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### Review Of "Muscular Christianity: Manhood And Sports In Protestant America, 1880–1920" By C. Putney

Bruce Dorsey

*Swarthmore College*, [bdorsey1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:bdorsey1@swarthmore.edu)

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Creek heard the news of the battle and of casualties. More than do most campaign historians, they discuss the tending of the wounded and burial of the dead, including the journey of Lyon's body (he was killed during the battle) to its final resting place in Connecticut. They also describe the news reports after the battle that emphasized the honor various companies brought to their hometowns. Finally, they put the battle into context, not merely of the war itself but also of its aftermath. They end the book by relating how one Kansas newspaper, printing a history of the town's company of soldiers, published a list of soldiers who had "broken the social contract" by deserting and thus bringing dishonor on the town.

This is a remarkable book, at once very good campaign history and well-researched social history. The small size of the armies at Wilson's Creek allowed a depth of coverage perhaps not possible in other studies, but the authors took full advantage of their subject. The book deserves a place on any Civil War bookshelf.

BRIAN BURTON is associate professor of management and director of the MBA program at Western Washington University, Bellingham. He is the author of *Extraordinary Circumstances: The Seven Days Battles* (2001).

*Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880–1920.* By Clifford Putney. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001. Pp. x, 300. Illustrations, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$39.95.)

Clifford Putney explores a topic familiar to historians of masculinity: the thoroughgoing efforts by fin-de-siècle Protestant clergy and laymen in the United States and Britain to reinvigorate Protestantism with a heavy-handed dose of masculine energy and physicality. His claim that muscular Christianity "has been largely overlooked by historians" (p. 6) is likely to surprise readers familiar with the work of E. Anthony Rotundo, Gail Bederman, Michael Kimmel, Elliott Gorn, T. J. Jackson Lears, Susan Curtis, and Harvey Green. What Putney does contribute is a rich exposition of the sources produced by church-sport associations in which physical fitness was conflated with Christian zeal. This is a well-researched book filled with wonderful examples of writings that touted the manliness of sports and Jesus.

Putney begins by describing how ideas about muscular Christianity, particularly the notion that sports build character, were transmitted from their British origins, in works such as Thomas Hughes's popular *Tom Brown's School Days* (1856), to American popularizers. The Americans saw rigorous physical exercise and masculine activism ("the Strenuous Life," as Theodore Roosevelt called it) as the antidote to their anxieties about "overcivilization," "the new woman," the supposedly feminized upbringing of boys, and the church's declining authority amid the social dislocations of turn-of-the-century immigration

and urbanization. Mainline Protestant churches, in conjunction with organizations such as the YMCA and the Boy Scouts, effectively overturned longstanding hostility to play and sports and redefined Christian theology so that salvation “lay as much through the body as through the soul” (p. 63). In response to this quest for a hypermasculine Christianity, Putney reveals, many Protestant women also embraced the “strenuous life” by creating alternative organizations like the YWCA, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls. Putney argues too that Protestant foreign missionaries’ initial reliance on muscular Christianity was abandoned after World War I and replaced by an emphasis on peaceful cross-cultural fellowship and anticolonialism. By his analysis of the legendary football coach Amos Alonzo Stagg, Putney exposes the long line of coaches who have blended Christian ideas with their shaping of athletes, later seen in Tom Landry and in University of Colorado football coach Bill McCartney, who founded Promise Keepers, a late twentieth-century version of muscular Christianity.

Those already familiar with the vast literature on turn-of-the-century masculinity will not find much that is startlingly new in *Muscular Christianity*. Putney relies on paradigms of “separate spheres” and the “feminization of American culture,” which other scholars have questioned, and he adds little to the compelling question, recently explored by George Chauncey, John Gustav-Wrathall, and Kevin Murphy, of whether the relationships among men in muscular Christian movements (YMCA, Social Gospel, settlement houses) were homosocial or homoerotic. And at times, Putney misses the purely metaphorical use of the language of muscular Christianity that often represented a call for more vigorous zeal and faith rather than an equation of physically healthy bodies with Christianity. Nonetheless, Putney has produced a synthesis that constitutes an excellent starting place for readers unfamiliar with the topic of Protestantism and masculinity during the Progressive era.

BRUCE DORSEY, associate professor of history at Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, is the author of *Reforming Men and Women: Gender in the Antebellum City* (2002).

*An Engineer's Diary of the Great War*. [By Harry E. Spring]. Edited by Terry M. Bareither. (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2002. Pp. vii, 259. Illustrations, notes, appendices. \$32.95.)

*An Engineer's Diary of the Great War* is an edited version of the war diary and scrapbook kept by an Indiana native, Lieutenant Harry E. Spring, an electrical engineer in the 37th Engineers. It was earlier transcribed by his daughter and given to the editor by his granddaughter. The well-appointed book is nicely organized with appropriate illustrations (some of them photos taken by Spring himself) and excellent maps. The editor, engineer Terry M. Bareither, though not a professional