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Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover, eds., *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*. (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2004.) Pp. xx + 234 pp. Cloth, \$49.95, ISBN 0-8203-2423-X. Paper, \$19.95, ISBN 0-8203-2616-X.

For southern historians it sometimes seems as if our understanding of southern masculinity has not progressed much since the publication of Bertram Wyatt-Brown's *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behaviour in the Old South* twenty-five years ago. While those interested in lives of women have published numerous monographs and articles, outlining the particular stresses and strains to which enslaved women and their free counterparts were subjected to, the same cannot be said for men. Our stereotype of the upright southern man (nearly always elite whites), concerned with his honor and with expressing his mastery of his dependents, has remained largely intact. Friend and Glover's collection aims to challenge that monolithic view of southern masculinity and does so successfully.

Aware of the class and racial bias that haunts studies of antebellum masculinity, the editors have tried to put together a collection of essays that showcase the variety of different male experiences in the South. Hence we have essays that delve into the world of middle-class artisans in Petersburg, Virginia, the very different world inhabited by Choctaw men, and of enslaved men. Naturally some essays confirm what we already suspected – that the militia and military education was important in shaping white male identity for instance should not be particularly surprising. Yet even these essays are successful in challenging our assumptions and extending our knowledge. Jennifer Green's article on military education, for instance, shows how

submission to authority and self-discipline were, rather ironically, crucial to the formation of an acceptable male image while Harry Laver's article on the Kentucky militia reinforces the importance of display for white masculine identity. Lorri Glover suggests in her own article on the education of southern boys that the roots of the sectional divide can be traced back to the early national era when southern boys became far more aware of the differences between themselves and Yankees while at college in the North. As they grew up these boys became the legislators and orators who would fiercely defend southern rights.

Three essays examine the experiences of non-white southern men. Greg O'Brien charts the shifting gender roles amongst the Choctaw as the traditional male hunting role was supplanted by a trading one. Heather Williams stresses the importance of literacy to enable freedmen to assert themselves, both during and after the Civil War, and Ed Baptist, in perhaps the most significant article in the collection, studies the strategies used by enslaved men to maintain their masculine identity. Far from accepting that enslaved men were emasculated by slavery Baptist demonstrates that many men who were sold to the south and southwest from the upper south immediately re-created family groups. Masculinity for enslaved men cannot only be found in the violent resistance of those like Frederick Douglass or amongst runaways. Ultimately, he argues, enslaved men created an individualistic type of masculinity, that actually was not too far removed from that of their white masters in these new southern states.

This collection is a most welcome addition to the historiography, but it has also left quite a few gaps that future scholars can fill. We still know remarkably little about the

lives of poor white men, who only make passing appearance in this volume. This is partly because of the paucity of records that relate to southern poor whites, but I believe that careful archival research should still permit us to flesh out a fuller sense of the masculine traits of the south's largest social group. The nationwide popularity of sports and exercise in the 1850s was an almost exclusively male phenomenon, and yet very little has been written about its impact in the South. This also has the potential to be a fruitful area for future research. The sheer variety of the slave experience in the south undoubtedly leaves more work to be done on this aspect of southern masculinity. There is only so much that can go into an edited collection, and there are always gaps that one would like filled, but I prefer to think of the gaps as opportunities, ones that should be easier to undertake after the trail blazed by this path-breaking volume.

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