production organize such a body—in fact they define it—far more than does the virtuous meritocrat who appears to own it. It is not incidental that she was said to have as her dream "to go to Seoul, Korea, where she would compete against other human machines" (Kort 31). This statement exemplifies the contradictory nature of the expressive and disciplinary sides of dominant sporting discourse. There should be no fit between "dream" and "machine": machines cannot dream because imagination is inviolably human. This ought to be a mixed metaphor. But it's not. It's utterly appropriate. Sport is a world in which dialectical play between the romantic humanism of elaborated fantasy and the steely wheels of engineering is simply not permitted. As the scientific management of sports training becomes more finely tuned through the appearance of biotechnology and sports science, the material stakes of medals, sponsors, and media textuality get higher. Surveillance functions both near the site of performance and far from it, as the body is constantly made vigilant of itself (Synnott 22). But in order to do so, it is also looking out, and with a much more unruly gaze.

Sport allows/requires men to watch and dissect other men's bodies in fetishistic detail. It proffers a legitimate space to gaze on and devour the male form without homosexuality being either alleged or feared. The fetish of admiring individuated body parts ("look at those triceps") gives a scientific pleasure and alibi. To see a man weight lifting, to witness the critical moment of lift, is to experience at close proximity physiognomic signs of pleasure akin to facial correlatives of the male orgasm, in a way otherwise denied to men defining themselves as straight. This is what has been called "the paradoxical play of masculinity," whereby "a satisfying sports competition is much the same as a satisfying homosexual, that is paradoxical, fuck" in an erotic meeting of coeval power displaced from the site of the overtly carnal (Pronger 181). The playing up of physicality and

the playing down of sexuality in sport may negate and repress sexual pleasure, but it does not dismember it. The act of looking, however, can also cause problems. Paul Foss suggests that “shower-room banter, that slightly nervous parading of one’s personal capital before the other boys at school or after sport, never entirely leaves us when we finally grow up to learn that this is a forbidden subject” (8).

But as sport increasingly moves away from violence and towards inclusive audience strategies, the generic male body quite clearly gives way to the pinup. The lengthy process of ocular invigilation that Elias has demonstrated, which began as the progressive displacement of speech by sight as an hermeneutic method in early-modern Europe, at last moves onto men in the sexualized way in which it colonized women much earlier. Male pinups are common today in teen magazines and even in British tabloid newspapers (Dyer 104). Consider male striptease shows performed for female audiences. This fairly recent phenomenon references not only changes in the direction of power and money, but also a public site where “[w]omen have come to see exposed male genitalia; they have come to treat male bodies as objects only” (Barham 62).

Sportsmen kissing one another on the field of play in congratulation and mutual ecstasy has become the object of administrative, legal, and promotional gazes, as well as approvingly hedonistic ones. In reaction, the English Football League has considered banning the embrace, latterly with the putative alibi of the risk of HIV infection (Peters 1, 3; Simpson 88). And in sentencing a man for indecent exposure in 1989, an Australian magistrate blamed the national cricket team’s “homosexual-type behavior” and “unmanly practices” for creating a climate of loose public morality. Two weeks prior to that decision, a prominent Australian sports-writer, formerly of the *National Inquirer* but also laying claims to New Journalism, devoted his entire by-lined column to a paranoid fantasy. He imagined himself facing the ethical dilemma of being afraid to make a successful play: if he drops the ball, his team suffers; if not, there is the threat of being kissed by the bowler and shaming his family on national television (Wells).

At such critical moments, sport figures masculinity as an issue. Andy Medhurst has argued that the male pinup draws out insecurity, instability, and contradictions in masculinity. Which kind of gaze is expected to consume it? Contrary to conventional masculine icons, the pinup pacifies the body, an impression that must be corrected (Medhurst 4–5). In the case of Andrew Ettingshausen, as we shall see later, his careers as a professional model and rugby league footballer involved a historic crossover. Each profession relied in part on the other for recognition, but this also produced a contradiction between the “doing” codes of sport and the “done-to” codes of modeling. But this should not surprise us. The Australian rugby league authorities undertook a management audit of the

Sportsmen kissing  
one another on  
the field of play  
in congratulation  
and mutual  
ecstasy has  
become the  
object of  
administrative,  
legal, and  
promotional  
gazes, as well as  
approvingly  
hedonistic ones.

game in the early 1980s, when the sport faced bankruptcy. Along with a rationalization of clubs and more professional administration, the league authorities created a new post of marketing manager, initially held by Graeme Foster. Foster aimed to “get away from the game’s ‘thugby’ league image and promote the players as fit, skilled athletes.” Ettingshausen was both an exemplar and a beneficiary of this development. The TV audience increased 10 percent in 1989 (including a 21 percent increase among women) after a pre-season promotional commercial with Tina Turner, described by the game’s officials as “a ballsy campaign that appealed to women and young men, broadened the game’s appeal, and reached into the white-collar audience without alienating the league’s traditional blue-collar supporter base.” By 1993, 30 percent of Australian women were regularly watching league games. Women all over the world routinely make up about a fifth of the readers of general sports magazines (Cunningham and Miller 69–71; Shoebridge; Pearce and Campbell 18; Guttman 130–31). Of course, women have long formed a preponderance of the TV audience for professional wrestling, while half the twenty-four million people in Britain watching a 1990 World Cup soccer game between England and Germany were women, leading to speculation that TV production houses and female viewers were both engaged by the “bum not the ball,” as the *Observer* put it (Packard 77; O’Connor and Boyle 108, 117, 116). When bum meets ball, the female gaze becomes very troubling.

### **A Short History of the Penis**

An erection on Rodin’s *Thinker* is a shocking thought. One cannot decently “have a hard on” everywhere.

—Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

Augustine’s account of Adam and Eve’s transgression and subsequent fall emphasizes that their new sense of physical shame is very much about lack of control: from having easily exercised genital organs prior to the Fall, they are now liable to “a novel disturbance in their disobedient flesh,” a flesh that is homologous to their own disobedience of God. Lust becomes opposed to the spirit, leaving the rest of us with original sin. The pudenda, or “parts of shame,” are named as such because lust can “arouse those members independently of their decision . . . to rebel against their will.” The “movements of their body” manifest “indecent novelty,” and hence shame. These feelings derive from the capacity of the penis to get out of whack. For Augustine, the “genital organs have become

as it were the private property of lust” (Augustine 522–23, 578, 581). The penis is a visible, obvious, metaphorically transparent genital. Today, ethnomethodologists distinguish it from the vagina because it is the “cultural genital,” a master signifier that should, *ceteris paribus*, be present if the person is to be regarded as a complete person. Masculinity and femininity are defined in relation to it (Kessler and McKenna 153–54). But the penis is difficult to leave alone—now, or in the past.

Circumcision seems to date back six thousand years to Egyptian notions that suitability for leadership could be judged through personal cleanliness (Wallerstein 7). Its most direct significance in our own time dates from directives in the Old Testament/Jewish Bible and the Koran, and from medical theories about hygiene, cancer, untimely ejaculation, and masturbatory desire. The Bible tends to materialize God in either weaponry or people. Each is tied to pain and suffering in ways that become connotative signs outside the narrative flow that surrounds them. Circumcision allows divine entry into the human form (Scarry 204, 235). The First Book of Moses found God appearing to Abram and forming a covenant: renamed Abraham, the mortal man would become “a father of many nations.” In return, all the male children born or coming to live in those nations must lose their foreskin flesh: the alternative being that an uncircumcised man’s “soul shall be cut off from his people” (Gen. 17:4, 14). The penis is quite critical as a public space of religious performance and representation in the Old Testament. But this is problematized somewhat in “The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians,” in which Paul identifies Christ’s legacy as a freedom from the “yoke of bondage” masquerading as membership of the chosen people: “I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing” (Gal. 5:2). It is faith through love that offers salvation: purity of life rather than purity of ritual begins to inflect the genitals. We can see synecdochical ties here to the auto- and allo-disciplined male body that so fascinated Foucault.

Despite a loss in modishness for Christians, circumcision abounds. For example, contemporary gender relations among Pintupi people of the Australian Western Desert are symbolically encapsulated in male circumcision processes. The public treatment of the penis is an index of age and position, again through a form of reciprocal covenant: the circumciser provides the young man with his daughter as a wife, in exchange for the pain he has inflicted. Ritual knowledge and the gift of woman are paid for with the foreskin, just as initiation is indexed in the penile sheath. Its loss is a sign that the initiate is ready to become an autonomous subject in terms of self-management, while being inexorably tied to a relational nexus with older men (Myers 174, 236, 239). Here, the penis is a public object, but it is not weakened by this condition. Rather, as Maurice Bloch shows for the Merina of Madagascar, the highly formalized processes of

circumcision and its circumstances are transferrable with shifts in the loci of male power across the history of a people, precisely because the changes are not so much propositional as ritualistic (Bloch 190–95).

We might pause a moment now to consider the mythology surrounding penises of color. Frantz Fanon's account of white projections onto black male genitals is central here. Fanon (when he is not announcing clitoral orgasms as immature) argues that "everything takes place on the genital level" in white imaginings of "the Negro." He is endowed with "tremendous sexual powers" enhanced by constant mating in the jungle, with a "potency" that "is hallucinating." These absurdities illustrate white men's "sexual inferiority," a contradictory mass of feelings that combines an elevation of the phallus to omniscience, and a hatred of the black man for being the ultimate "penis symbol." As per Augustine's notion of genitals out of control, Fanon points to the equation of black maleness with penile excess and the risks of uncontrolled lust (157, 159, 165). And this trend continues. Recent Canadian research produces a sociobiological spectrum that places people of different races along a continuum of sexual civics and criminality that is divined from the size of their genitals. Here, blacks are large and uncontrolled, Asians are small and restrained, and whites are the magical median (Fung 145–46).

Pasi Falk dates the European investiture of penile cultural objects with an evil iconic power to sixteenth-century attempts by Roman Catholics to counteract the iconoclasm of Protestantism by playing up the beatific nature of "good objects" and the turpitudinous nature of "bad" ones. But the key issue was always readership: its composition and its practices. Texts *per se* were less worrisome. The erotic in art was not subject to mass production at this time, so no strict opposition was drawn between sex and purity. Manners, rather than products, were the site of obscenity until the end of the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, Kant developed his bifurcation of the sublime and the beautiful, via the exclusion of a third, less worthy concept—the sensual, the pleasurable, the visceral—to describe those bodily experiences that lacked an apparatus of commentary to validate, explicate, and enable them. His followers' horror was clearly apparent in early reactions against the artistic claims made for photography, which was held to be irredeemably caught in actuality to the point where its naturalism defied the processes of interpretation by being a presentation of materials, rather than their representation (Falk 10, 4–5, 7–8). Furthermore, from the eighteenth century, sex in Europe was privatized, domesticated into an isomorphism with intimacy. This helped to produce a new shyness and a communicative ethic of indirectness, even as sex was theorized for Christians as simultaneously disgusting, tender, excessive, and necessary; and theorized for governments as simultaneously biological and psychological, as given and alterable (Luhmann

111–13). The late nineteenth century saw an end to the veneration of penile reliquiae from Jesus’s foreskin, as sex-related body parts were redefined and privatized (Wallerstein 10). At once sanctified and demeaned, free representation of the genitals in search of pleasure (i.e. porn) came to raise the threat of transcendence beyond religious, cultural, and social norms, as the self was objectified and then surpassed in a spectacular move of auto-secularization that weighed heavily on the offices of both public and religious government (Peckham 288, 298).

This duality continues. Michelangelo’s *David*, something of an oddity for its own time, has been both valorized as high art and derided as obscene. Prints of his work caused trouble for the vice-police in the U.S. and Australia well into the twentieth century. And in 1985, a swimming pool mural in a London nurse’s home was whitewashed by administrators to hide full frontal male nudity, leading senior registered nurse Sian Hillier to ask whether this meant that “young and innocent nurses” would be given blindfolds when “handling the unmentionable object” (Easthope 16). You can touch, but you must not look. Through conventional aesthetics the nude female body is disarticulated from women as social agents. The male form is, however, instantly exposed to ridicule when it is revealed in this way. The nude male body’s capacity to metonymize power depends on its being secreted; once secreted, a sleight of hand is revealed (Davis 68–69).

Certain aspects of modernist aesthetics despise the realist codes of photographs even as they supposedly reverse the relationship of form, beauty, and artistic legitimacy. For Baudelaire, photography was the natural ally of pornography in its ability to circulate lewd materials to the mass public through an indexical link of image to object. Photography was tied in the popular imagination to a sexual charge, with the camera acting as a tool of seduction (Falk 20–21; Solomon-Godeau 235). In the eyes of the pornography police of our own time, the photograph is notorious for its “coercive immediacy” (Hunter et al. 89). The late-nineteenth-century spread of the photograph coincided, of course, with the spread of empire, and Britain saw hundreds of thousands of Orientalist male porn shots seized by the state. Ironically, such confiscation was critical to the creation of an erotic photo archive. The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction, which holds over seventy-five thousand dirty pictures, benefited for many years from the careful nurturance of relationships with metropolitan law-enforcement agencies. The archive includes a wide array of physical culture exposures seized in the 1940s and 1950s, most of them homoerotic and/or sadomasochistic.

So the penis is historically contingent as an organ suitable for treatment and as an object ripe for representation. While the penis is a weighty sign, its dimensions and effects are worryingly variable: hard to tie up and

Through  
 conventional  
 aesthetics the  
 nude female  
 body is  
 disarticulated  
 from women as  
 social agents. The  
 male form is,  
 however, instantly  
 exposed to  
 ridicule when it is  
 revealed in this  
 way. The nude  
 male body’s  
 capacity to  
 metonymize  
 power depends  
 on its being  
 secreted.

hard to tie down. Male genitals are held to embody a holy beauty in certain aesthetic discourses dating from the nineteenth century. But problems arise when they are represented for the purposes of sexual excitation, especially as this necessitates a disproportionate, wandering penis, a penis that goes out of whack and sets the rest of its body askew. In short, a penis that becomes ugly. But more than this, the visible, material practice of libido, a sign of Adam's rejection of God's instructions, renders isomorphic the relationship of the owner-operator to his penis and his relationship to the divine, based on a capacity to control and manage native desires (Falk 12–14).

For the psychoanalytically inclined, anxieties about the penis remove it from the private and public expression of homosexual desire and sublimate it in the direction of "social obligation" (Easthope 15). Clearly, the hermeneutics of spotting genitals is now so common a public exercise that it may be the most enduring and widespread of Freud's legacies. We can "effortlessly and unembarrassedly identify the phallus in dream objects, domestic objects, and civil objects" (Scarry 282). As all these entities deny their basis in sex—on this reading—that is where their real nature can be known. But this means that objects which foreground their sex, such as the penis, become literally unknowable, since they fail to conceal their true function. And they are decoupled from sexuality; hence the need for men who market themselves as creatures of attraction predicated on virility to police their representation and secure escape clauses from the direct depiction of their genitals (witness Michael Douglas's contract for *Basic Instinct*, which proscribed full penile coverage). The burden of these events is clear: the penis emerges with the commodification of the post-modern male subject, brought out into the bright key lights of narcissistic day; but when it meets the slightly different signficatory system of professional sport at the crossroads of fashion photography and the law, the view is obscured by clouds, as the following case study will show.

**ET**

Take a cappuccino-drinking copywriter from Paddington, a man who has never watched a game of Rugby League in his life, and turn him into a fly on the dressing-room wall during the 1990 Kangaroo tour of England. This is what he'll see: HUNKS.

—James Kerr, "Hunks"

This history of the penis, while necessarily nasty, brutish and short, leads us now to the debates and discourses surrounding the April 1991 issue of

the glossy monthly magazine, *HQ*, an Australian periodical that addresses its readers as people who “know Umberto Eco isn’t a sounding device” (a dubious rendering, perhaps, of all parties named) and has recently been doubly transformed from the former *Good Housekeeping* and—briefly—*GH* into a magazine of knowing style. The issue in question was the least successful to that point. It sold 22,000 of a 30,000 print-run (Hickie, “Rugby”). But sales have a multiplier effect: *HQ* claims an actual readership of 154,000 (Hickie, “ET”). The April number contained, inter alia, interviews with Hanan al-Shaykh, Sonia Braga, John Cale, Paul Bowles, John Updike, and Quincy Jones; advertisements for Chanel N<sup>o</sup>. 5, New Caledonia, and the Northern Territory desert; a contest for the best film-script about the assassination of John F. Kennedy; fiction by Tim Winton; and (according to the Supreme Court of New South Wales two years later) a photograph of Andrew Ettingshausen’s penis.

From the moment of his appearance as a professional rugby league player in the mid-1980s, Andrew Ettingshausen has been a glamorous subject. His looks have brought modeling contracts and television appearances, his speed of foot a reputation as a sporting star; as a former coach put it, “he’s so quick he can flick off the light switch and be in bed before it’s dark.” These qualities, allied to his surname, have led to the genially oxymoronic soubriquet of “ET;” a great paradox when it is his beauty that provides so much of his recognition factor. It is claimed that he is “the face” of his sport, that his “boyish good looks” attract thousands of female spectators to a code that had formerly been characterized by extreme gender segregation in its audience appeal. The readers of *Cleo* magazine (a competitor on the Australian market with *Cosmopolitan*) voted him the “Sexiest Man Alive.” And he is part of an intensely visible sport: a few months after his penis was captured, Ettingshausen could be seen in an inter-State football competition that set an Australian TV ratings record.

The front cover of the *HQ* issue in question advertised its contents as including “some naked Kangaroos,” referencing the nickname of the Australian rugby league team. The article promised to answer the following questions: “How big is Big Mal?” (the team’s captain, Torres Strait Islander Malcolm Meninga) and “What does ET look like under the showers?” It answered like this: “Big Mal is indeed big, the biggest . . . and ET is built like a Greek god.”

In February 1993, a jury of two women and two men awarded Ettingshausen A\$350,000 tax-free in damages against Australian Consolidated Press (ACP), the owner of *HQ*, on the basis that he had been defamed by the photograph’s publication. The basis for this was the false implication that he had consented to having his “genitals exposed for reproduction” for a wide readership. By contrast, a person who lost his penis through an industrial accident might expect A\$45,000, or A\$80,000 for a leg.

Another contrast might be drawn with the baldingly unglamorous family man, Darrell Bampton, a player who received A\$11,000 in a settlement out of court in 1978 when his penis was broadcast nationally (and gratuitously) from the dressing room. The award to Ettingshausen drew criticism on these points from the New South Wales Law Society. Michael Lavarch, former chair of a parliamentary inquiry into the status of women and later a Federal Attorney-General, remarked that there was at least a paradox at play when the alarms over this image were compared with the daily media representations of women. The chair of the Federal Government's working party on the portrayal of women in the media, Anne Deveson, spoke of double standards, while hoping that men would at least now come to understand the source of many women's feelings about pornography. There have been various related developments in the United States. After Jeff Gillooly, Tonya Harding's ex-husband, circulated a video tape to tabloid TV programs of her getting undressed on their wedding night, New Jersey politicians announced a plan to fine or imprison people who sell or display nude photographs without their subjects' consent, on the ground that this resembles an assault.

Ettingshausen had initially claimed that the publication carried a series of imputations about him to the effect that he was an "indecent and lewd person" who had "willingly pandered to the prurient interests of . . . readers" by posing for the picture. He revised this later to say that it was suggested he had allowed his genitals to be reproduced for a wide readership (Hunt 3–4). For its part, the Press did not accept that the penis was exposed, arguing that the photograph would not cause Ettingshausen any harm. It further claimed that he had consented to the picture (despite the fact that the magazine had published an apology to the contrary in August 1991). The defendant's counsel, Ian Callinan, maintained that Ettingshausen's career as a model was predicated on sexualizing himself for women—something the player conceded—and that this meant "no sense of modesty could reasonably be offended" by the reproduction in question. In an expansively metaphorizing mode, Callinan described the shot of a penis in the shower as "something much less than . . . [a] storm in a teacup . . . a great deal of fuss over nothing much at all," and also as "that tracery of deep shadow and greyness and darkness." Ettingshausen's reputation had "never stood higher" and his modeling career had flourished. The Press appealed the finding and the amount, while agreeing to pay his court costs of A\$180,000 and A\$20,000 of the damages. Later in the year, a Court of Appeal found that the amount awarded had been "excessive," and a new trial was scheduled.

The proceedings raised a number of complex questions. Who owns the penis as an image? When is a penis a shadow? How do penises bring the men attached to them into disrepute? ET's counsel was Tom Hughes,

a noted former politician famous for his period as Attorney-General in 1970. (On one occasion, annoyed by anti-Vietnam War demonstrators in his garden, Hughes had pursued them with a cricket bat.) In the ET hearing, his antipathy towards Kerry Packer, the richest man in Australia and owner of ACP, who had just discarded Hughes in favor of another law firm, was a strong subtext to what went on and how it was perceived by others. During the case, Hughes cross-examined Brett M. Cochrane, who took the photograph: “His penis was in the photograph, wasn’t it?” Cochrane looked at the magazine and replied: “There’s no denying that.” He said that he could make the penis out “on close inspection.” Cochrane added that he had not asked the players for permission to take the pictures, although he was there as an official tour photographer, had a general authorization to film from the Australian Rugby League, and had never been asked to stop work by anyone. (Cochrane later told a reporter, by way of background, that many members of the team regarded women as “just objects to root.”) In his questions to Shona Martyn, the editor of the magazine, Hughes asked whether she would be offended by the suggestion that she had consented to have her genitals photographed and published in a mass-circulation periodical. She responded that she would not, provided that the outcome was “a tasteful shot” in a magazine such as *HQ*, adding that she thought the picture in question was “flattering” to Ettingshausen. She dissented from Hughes’s view that a reasonable reader would assume that Ettingshausen was now an inappropriate person to continue in his job as a school development officer for his sport. She would agree to having her genitals photographed and reproduced if asked, but had received no offers.

When shown a massive enlargement of the image, Martyn conceded that she had been “careless” to allow a picture in the magazine that had a “shadow” between a man’s legs, a “shaded area” that might be taken to be a penis. She had “been struggling to look at it” and could just make out “some shadow.” Martyn denied that there was a “white shape with what looked like pubic hairs”—Hughes’s description—but would come at an interpretation of the image as “an off-white shape” that “could be a penis.” The following exchange then took place:

Hughes: Is it a penis or is it not?

Martyn: Well, I assume that if it’s in that part of the body, maybe it could be and maybe it might not be.

Hughes: What else could it be?

Martyn: I guess it could be a shadow . . .

Hughes: Is it a duck?

Martyn: I don’t think it would be a duck. (Hickie, “Editor”)

The line about the duck references Martyn's New Zealand accent. It is common for Australians to mock the way in which New Zealanders pronounce the flat "i," such that "six" becomes "sex," "fish and chips" becomes "fush and chups," and "dick" swells into "duck." The exchange stands in some contrast to the encounter between ET himself and his counsel on the same issue ("Is that your penis in the lower half of the photograph?" "Definitely"). Attempts to make photocopies of the offending images produce a trade-off between penile visibility and color: accurate reproduction of the shadow washout the red lettering across the page.

The presiding judge in the New South Wales Supreme Court believed that the damages payment was reasonable and criticized subsequent media coverage of the payout. Justice Hunt emphasized that the "award was made not simply because the plaintiff's penis was shown in the photograph," but because the publication in *HQ* would have been "an extraordinarily serious imputation about a well-known young sportsman with an unchallenged good reputation for observing standards of decency" in the eyes of "the ordinary reasonable reader." He added another A\$13,416.66 to the payment as 2 percent interest, noting that the defendant had conducted the case like "a death wish." Justice Hunt stressed that Ettingshausen "is entitled to a good cushion" (Hickie, "Judge Defends"; O'Neill).

One of the critical cases cited as a precedent was *Burton v. Crowell Pub. Co.*, a case from 1936 in which the Second Circuit Court of Appeals for the Southern District of New York heard an appeal in an action that had previously been dismissed. The plaintiff was Crawford Burton. Burton complained that an image of him had been published by the defendant that, inter alia, made him look "physically deformed and mentally perverted," as well as "guilty of indecent exposure." The Court found that the defendant had a case of libel and slander to answer, even though the "trivial ridicule" that might descend on Burton was "patently an optical illusion," and regardless of the fact that the image was part of a text in which he had consented to appear (*Burton v. Crowell*).

The image in question? The Crowell Publishing Company had printed a photograph of Burton in an advertisement for Camel cigarettes. Burton, a renowned amateur steeplechase jockey, was quoted as endorsing Camels for their calming, restorative effect after "a crowded business day." This annotation accompanied two photographs. The first, which did not excite legal action, depicted Burton in his riding attire after the race, holding cigarette, whip, and cap, and with "Get a lift with a Camel" as the caption. Problems arose with the other picture. It represented him after the little death, the race-finish when it is time for all good jockeys and horses to draw deep breaths in the postclimactic moment. Burton is shown in the somewhat less dramatic, regulatory moment of the weigh-in.

On the way there, he is shot carrying his saddle, one hand under the cantle and the other under the pommel. The seat is about a foot below his waist, and the line formed by a loose girth appears to connect him to it. Herein lies the problem: it looks like a dick. Or in the terminology of Circuit Judge Learned Hand, “the photograph becomes grotesque, monstrous, and obscene; and the legends, which without undue violence can be made to match, reinforce the ribald interpretation. That is the libel.” Burton had posed for the photographs—unlike ET, except in the most generic sense—but he had not been shown the outcome. His penis had been accidentally constituted in sites and sizes that were unrealistic; the power of cropping (*Burton v. Crowell* 154). Knowing that Judge Hand was a strong supporter of free speech adds to this sense of a problem with proportion and person rather than penis qua penis (Heins 172).

In Burton’s case, the Court decided that the fact that this was an accident was transparent to all potential viewers. It was “the camera, and the camera alone, that had made the unfortunate mistake.” The outcome amounted to a “caricature” rather than the pictorial equivalent of a verbal utterance amenable to confirmation or disproof. The judges found that, just as caricatures ridicule their subjects regardless of accuracy—they are monumentally monologic in this sense—so this unfortunate syntagm of rider and extension, where body and apparatus merged, called up a uniform reading practice that mocked their subject. This raised the specter of indefinite but determinate humiliation, akin to alleging that a man is a eunuch or a woman has been served with a summons in the bath (the list of analogous legal precedents decomposes into a Borges-like lexicon). The reading protocols engaged by such textual forms do not amount to characterological interpretations; they do not call up a moral audit of their subject. Rather, it is their labor to encourage a set of negative feelings in the reader regardless of authorial intent, mischance, or interpretability (*Burton v. Crowell* 155–56).

The penis is one of those well-hung signs, weighted down beyond the capacity of the postmodern to float it. If there is no penis where one should logically be in the ET-shot, then is ET still a man? What is in that space? A *différend*? I suspect those issues inform the jury’s decision in some sense. For as Peggy Phelan has shown, the “visible real” of texts such as photographs is quickly enlisted by “representational notions of the real” that come from the human sciences and government. This enlistment serves to establish the effect of transparent truth beyond the recorded image, grafting onto the photo-effect the discourses of these sciences in order to render theory empirical. Mimesis goes guarantor for the subject who utilizes it (Phelan 3, 6–7). This regulated indeterminacy in the face of the semantic necessity of penile existence encourages some further consideration of organic history. At the same time, the privacy of

The penis is not  
to be investigated  
as part of mass  
culture, but  
within the firm  
binding of  
learned books.

the penis comes to stand for the one part of ET that the public is expected to fantasize over—or sublimate desires for—but not see. Why?

In his evidence during the case, Ettingshausen acknowledged that he had promoted himself as a sex symbol. This strategy had expressed itself at such sites as calendar stills, posters, a TV commercial for jeans where he appeared without a shirt on pulling up the zipper of his denims, and a posed photograph in pajamas designed to interest straight women. These appearances were, he thought, tasteful, but the *HQ* photograph was “a very offensive shot and a pornographic shot.” The difference between his promotional strategy and the offending image lay in a combination of his feelings about his penis and the genre of publishing in which it was reproduced. He found the picture affronting and pornographic “because it shows my genitals which I believe to be a very personal part of my body which I do not want to be shown to anybody” (Hickie, “Nudity”). The body could not be known at ease, in an unposed, unanalyzed, unprofessional condition for “anybody” to see.

The “anybody” in question was a particular kind of reader: it obviously did not include his fellows in the shower at the time of the original event, and perhaps not his wife. But he had been dogged since the magazine appeared by taunts from colleagues when posing for team pictures (“Hang your cock out, ET” and “Make sure you don’t get ET’s cock in the photograph” were representative statements) and he had received repeated requests from women to autograph the picture. These feelings about his own penis extended to and were informed by the global standing of the penis, but that status was again dependent on questions of reproduction and reception. When asked if the simple sight of male genitals was offensive, he replied: “Not in an encyclopedia but in a book such as this, yes” (Hickie, “Nudity”; O’Neill; Harari). (In referring to *HQ* as a book, he was presumably associating all perfect binding with that status.)

There is the sense here that the penis can be a legitimate object of disembodied study, where it is a fetishized sign standing for a generic object without any specific human identification. Conversely, when it appears outside the domain of learning, as an item of mass culture with a specific individual as its referent, the reader’s formation changes from that of the disinterested inquirer after knowledge into a gossipy subject of camp. The penis is not to be investigated as part of mass culture, but within the firm binding of learned books. This interpretation is enhanced by the testimony given in the case by Wayne Pearce, a former international player: “I wouldn’t want my pecker in the paper.” Pearce is famous for being a non-drinking, nonsmoking, ever-smiling natural advertisement for beatitudinous living. He had been unable to buy the magazine because sales were so rapid but had seen the photograph when a female work colleague was handing it round for her coworkers to see. His reaction was profound: “I

was just repulsed by it. I didn't want to read the article at all . . . and I still haven't read it." Again, the problem was not the sight of men's genitals in the shower, but their reproduction. Ettingshausen's wife Monique also gave evidence in support, noting that he didn't "do nude photos," had been anxious since the publication of this one, and was experiencing difficulty concentrating at work. Robert Abbott, the Australian Rugby League's general manager, described Ettingshausen as "the epitome of what was good and healthy," somebody who "always portrayed an excellent standard of living and decency" (Hickie, "Rugby"; Thorp). The issue, then, is less that of representation than of ethical indolence. Similarly, when Edouard Manet's *Olympia* and *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* were first exhibited, it was as much their air of languorous ease and unconcern as the depiction of nudity that enraged critics (Heins 106). And here we see the link to training and disciplining the sporting body.

The pursuit of the popular by the law is necessitated by unruly citizens who may fail to comport themselves properly. As that lugubrious but worthy study into book sex (*On Pornography*) has shown, the very notion of prurience, which seems to have been central to Ettingshausen's discomfort, is historically related to specific occasions of textual reproduction and encounter. This concern is about the ability of a formation of readers to balance their own bodily responses to a text with the tasks of aesthetic interpretation at a higher plane. It accounts for a movement in the governmentality of pornography towards specifying the occasion of reading and the practices and identities of readers, away from the suggestion that texts are ever inherently obscene. The question of circulation as a test of pornography develops with the spread of print culture and its ability to overlap boundaries of high and low aesthetics. This centers the question of readership and the government of readers as citizens; hence the decline of absolutist defenses of art that briefly flourished in debates over, for example, D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1961) (Hunter et al. 211, 146, 138–39). Pornography is an uneasy border between the private and the public, especially at the site of a semi-public shower and the display of an always already sexualized male body. Foucault's model of self-discipline, of internalized and automated police work, is transformed here from the individuated subject within the photograph to its manifold, unruly readership, whose activities in the realm of the popular must be evaluated and reordered in pursuit of obedience.

The specificity of authorship is equally important for many people involved in sports journalism. Wayne Pearce's own team, Balmain, was taken to court for refusing dressing room access to Jacqueline Magnay, a reporter with the *Sydney Morning Herald*. No post-match interviews with players or officials could be conducted in this area by women (not a policy held by other clubs in the competition), because Balmain men

required particular privacy. This issue of equal access to the secrets of the changing-shed has legal precedent, dating from the 1977 World Series, when female baseball reporters were banned from the locker room. Despite legal victories for women in case after case, many obstacles are still erected to their free passage, including sexist remarks and intimidating behavior by players and officials.

Of course, the privacy issue goes beyond gender; news polls indicate public dissatisfaction with any journalists expecting to enter the rooms. Again and again, the lines of force dividing civility from its other are tested and redefined under these circumstances. The characteristically uneasy interdependence of journalism and professional sport is nowhere better traced than here. Every reporter needs to notice and every player needs to be the object of such notice. But no one is clear about what should be noticed, or how far the inspectorial gaze should go, or whose it should be. Heartaches begin in the male changing-sheds because the post-match male letdown is a cathartic, liminal event, a space for what Elias calls the “mock contest” of body-contact sport to be transcended (159). Perhaps it is the fear of a female gaze directed at the shadows—or their gaze at men gazing into that darkness—that so exercises men’s minds. For the shower scene from *HQ* is far from the tautness of *ET* in his pinup mode. He is engaged in jovial self-repair-and-maintenance, blissfully unaware of any duty of control.

And *ET*’s gray areas are literal as well as metaphorical. Australian Consolidated Press argued in court that the source of Ettingshausen’s shame amounted to “a very, very indistinct collection of shadows” that were “no more than in the groin area.” Tom Hughes countered by describing the notion that the jurors could not discern a penis as “an insult to your intelligence.” The penis was definitely there in the text: “There is some suggestion that it’s a shadow. I bet it’s the only shadow you’ve ever seen that is lighter than the surrounding area” (Hickie, “*ET*”; O’Neill). And legal precedent exists for a preoccupation with pubic hair as a kind of Peircian index of a darker, tubular presence. When Lawrence’s pictures caused great anxiety in Britain, one of the police tests mobilized to spot the probability of obscenity was the search for hair (Hunter et al. 79, 141). This raises some complicated matters in the undertheorized domain of literary-critical follicle forensics. Nagisa Oshima’s defense of his work against police prosecution makes mention of Ikeda Masuo’s prize-winning novel, *Offered to the Aegean Sea* (1977). The book refers to “the underground sea” as a metaphor for pubic hair. Oshima contrasts this with the formal indictment of his own work for its frankness in the depiction of heterosexual intercourse. This then leads him into a complicated, sardonic troping of signifiers that plays with the arbitrariness of the obscene:

If, for example, “pubic hair” is “frank” and “the underground sea” is not “frank,” then I think there would be absolutely no problem if I said “metropolitan police headquarters” in place of “male sexual organs” and “public prosecutor’s office” in place of “female sexual organs.” Give me the basis on which the “frank,” “pubic hair,” “male sexual organs,” and “female sexual organs” are considered more “obscene” than “the underground sea,” “metropolitan police headquarters,” and “public prosecutor’s office.” (275)

In the case that most concerns us here, ACP claimed that even if the jury thought there was “the suggestion of a penis,” Ettingshausen’s overt use of his body as a sex object to advance his career as a model problematized any suggestion of defamation and the award of damages. (Perhaps ET certainly modeled something for Tommy Raudonikis, an ex-player who commented after the hearing that he would “drop my ol’ fella’ out anytime anywhere for that kind of money.”) So we are returned once more to the question of men’s bodies under surveillance, and to the etymology that connects pornography with prostitution. As the Appeals Court that set aside the ET payout remarked, “[c]ommon experience demonstrates that male nudity is now much more frequently seen” (Falvey). Masculinity is not so much destabilized here; more, it makes one of its appearances, it is occasioned—made overt, perhaps made to happen—by such events. Hence the power to shock, the pay-per-view damages, that brought ET’s shadow into the bright lights of the law. And this is very much about the sometimes contradictory meeting of legal, sporting, and commercial systems inside postindustrial society: to repeat, losing a penis in a work accident provides a lesser damages payout than losing power over its representation, if you are a model as well as a footballer. Commercial objectification of the male body is increasing, and running parallel most of the time, in the two systems of fashion and sport, with the male genitals ambiguously sited/cited/sighted as visible objects of pleasure and symbols of unseeable power. The legal system, which reserves the power to negotiate these positions, contradicts the commodification of male sexuality by upholding a much older stature for the penis as protected sovereign signifier of the phallus.

Commercial  
 objectification of  
 the male body is  
 increasing, and  
 running parallel  
 most of the time,  
 in the two  
 systems of fashion  
 and sport, with  
 the male genitals  
 ambiguously  
 sited/cited/sighted  
 as visible objects  
 of pleasure and  
 symbols of  
 unseeable power.

## Conclusion

We felt like joining hands in a prayer of thanks for the two or three actors willing to do a scene involving real sexual intercourse . . .

The problem was the man. Nearly all the men flinched at the idea. They all said, “I’m afraid I won’t get an erection when the time comes.”

“You have a big one, don’t you?” I asked audaciously over and over.

“I’m confident that it’ll be big at the crucial moment, but I think that normally it may be a little smaller than most people’s.” Eight out of ten men gave that response.

Two out of ten said theirs was average. I considered them to be the confident ones.

I am one of those lacking in confidence, but I was delighted to find out that there are so many of us.

—Nagisa Oshima, *Cinema, Censorship, and the State*

I want to do two things in this conclusion: deal with the question of size, and then of definition. First, what matters as a penis? And second, what counts as masculinity? Gay pornography dedicates a great deal of time and space to penis dimensions. Brian Pronger, author of the major study on sport and homosexuality, defends this equation of size with maleness against criticisms that it is reductionist and biologicistic: the accident of birth always already excludes women from ownership of the phallic symbol, so why not proceed to cut more and more people off from it (161)? Maureen in Elmore Leonard’s *City Primeval* (1980) has spent eight years in Detroit’s Sex Crimes field, dealing with how to spot an “infantile penis” in a suspects’ parade. One hundred and fifty-seven sets of pants were dropped, but no common agreement ever emerged on the exemplification of penile infantilism (255–56). It’s all a bit of a laugh, in an anxious way, for such men. Consider John Davidson’s important article in *Cleo*, “Does Penis Size Really Matter? One Guy Gets Honest.” The most useful component is a measuring apparatus that appears to the side of his text. It is calibrated to determine whether a man’s penis is “SMALL” (1–10 cm), “AVERAGE” (11–20 cm), “IMPRESSIVE” (21–25 cm), or “OUCH” (26 cm and counting) (69). Now this clearly has an element of parody; but it is also a movement away from the discovery of conscious and unconscious fears about proportions and onto a very strict calculation of difference (Fanon suggests that the average length of both white and black men’s penises is 12 cm [170]). Consider the lines of force drawn over women’s bodies in specifying “correct” measurements of breast, waist, and hip size. Men are now the target of a disciplinary gaze, long-experienced by others, that can be excruciatingly precise in its desire for calibration (as in the case of Britain’s Obscene Publications Squad, which defines as erect—and hence actionable—a textual penis that is at an angle to its owner of more than thirty degrees [Simpson 147]).

As Wil Coleman has indicated, two principal discourses interrogate masculinity. The first of these presents a dramaturgical view. Men act out their gender in public performances derived from a repertoire of practices that together amount to a role. By contrast, the second discourse treats its object as a hidden truth to be understood through symptomatic readings

that plumb latent depths from the surface to reveal and expose men in all their specificity. In each case, various practices that are catalogued as “masculine” could equally well be ascribed to other requirements or performances within a social formation: those of teaching, or voting, or policing, or cooking. Masculinity is an occasioned activity, not a system (193, 195). It appears at such moments as school sports, the law case concerning Andrew Ettingshausen’s body, and acts of sexual violence: when it is utilized as a pedagogic, analytic, or aggressive category. But these occasions do not tell us about each other, or about processes that are going on elsewhere. They are local and specific to those sites, not to an overall movement of masculinity.

This is not to deny that sport is a dynamic site for the renegotiation of the public culture of gender. But it does suggest that the extant terms of debate in social and cultural theory are too static and essentialist to deal with the warp and woof of men. The man simply “is” most of the time; his masculinity emerges when it is called up (Coleman cites an occasion when a man is asked to carry a bag that is conventionally coded as feminine and becomes aware of sexual difference). This is decidedly not to argue that these moments are secretions of what is otherwise denied: there are no things to deny, there is nothing beneath the surface, and they are not part of a broader, coherent problematic. There are simply too many other contexts of ethnomethodological membership to be accounted for (bell-ringing, color, age, newsprint readership, gardening-appliance purchase, and criminal activity) to encompass the diverse practices of all men all the time under this handily tidy soubriquet. For its very tidiness leads down one of two paths. Either men constantly monitor their performance of masculinity to ensure a seamless weave to its direction, with no grammatical mistakes and specific semantic and syntactical shifts to underscore their gender, or they are constituted unconsciously and collectively by a mass ideology that can only be uncovered through the heroic labor of social theory. Rather than these somewhat gracelessly remorseless antinomies, we would do better to aim the study of gender in the direction of explicit, knowable—and hence realistically contestable—occasions of maleness (Coleman 197–98).

Such occasions can themselves only be known through a variety of theoretical approaches and analytic techniques, bringing together forms of knowledge in the spheres of law, text, society, and economy. Policing, aestheticizing, behaving, and spending are interlocked as never before to produce a lattice of technologies of truth. When Ian Callinan drew into question ET’s complaint, on the grounds that the player-model-junior development officer had posed in sexually suggestive ways for women’s magazines, he interpreted the display of the male body in a unified way that sought a definite signified in a notion of availability that “deliberately,

overtly exploited himself as a sex symbol.” Conversely, when Tom Hughes responded, he found a significant distinction between “unoffensive, non-pornographic photographs that emphasize a person’s sexual attributes” and “this wretched photograph.” Masculinity is being unwrapped, fold by fold. But it remains to be interpreted, to be finally known through suggestion, as a shadow and an outline. The threat of tumescence, disfiguring the proportions of male beauty by opening up the prospect of an organ out of control, continues to be its limitation for governance, and its possibility for cultural politics. As when Abe Sada cuts off her lover’s penis “because of love,” and wears it “next to her body” in *In the Realm of the Senses* (Oshima 285), something far more interesting and multifaceted than Freudian therapy-in-the-name-of-interpretation is engaged: the law, the image, and gendered power are brought forward in overt ways for our delectation and concern.

## Afterword

In February 1995, a new trial saw ET receive a reduced payout of A\$100,000.

## References

My thanks to Sarah Berry, Jim McKay, Monica Marciczkiewicz, Randy Martin, Helen Pringle, and Andrew Ross for their assistance.

Augustine. *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, ed. David Knowles, trans. Henry Bettenson. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976.

Barham, Susan Baggett. “The Phallus and the Man: An Analysis of Male Striptease.” In *Australian Ways: Anthropological Studies of an Industrialised Society*, ed. Lenore Manderson. Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1985.

Bloch, Maurice. *From Blessing to Violence: History and Ideology in the Circumcision Ritual of the Merina of Madagascar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

*Burton v. Crowell Pub. Co.* 82 F2d 154 (1936).

Coleman, Wil. “Doing Masculinity/Doing Theory.” In *Men, Masculinities and Social Theory*, ed. Jeff Hearn and David Morgan. London: Unwin Hyman, 1990.

Cunningham, Stuart and Toby Miller. *Contemporary Australian Television*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1994.

Davidson, John. “Does Penis Size Really Matter? One Guy Gets Honest.” *Cleo* (October 1992): 68–70.

Davis, Melody D. *The Male Nude in Contemporary Photography*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.

Dyer, Richard. *Only Entertainment*. London: Routledge, 1992.

- Easthope, Antony. *What a Man's Gotta Do: The Masculine Myth in Popular Culture*. London: Paladin, 1986.
- Elias, Norbert. "An Essay on Sport and Violence." In *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process*, ed. Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.
- Ettingshausen v. Australian Consolidated Press Ltd.* 12807 of 1991. Supreme Court of New South Wales Common Law Division.
- Falk, Pasi. "The Representation of Presence: Outlining the Anti-Aesthetics of Pornography." *Theory, Culture, and Society* 10 (1993): 1–42.
- Falvey, Jennifer. "ET Damages Jury 'Over the Top'." *Australian*, 4 October 1993.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann. London: Polity, 1986.
- Foss, Paul. "Mapplethorpe Aglance." *Photofile* 3 (1985): 8–10.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- . "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century." In *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986.
- Fung, Richard. "Looking for My Penis: The Eroticized Asian in Gay Video Porn." In *How Do I Look? Queer Film and Video*, ed. Bad Object-Choices. Seattle, Wash.: Bay, 1991.
- Gray, Jerry. "Fuss Over Skater's Nude Video Echoes in New Jersey Assembly." *New York Times*, 20 February 1994.
- Guttmann, Allen. *Sports Spectators*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Harari, Fiona. "The Crotch of the Matter." *Australian*, 11 February 1993.
- Hargreaves, John. *Sport, Power, and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain*. Cambridge: Polity, 1986.
- Heins, Marjorie. *Sex, Sin, and Blasphemy: A Guide to America's Censorship Wars*. New York: New, 1993.
- Hickie, Kathleen. "Editor 'Careless' in Printing ET's Photo." *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 February 1993.
- . "ET Case a Storm in a Teacup: QC." *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 February 1993.
- . "Judge Defends Payout to ET." *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 February 1993.
- . "Nudity Not on for ET the 'Sex Symbol'." *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 February 1993.
- . "Rugby League Star 'Repulsed' by ET's Nude Shower Shot." *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 February 1993.
- Hunt, David J. Judgment in 12807 of 1991—*Ettingshausen v. Australian Consolidated Press*.
- Hunter, Ian, David Saunders, and Dugald Williamson. *On Pornography: Literature, Sexuality and Obscenity Law*. London: Macmillan, 1993.
- Jardine, Alice. "Men in Feminism: Odor di Uomo or Compagnons de Route?" In *Men in Feminism*, ed. Alice Jardine and Paul Smith. New York: Methuen, 1987.
- Kerr, James. "Hunks." *HQ* (April 1991): 94–99.
- Kessler, Suzanne J. and Wendy McKenna. *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Kort, M. "Go, Jackie, Go." *Ms.* 17 (1988): 30–33.
- Leonard, Elmore. *City Primeval: High Noon in Detroit*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1986.

- Lewis, P. "Men on Pedestals." *Ten-8* 17 (1985): 22–29.
- Luhmann, Niklas. *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy*, trans. Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones. Cambridge: Polity, 1986.
- Medhurst, Andy. "Can Chaps be Pin-Ups? The British Male Film Star of the 1950s." *Ten-8* 17 (1985): 3–8.
- Miller, Toby. *The Well-Tempered Self: Citizenship, Culture, and the Postmodern Subject*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- Myers, Fred R. *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place, and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.
- O'Connor, Barbara and Raymond Boyle. "Dallas with Balls: Televised Sport, Soap Opera and Male and Female Pleasures." *Leisure Sciences* 12 (1993): 107–19.
- O'Neill, Anne-Marie. "Public Exposure." *Courier-Mail*, 13 February 1993.
- Oshima, Nagisa. *Cinema, Censorship, and the State: The Writings of Nagisa Oshima, 1956–1978*, ed. Annette Michelson, trans. Dawn Lawson. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992.
- Packard, Vance. *The Hidden Persuaders*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1960.
- Pearce, Melissa and Bronwyn Campbell. "Breaking the Rules." *B and T* 43 (1993): 18–19.
- Peckham, Morse. *Art and Pornography: An Experiment in Explanation*. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.
- Peters, Roy. *Television Coverage of Sport*. Birmingham: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Stencilled Paper 1, 1976.
- Phelan, Peggy. *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Pronger, Brian. *The Arena of Masculinity: Sports, Homosexuality, and the Meaning of Sex*. New York: St. Martin's, 1990.
- Reekie, Gail. "Feminism and Men's Bodies: More Thoughts on Male Sexuality." *Australian Feminist Studies* 6 (1988): 31–39.
- Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Shoebridge, Neil. "League's New Tack Wins Converts." *Business Review Weekly* 11 (1989): 164, 167.
- Simpson, Mark. *Male Impersonators: Men Performing Masculinity*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Solomon-Godeau, Abigail. *Photography at the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions, and Practices*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
- Synnott, Anthony. *The Body Social: Symbolism, Self, and Society*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Thorp, Diana. "League Star Hurt by Photo, Says Wife." *Australian*, 4 February 1993.
- Wallerstein, Edward. *Circumcision: An American Health Fallacy*. New York: Springer Publishing, 1980.
- Wells, Jeff. "A Slashing Ambush If I Should Dare to Catch It!" *Australian*, 6 February 1989, 22.