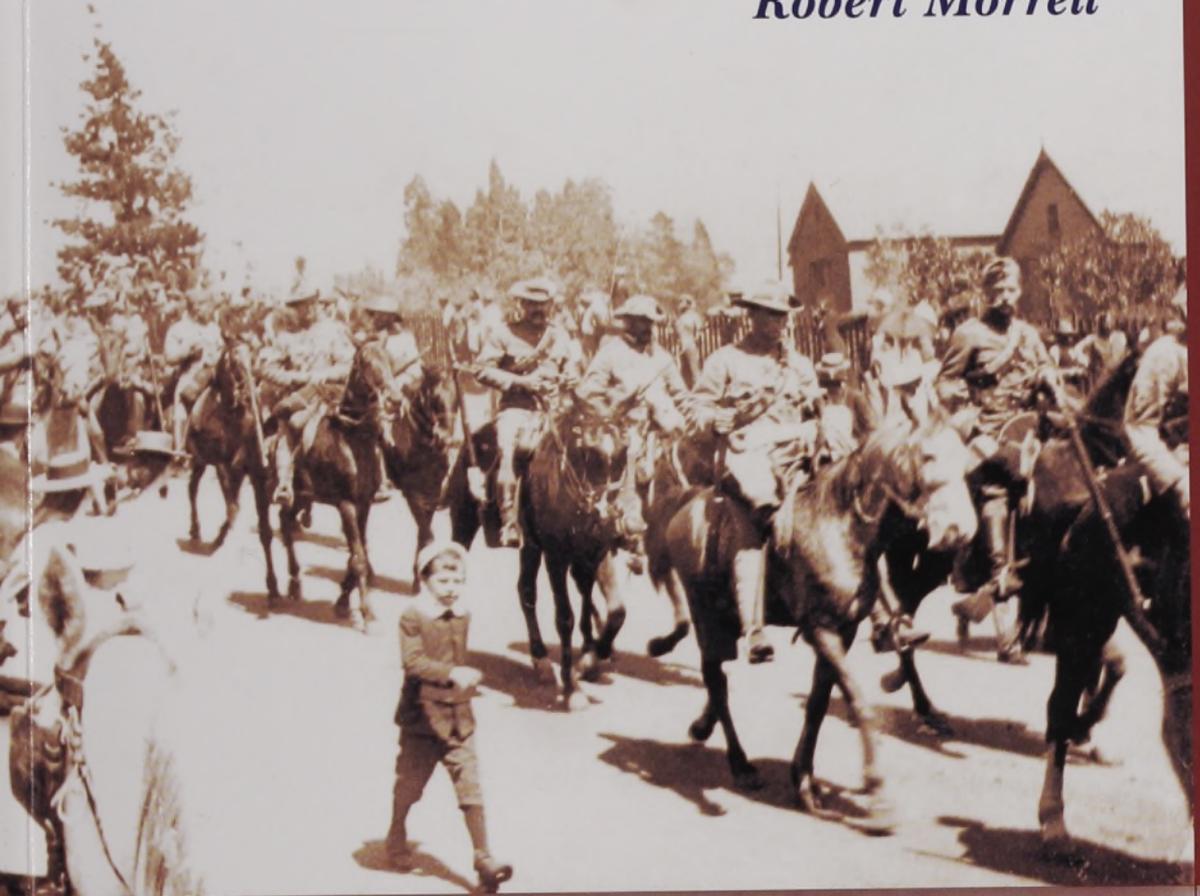


Robert Morrell



FROM BOYS TO GENTLEMEN

Settler Masculinity in Colonial Natal

1880 – 1920

HIDDINGH-CURRIE



UNISA

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HIDDINGH-CURRIE



*Winner of the
Hiddingh-Currie Award
for academic excellence*

FROM BOYS TO GENTLEMEN
Setler Membership in Colonial Vets
1880 - 1920

CONTENTS



FROM BOYS TO GENTLEMEN *Settler Masculinity in Colonial Natal* 1880 – 1920

Robert Morrell

University of South Africa, Pretoria

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CONTENTS

Preface – A personal note	ix
Acknowledgements	xv
List of illustrations	xviii
CHAPTER 1 <i>Prologue</i>	1
White settlers in South African historiography	3
The historiography of Natal's settlers	6
Present men, absent gender	8
Gender theories of masculinity	10
Settler masculinity	13
Gender in equality and Natal's settlers	18
CHAPTER 2 <i>The settlers of the Midlands and the political economy of Natal</i>	20
White settlers and the political economy of Natal	22
The old Natal families (ONFs)	35
Midland community and ONF mythology	39
CHAPTER 3 <i>Schooling: making men out of boys</i>	48
The development of an education system in the Midlands	50
The secondary boarding schools of the Natal Midlands	52
The masters and their pupils	57
School experience and the construction of masculinity	59
Categories of punishment and the number of the boys punished therefor during the period 1888–1905	60
Prefects	62
Initiation, fagging and bullying	63
General living conditions	67
Personal relations, friendship and gangs	68

CHAPTER 4 *Rugby: schools, clubs and personalities* 78

Sport and masculinity	78
Other sports and challenges to rugby	81
Rugby and race 1870–1880	84
The consolidation of rugby 1880–1900	89
The class and gender contours of rugby	94
The spread of rugby 1900–1920	100

CHAPTER 5 *Clubs, societies and secret orders* 107

Club membership, distinction and the politics of taste	109
The clubs and their members	111
<i>Old boys' societies</i>	111
<i>The Victoria Club</i>	114
<i>The Freemasons</i>	116
The influence of the clubs	122
The clubs and distinction	124
The clubs as locations of friendship	131

CHAPTER 6 *Volunteer regiments,
military men and militarism* 139

The military and militarism	141
Natal's volunteer force	143
The regiments of the Midlands	147
<i>Natal Carbineers</i>	147
<i>Natal Mounted Rifles</i>	149
<i>Umvoti Mounted Rifles</i>	150
The men who joined the regiments	150
Militarism and masculinity	155
The effects of militarism on political life	164
Sir Duncan McKenzie, ONF career soldier	167

CHAPTER 7 <i>Agricultural societies, farmer associations and the creation of a 'farming community'</i>	176
An overview of farmer organisations in South Africa	177
The economic position of Midland farmers	179
The establishment of farmer organisations	184
Membership of farmer organisations	188
Economic functions	190
Agricultural shows – creating a farming community	198
CHAPTER 8 <i>Family, women and inheritance</i>	213
Making the settler family	217
Women in the family	222
Inheritance and the generational transfer of wealth	238
CHAPTER 9 <i>The forgotten and the excluded – the secret history of the ONFs</i>	254
Misfortune	255
Misfits	255
Miscegenation	259
Silencing	264
CHAPTER 10 <i>Conclusion</i>	268
BIBLIOGRAPHY	275
Primary sources	275
Secondary sources	287
Locally produced, unpublished material	307



PREFACE

A personal note

Growing up in the 'ruling class' is often thought of as being unproblematic, as a silver spoon experience. I do not regard my own social origins as being 'ruling class', though some might disagree. They might cite the fact that I went to private schools and university, had a professional (a dentist) for a father, and a successful businessman and mayor-elect of Cape Town as one grandfather and a senior colonial official (resident commissioner of Bechuanaland and Basutoland) as the other as evidence of 'ruling class' origin. Whatever the arguments about my class position, I can say that it did not bestow any special happiness upon me. A poem by Patrick Cullinan called 'Sir Tom' captures some of my own feelings about what growing up in the ruling class could mean. Cullinan was a grandson of Sir Thomas Cullinan, whose name was given to the largest gem diamond ever found.¹

... I was his favourite,
so my parents said, and when we went to luncheon
once a month on Sunday, they'd place me on a high stool
next to 'Father'. He'd say the grace, then punch upon
the table, shout 'my sweet boy' and squeeze my puny chin
with his gross hand, while all around us aunts
and uncles kept on smiling: awkward, docile, prim ...
... the old man said, 'Open
wide!' I made my lips into an O, smiling to the giver.
Eyes shut, I turned towards grandfather,
trusting. Into my throat he jabbed a long coarse sliver
from the crust. It rasped and burnt my skin. I gagged
in panic and could not scream while still he stabbed and bent

it down my throat. Some uncle (or my father, was it?)
pulled him gently off ...

.... At the table old Sir Tom
stared at his family. Rightly, they had always known
children never should presume or, if they did, learn that from
such babies must come men. But strangely, now, the old man broke,
gasping into tears.

(Cullinan 1994:114–115)

This book is not about me and my family. Yet it could not have been written without full and frequent reference to my historically constructed self and my ancestors. It is trite, but I need to say that this study is shaped by my own history. Of course, all pieces of work bear the distinctive and unique mark of the author – his/her past, predilections, dispositions. It is not conventional to intrude these into academic writing on the basis that academic research should strive to be scientific and objective. While this positivist, Rankeian notion has long been discredited, historians continue for the most part carefully to sweep away as much of themselves from the text as possible.²

For two reasons I shall break, at least in this Preface, with this convention. Theoretically, there is a huge corpus of work which calls us to acknowledge our selves, our emotions, our histories in the art of writing.³ For some time, history has been searching for lost voices – those of the workers, the peasants, the children, and most recently the subaltern. But there is another voice which historians have been less anxious to access. That of the writer him or herself. In this Preface I shall permit my own voice to sound.

The second reason is that my own life has been bound up with the subject matter of this thesis. My earliest memories are filled with my maternal grandparents, Aubrey and Kathleen Forsyth-Thompson. I remember them as kind and correct people, always well turned out, my grandmother smelling mildly of lavender, my grandfather in his suit. Even in the hot South African summers he wore a tie. My great-grandfather (Kathleen's father) was Herbert Murray, a Pietermaritzburg lawyer. And his father (my great-great-grandfather) was Sir Thomas K Murray, Natal government minister, whose history is covered more fully later in this study. Aubrey's father was Ernest Thompson, a schoolteacher who taught in Ixopo, Mooi River and Pietermaritzburg in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. My own memories, then, are of people who came from the class that this book sets out to examine and analyse.

I have always had a historical curiosity. My great-aunts (Kathleen's sisters) sparked some of that curiosity. Ella, the eldest, was a powerful woman. Married to Jack Gooding, Natal's provincial secretary, she was never short of opinion, a hive of information on Natal families and always very active. She played golf and worked tirelessly, after Jack's death, for a variety of charitable organisations. As a child I remember her as the person who taught me the child's card game, 'Please and Thank You'. On occasional visits to her home in Pietermaritzburg, I remember her talking of the Natal Carbineers, Delville Wood and the cross in Alexandra Park (made out of blasted timber from the battlefield which inexplicably each year wept resin on the anniversary of that bloody battle), the Natal provincial rugby team and, with pride, the newly promoted National Football League club, Maritzburg City.

My grandmother fuelled that curiosity by her taciturnity. After Aubrey died in 1982, she lived with her niece in Pietermaritzburg. I visited her frequently in the years before she died (1988) and witnessed some of her long-suppressed griefs and angers slowly seep out of her. She was particularly angry about the end of colonialism. She had been in Uganda as wife of a district commissioner in the 1920s and 1930s. She lamented the fate of Uganda, blaming it all on tribal ignorance and savagery. The last time I saw her she was lying absolutely still in a bed covered with a white counterpane. Her face was drawn, but her composure was as it had always been, neat, correct, concealing. I had my young daughter by the hand and we sat next to her for a while. She whispered to me, words that sounded urgent and important. But life was leaving her, and I could not make them out. My curiosity about her, her family, her world, has been stronger since that sad day.

Aubrey was a fine figure of a man. He had been a good middle-distance runner at school, and his body and comportment spoke of this athleticism for most of his life. His working life was spent in the colonial service. He finished his career as resident commissioner of Basutoland, having served in the same capacity in Bechuanaland, and before that, as a district commissioner in Uganda. My admiration was at its height when I saw his mail: addressed impressively to Lt-Col A D Forsyth-Thompson, CBE, CMG, CVO. It was most unusual for my grandfather to express any extreme emotion and I therefore rarely saw him weep. To this day I wonder what raw but deeply concealed memory brought him, unexpectedly and abruptly, to tears, one summer afternoon in Pietermaritzburg. He was sitting in an armchair listening to Chris de Burgh, a contemporary British balladeer, singing a song about the Battle of Passchendale Ridge in 1917. He never spoke of his war experiences as a nineteen-year-old second lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery in France.

In my research, many memories have swirled into my consciousness, prompted by chance or a name that conjured up a moment of my past. I record them here because I believe

that they say something about my relatedness to the social class I study and about that class itself.

In 1974 I finished my schooling at Hilton College, one of the schools studied in chapter 3. I spent two miserable years at the school, bullied by my peers and made to pay the wages of difference (having arrived in Std 9, I (and my twin brother) had not undergone initiation and therefore was not considered to belong within the system). In the late 1930s and early 1940s my uncle had also been at Hilton. He too found the experience gruelling. The story the women in the family told of this phase of his life was of him being picked on and challenged to a fight. According to family lore, he responded by approaching his antagonist and kissing him. The story does not relate what happened after this.

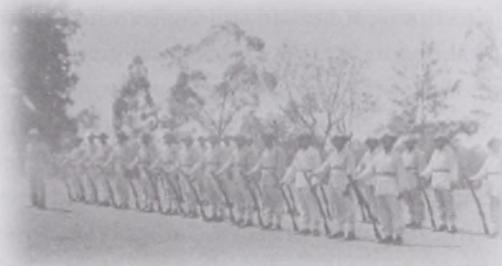
At Hilton I played rugby. I liked sports and was not forced to play. I ended up playing for the lowest team in the school – the glorious sevenths. This had something to do with having played soccer for four continuous years at my previous school, but it also had a lot to do with not being considered masculine, not considered being ‘one of the boys’. Misfits are not generally created unequal; they are constructed that way. While my career at Hilton was not exactly covered in sporting glory, I could take consolation from the fact that my grandfather’s nephew (Patrick Forsyth-Thompson) had captained the famous unbeaten Hilton rugby team in 1938 and had been headboy. In addition, his son, Richard, and another distant cousin, Nicholas Swan, both played rugby for the first team. Moments of reflected glory like these could momentarily blow away the unpleasant realisation of being bottom of the pile as one trudged out to play on a deserted, inhospitable outside field.

My memories are strongest of school and sport, but they also come into focus when familiar family names come up in conversation. The ritual of afternoon tea was invariably the occasion when my grandparents and their generation would discuss the fortunes of their vast extended family or of mutually known friends or of families considered to be important. Humour often was a part of these discussions, with politics seldom to the fore. Only at large family gatherings (such as Christmas time) did the men get into a huddle and discuss the serious matters of the day.

So I came to the subject of this book with a formal, genealogical connection as well as a rich store of memories. Where either of these is consciously at play, I indicate so in the text. For the rest, the reader will have to measure for him- or herself where my scholarly technique ends and my historical imagination begins.

Notes

- 1 Cullinan opened the Premier mine in 1902 and in 1905 the largest flawless diamond of 3 106 carats was found in the mine and named after him. The Transvaal government presented it to Edward VII. It was cut up into nine large and over 100 smaller diamonds and included in the royal crown and sceptre.
- 2 An exception is Anthony Giddens, who recently drew attention to this phenomenon: 'Modern societies have a covert emotional history, yet to be fully drawn into the open' (Giddens 1992:2).
- 3 One of the many authors who follow this line is Julia Kristeva, the French feminist psychoanalyst. In a much discussed work, Kristeva (1986) attempted, in the context of debates on women's oppression, to identify a voice from within, a pre-verbal voice of sensation and feeling which would be a 'true' voice, a voice outside the domination of phallogocentric language.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements

Many histories today are written 'for' some group or other. I cannot say, however, that I have written this study for any group or minority, or for any cause, other than the personal ones I set out in the Preface, and the intellectual ones I lay down in the prologue. This study is not an attempt to resurrect the memory of the forgotten or to ennoble the slighted. Nevertheless, this study has a constituency, white settler-farmers, of which I am mindful. More than anything else, this study has depended on the generosity and openness of my informants (who are listed in the bibliography). I would like to record my thanks and admiration to them. I doubt whether they will like everything they read in this study, but by the same token, I hope they do not find it all critical and unsympathetic. My intention has been to present their world, a world that is past, as honestly as possible. This has meant being critical, but it has also drawn my empathy.

No historian can find the treasures of archives and libraries without the help of the librarians. I wish to thank the many librarians who assisted me, often when I was in a hurry, sometimes when I was in a disagreeable mood! I would like specifically to record my thanks to the staff of the Killie Campbell Library, especially Bobby Eldridge, Stacey Gibson and Penny Brown; John Morrison of the Natal Society Library, Heather Green of the University of Natal's Law Library, the staff of the Natal Archive Depot, especially Verne Harris; the staff of the Cape Town Public Library, the Cape Town Archive, the Local History Museum of Durban, the Don Africana Library (especially Bryan Spencer), the Central Archive and South African Defence Force Archive in Pretoria, Maureen Holland of the Howick Library, Herman van Wyk of the Victoria Club library, Elaine Dodson (archivist of Hilton College and Michaelhouse), Ronald Brookes of Michaelhouse and Mark Coghlan, Natal Carbineers Archive.

I have many other people to thank, some are colleagues who have expressed an interest in my work, others are people I had never met before, who generously gave me the benefit of their local knowledge. I apologise if I have omitted somebody, as I am bound to have done – the road has been a long one. The doctoral thesis upon which this book is based was supervised by Bill Freund. Bill selflessly gave me his time and offered me access to his encyclopaedic knowledge. He unfailingly supported my work and encouraged me along the way. Others who took an interest and helped include Helen Bradford, Cathy Campbell, Ben Carton, Roger Deacon, Graham Dominy, Carolyn Hamilton, Doug Hindson, Gavin Ivey, Sue Krige, David Lincoln, Vivien McMenamin, Linzi Manicom, Sheila Meintjes, Mike Morris, Tim Quinlan, Jenny Robinson and Harald Witt. I record my appreciation to fellow academics who pointed me towards unknown references or helped with unfamiliar sources: Shirley Brookes, Mike Lyne, Professor M Olmesdahl, Ian Phimister and Pip Stigger.

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Family and friends have been especially important to me in the course of my research and writing. The memory of my grandparents, Aubrey and Kathleen Forsyth-Thompson, both of whom died before I began this research project, accompanied me on this intellectual journey. My father's influence can be found in the pursuit of awkward questions and a quest for 'the truth'. My mother (whose great-grandfather was Sir T K Murray, Natal cabinet minister) was especially supportive, providing useful references and shedding light on aspects of family history. My twin brother, Christopher, spurred me on by his successes and my dear sister, Penny, has given me consistent and sustained support. It is hard to imagine

having completed this without her. To June Farrer, my 'aunt' in Pietermaritzburg, I say thank you for giving me rare insights, a giggle and a bed when I needed one. To Wendy Swan, another 'aunt', I belatedly record my gratitude – she died at the end of 1995. To my daughters, Tamarin and Ashleigh, I send my love.

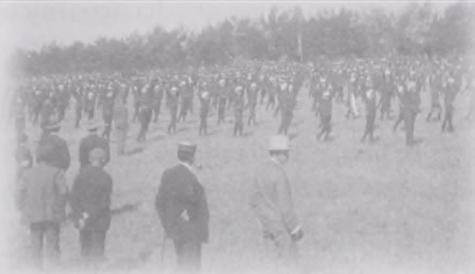
There have been so many people in this time who have given to me of their friendship, support and time unstintingly that I cannot possibly mention them all here. I must single out, however, my close friends. Vishnu Padayachee accompanied me to the archives in the early years and remained a loyal support thereafter. Geoff Schreiner became like a brother to me, sharing the ups and downs that go with a long project such as this. Alan Rycroft steadied me on many an occasion, giving me wise words and warmth. Bob Connell gave me the benefit of his knowledge and a glimpse of hope as he initiated me into the theoretical world of men's studies. Georgina Hamilton shared her life and her love with me. Dave Johnson reminded me that life is about fun as well as anguish.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Imperial Light Horse leaving Pietermaritzburg for the front (book cover)
- p2 The Natal Midlands (map)
- p21 Natal region (map)
- p29 Homestead, Mr John Moor
- p30 Natal farmers' transport-riding
- p32 Wattle plantation: six years old
- p33 Railway construction (map)
- p34 Cedara students, August 1902
- p53 Hilton College Cadet Corps 1881
- p56 Clark, R D, Headmaster, Maritzburg College
- p80 Hilton College, First XV, 1903
- p85 Schoolboy rugby game, Hilton College, 1887
- p102 The entire staff and pupil body of Maritzburg College in 1898.
- p108 The Victoria Club, Pietermaritzburg
- p112 Hilton College display of Swedish drill and physical exercises – Old Boys Day, 1932
- p121 R D Clark, District Grand Master, 1897–1902
- p144 Natal Militia: Col W Royston of Natal Volunteer Force and his staff, 1906
- p148 Natal Carbineers: physical exercises at Mountain Rise, Pietermaritzburg, 1904
- p170 General McKenzie's funeral, Dargle, 1932
- p177 Richmond Agricultural Society members (c 1918)
- p180 Maize: one of the many crops successfully grown in the Midlands (c 1902)
- p189 Steam harrowing (c 1900)
- p191 Maize crop (c 1900)
- p214 A settler family, Pietermaritzburg (c 1900)
- p242 The residence of Duncan McKenzie: Cotswold, the Dargle
- p256 Mungo and Edric Smythe
- p264 Braithwrtes from Seven Oaks: all members of the UMR



CHAPTER 1

Prologue

The white people of Natal are British, and intensely patriotic. They do not regard themselves as South Africans, but as an outpost of England. As a group, they are excessively conservative (International Socialist Review, June 1917:726).

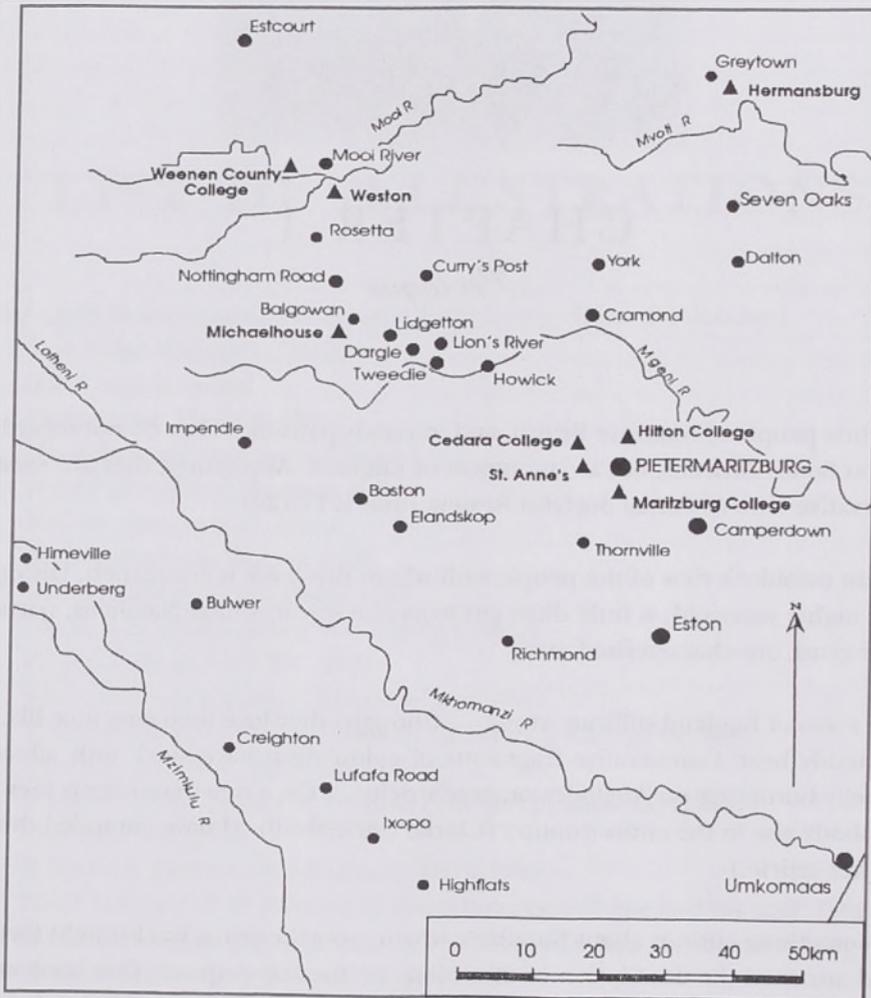
This was an outsider's view of the people with whom this book is concerned. His opinion, now over eighty years old, is little different from the way in which Natalians, particularly the upper crust, are characterised today.

[T]he roots of England still run strong ... (though) they love their province like a well-worn teddy bear. Conservative fragments of colonialism have stuck with affectionate simplicity bordering on Anglo-Saxon eccentricity ... On a one-to-one basis they resemble nobody else in the entire country (Clarke 1989:96–99). (I have compiled this quote from her article.)

There is something curious about Natalians, which, over the years, has brought forth comment and attracted the description of the colony as 'the last outpost'. This book attempts to explain something of this curiosity by examining the residents of the Midlands (map 2). Many of the earliest white settlers settled on farms that became the heartland of the colony. Some remained as farmers, while others branched out into commerce and the professions. Although they were few in number, they had considerable political power and exercised a cultural influence over the colony as a whole.

The quotations with which I began this chapter alert us to the fact that lives cannot be fully understood within the confines of the economic and political realms. Being 'conservative'

and 'colonial' are not just political or economic characteristics. Nor can they be understood simply as social personality traits. They are bound up with class and gender identity.



The Natal Midlands

White settlers in South African historiography

This book rests on a body of scholarship loosely described as 'revisionist' or 'radical'. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as part of an upwelling of critical enquiry and political dissent worldwide, young South African historians rejected the explanations of the past offered by Afrikaner nationalist and English liberal academics. Their work focused on the economic exploitation (as opposed to political oppression) of South Africa's indigenous populations. The unit of analysis used in this new work was class, which replaced race as the master category. Revisionist scholars were particularly critical of the role played by the capitalists who had established the mining industry in the country. They were held to be just as culpable for the downtrodden position of blacks as the apartheid rulers of the day.

Given the class critique of capitalists, who were white, there was an easy slide into the convention that averted historical enquiry elsewhere. Although white workers received some attention, enquiry was shaped by the political concerns of the day. Research on whites seemed indulgent or apologetic in conditions which were marked by escalating state coercion and the rise of militant opposition to apartheid. When research was conducted on whites, particularly on the white ruling class, it tended to be through the unsympathetic lens of class struggle.

Where white settler farmers were researched, they were treated as a class that was economically exploitative of black people. This was not the only way in which they were conceptualised, but it tended to frame the way in which research questions were asked.

Revisionist historians had two basic approaches to the study of white farmers. The first, pioneered by Colin Bundy, grew out of under-development theory and the impact made by the work of André Gunder Frank (1971) in the context of European-centred debates on the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Arguing against the failure of backward third world peasants to make the economic leap demanded by the introduction of the new capitalist economy, Bundy showed that South African cultivators had responded positively to market opportunities, but had been beaten back by the state, itself the instrument of the economic interests of threatened white farmers (Bundy 1972; Bundy 1979). This spawned an ever-more detailed and sophisticated corpus of work on the African peasantry, which reached something of an apogee with William Beinart's work on Pondoland (1982). Another strand in this literature shifted the focus to relations between white farmers and African cultivators (Trapido 1978). In general, the success of white farmers was put down to the control of land and the intervention of the state.

A different approach to the agrarian question emerged from amongst scholars using Marxist structuralist analysis, particularly the works of Nicos Poulantzas. In a path-breaking work, Mike Morris (1976) attempted to demonstrate that even with labour-tenancy being the major form of labour utilisation on farms, capitalist relations of production existed in the early twentieth century. While Morris's article continued to influence writing on the agrarian question, his colleagues at Sussex University began a broader analysis of South African history in which the agrarian question was subsumed in an ambitious attempt to periodise the South African state (Davies, Kaplan, Morris & O'Meara 1976). Here the purpose was to mesh an analysis of the economic mode of production with an understanding of immanent political forms. A major feature of this project was the effort to understand how 'feudal' relations, featuring Boers, were transformed into capitalist relations. Briefly, this analysis posited that land-owning Boers and in the twentieth century the landless and largely urbanised Afrikaans-speaking population came together under the umbrella of Afrikaner nationalism to wrench economic and political control from the Randlords (English-speaking, metropolitan-linked capitalists who controlled the mining industry and associated enterprises). This, it was held, occurred between the 1920s and 1940s when Afrikaner nationalism gained the support of white workers (and supposedly cut them off from a worker alliance with black colleagues) and finally gained control of the state (1948) as well as creating an independent economic base (by a variety of economic initiatives and by breaking down the exclusionary Englishness of the business world) (Davies 1979; Kaplan 1977; O'Meara 1983).

Structuralist analysis seldom explored the people who made up classes. The approach was one dimensional and forced complex issues into ill-fitting conceptual boxes. Structuralism took the life out of history. It was left to social history to breathe back life into that history by offering a rich, narrative account of the lives of working people.

The influential work of E P Thompson (1980) and Raphael Samuel (1981) was the inspiration behind a new approach to the writing of South African history. Charles van Onselen, Luli Callinicos and others developed the writing of social history in South Africa. They were particularly interested in 'history from below' which was part of the attempt to get away from 'great man (ruling class)' history. In South Africa, the lives of African workers and cultivators were illuminated by the new approach. (Keegan 1988, 1989a, 1989b, 1991; Matsetela 1982; Van Onselen 1982, 1992, Bozzoli 1979, 1981, 1987, 1991.

In the field of agrarian history, the focus gradually broadened beyond the peasantry to consider the complex processes of capital accumulation and class formation, and to trace the fortunes of black labour tenants and white farmers (Beinart, Delius & Trapido 1986). As interest in agrarian history grew, the white farmer came a little more into focus. In two

unusual essays, Peter Delius (1986) and Tim Keegan (1986b), provided detailed accounts of two colourful nineteenth-century Boers (Abel Erasmus and Cornelius de Villiers) operating on the margins of the emerging capitalist economy via primitive accumulation and through the self-arrogated powers of the weak Afrikaner states. My own work shifted the focus onto the organisation of white farmers and their access to the state (Morrell 1986). And John Bottomley returned attention to the 1914 Rebellion, locating his explanation in the sharp class divisions between poor white rebels and the landed *heerenboeren* (gentlemen farmers) (Bottomley 1992). The most comprehensive treatment of settler farmers came from the historical anthropologist Colin Murray (1992). In his study of farming in the Free State, Murray showed that it was the state which was the decisive reason for settler success (and conversely for the failure of African cultivators to escape conditions of labour tenancy and subsistence farming).

What was missing from this impressive body of work was the study of the social and cultural reproduction and constitution of the agricultural ruling class, the white farmers.

Comparative studies on settler society in Kenya and Rhodesia gave some indication of how studies that focused directly on white farmers might illuminate the lives and actions of this social grouping. Dane Kennedy (1987), for example, used the metaphor of small islands of white in a huge black ocean to explain the nature of settler society. For Kennedy this demographic reality determined the way in which settler society operated. He described settler society as being distinguished to 'a remarkable degree by conformity of values and unanimity of purpose' and put this down to the enemy beyond (Kennedy 1987:181). Kennedy's analysis, however, did explain how the (race) conformity was constructed and tended to assume, rather than demonstrate, a settler identity (as an obvious effect of being demographically outnumbered). In the end, these studies, including the sophisticated analysis of British East Africa by Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale (1992), explain settler society in terms of its position within a matrix of class forces and in terms of the colonial state. Little attempt was made to write a social history of settler society. In the absence of such studies, it was easy for settlers to be represented as metropolitan 'misfits' who were little more than 'parasites upon the Kenyan economy' (Brett 1973:168, 212).

It is only in recent journalistic accounts that vivid and real descriptions of settler society have been offered. In David Cauter's graphic eye-witness account of the fall of Ian Smith's Rhodesia, for example, we confront the contradictory, self-confusing, bombastic, hopeless, tragic, deluded and occasionally heroic aspects of white settler society (1983).

The historiography of Natal's settlers

As with South Africa as a whole, so it was with the revisionist historical writing on Natal that the major emphasis was on capital accumulation, the fortunes of Africans (the independence of the Zulu state (Guy 1982) and the development of a peasantry (*amakhohwa*) (Meintjes, Lambert) and class struggle (Bradford 1987). Where white settlers received attention it was in terms of the master narrative of colonial expropriation and the establishment of power (Slater 1975, 1980).

Apart from revisionist studies, Natal boasts a separate, dynamic and historically meticulous tradition of regional history. This historiography is often described as liberal or conservative, but it has, among its strengths, a holistic approach to society. Much of its recent work has focused on the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. Here, equal consideration to settler and African involvement has been given. For this reason, and others, my study here has taken seriously this literature and its antecedents.

It was Alan Hattersley who laid the foundations for this somewhat parochial school of history writing. He was a Cambridge-educated Englishman, who established the history department at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg. He wrote prodigiously about the Natal settlers and showed little interest in other aspects of the region's history. He virtually ignored the black population. Subsequent historians were able to break with this narrowness though retain his fascination with the region. Edgar Brookes and Colin Webb (1965) picked up the strand of history associated with men like James Stuart and wrote a regional history in 1965 which echoed the liberal work elsewhere in its sympathy for the disenfranchisement and dispossession of blacks. The Natal historiography was marked primarily by a concern for the region's particularity, and most recent volumes perpetuate this non-integration of Natal's historiography (Duminy & Guest 1989; Guest & Sellers 1985; Guest & Sellers 1994, Morrell 1996).

The local treatment of settler society is by and large descriptive and uncritical. The shortcomings have been addressed, though not corrected, by Africanist and revisionist scholars. A major reason for the jaundiced and narrow treatment of settler society was the political persuasions of the authors. They were revolted by the unapologetic white supremacist system which had grown up in Natal. Consequently, the impression of settler society gleaned from their work is unsympathetic. One of the fullest accounts is given by Shula Marks in her analysis of the origins of the Bambatha Rebellion (1906) – an infamous case of settler bloodletting. As the title of her book *Reluctant rebellion* suggests, Africans were driven to revolt by bad governance, settler intransigence and gross injustices. She summarised 'white

attitudes towards Africans at the turn of the century' as 'a curious blend of paternalism, fear, and contempt' (Marks 1970:11).

Marks described the settler society in the following terms: 'The tightly knit nature of white Natal, the free mingling of officials and settlers, of farmers, shopkeepers, and artisans led to a high degree of uniformity and conformity of opinions on most issues, and to stereotypes being formed of the other racial groups' (Marks 1970:10). And yet this sketch of settler society, despite its correctness, missed something. It also bequeathed a legacy to history writing which discouraged new understandings of settler society.

Two new and important approaches dominated enquiry in the 1980s and 1990s. Julian Cobbing's Mfecane thesis renewed interest in precolonial history and redirected interest to the impact of imperialism on the history of South East Africa (Hamilton 1995). Carolyn Hamilton's *Terrific majesty* (1998) introduced new theories of representation and identity into the field and steered the study of Zulu history in a new direction.

The effect of these diverse studies was to deflect treatment away from settler society. But this was not a major departure from well-established patterns within revisionist literature. Revisionist histories eschewed settler studies. It is significant that the one study on settler society itself by a revisionist historian focused on a dissident. Jeff Guy's *The heretic* (1983) dealt with the life of Bishop Colenso, a man who spoke against the settler establishment and chose to remain outside it and, indeed, be at war with it.

In a revealing passage Guy describes Shepstone's conception of colonial government, which

... was one in which a group of closely connected officials, often relatives and friends, sealed off their business from the scrutiny of outsiders, on the grounds that only the officials possessed the necessary insights into the secret of native government. Colenso had broken into this system at the time of Langalibalele and exposed the fact that the secret lay in deceit, intimidation, corruption and the threat of force (1983:325).

For Guy, there was little to redeem settler society. Only those whites who took up moral positions against the injustices of colonialism seem, in this view, to be worthy of examination.

Hamilton's position on the issue has similarities with that of Guy. She criticises Cobbing for describing James Stuart as 'a racist native administrator who supervised "land seizures, taxation and *chibalo* (sic) labour"' (Hamilton 1993:361, citing Cobbing 1988b). Calling for a

re-evaluation of Stuart that takes account (among other things) 'of the complexities of Stuart's career' (1993:362) her ultimate defence of him is phrased in terms of the dissident. He was, writes Hamilton, 'painfully at odds with the prevailing sentiments of his fellow colonists' (1993:363).

The strength of Hamilton's approach is to recognise complexity and to eschew simplicity. In her discussion of Robert Moor, Secretary for Native Affairs, for example, she provides a refreshing view. Noting that he was an elected representative of Weenen's white farmers, but also charged with protecting the interests of Africans, she concludes that he tried 'to maintain a delicate balance between white employers and African workers' (1993:402). Yet against this, she still offers a view of settlers which comes close to stereotype.

Natal settlers held strong notions of the inbred idleness and irresponsibility of Africans, and the necessity of teaching them the habits of industry and the value of labor. Labor was viewed as the first step towards civilization (1993:402-403).

It would not be fair to accuse Hamilton of failing to re-assess settler society for this was not her goal. She has rendered a valuable service in suggesting a more nuanced and less conspiratorial view of settler society. With good effect, we could use her injunction on how to comprehend identity and representation: to paraphrase, we need to understand from what settler society was adapted (how it was formed) and what were the processes of adaptation and their limitations (Hamilton 1993:65). In order to answer this, we need to ask: What institutions did they create? What were the roles of these institutions.

Present men, absent gender

The history of Natal is primarily about men. This is generally assumed to be natural or obvious. Few authors comment on it. But it is of critical importance. The way men are, the way they behave and act, fills the pages of history books in an unreflective way which suggests that all men are the same. This assumption is part of a broader blindness to the importance of gender.

All branches of South African history have been to some degree or other gender-blind. In the 1980s one response to this was for feminist scholars to write about women. The work of Cheryl Walker and Julie Wells in particular drew attention to the role of (mostly black) women in resistance (Walker 1990; Walker 1992; Wells 1991). With some exceptions (Eales 1989), the work did not influence the mainstream of social history – women's history had

an additive rather than transformative impact on historical writing.

Since the mid-1990s the weaknesses of a gender-less history have been exposed. Helen Bradford's work criticises South Africa's 'androcentric historiography' (Bradford 1995b). She noted the absence of women in history writing and showed how this impoverished and corrupted historical analysis. In her approach, Bradford was heeding Catherine Hall's call that feminists 'needed to fill out the enormous gaps in our historical knowledge which were a direct result of male domination of historical work. How had women lived in the past, what had they experienced ...' (Hall 1992:5). But Bradford's attack fell short of a potentially more disruptive break with tradition. Such a path was sketched by Linzi Manicom (1992), who argued that taking gender seriously involved a reconsideration of perspective, not simply an inclusion of a neglected category.

In this study, I respond to the feminist critique not by writing about gender alone or by integrating women into the history, but by weaving an analysis of class and gender together. In this process I focus not on women, but on men, in fact as neglected a category as women. This may seem an odd claim, but it is easily substantiated. It is true that South African history has been written as a story of men. But it is not true that South African history has been about men. The difficulty lies in the notion of man. Essentialist conceptions of man are the problem. Man is considered to have an essence – aggressive, violent, acquisitive, insensitive, unemotional. What is not problematised is his social identity. What is not acknowledged is the social construction of masculinity.

There have been a number of local responses to the silence about men. In the world of literature the novel by Damon Galgut, *The beautiful screaming of pigs* (1992), was described by a reviewer as one of the first novels to examine the difficulties of masculinity in South Africa (Boehmer 1993:9). From within the discipline of psychology, scholars began to explore gender identity (particularly masculinity) and its relationship to political violence (Campbell 1992, Hayes 1992). Among historians, the exploration of the historical construction of masculinity was slow to get going. As John Tosh noted with concern about Britain, there was a 'reluctance of the historical profession to explore the potential of this new perspective' (Tosh 1994:179). William Beinart's plea for more attention to be given to the relationship between masculinity and violence went unheeded until in 1997 a conference on 'Masculinities in Southern Africa' was held at the University of Natal (Durban). This culminated in a special issue of the *Journal of Southern African Studies* (24(4)1998) and a book (Morrell 2001).

Gender theories of masculinity

This book draws on a literature referred to variously as men's studies, critical men's studies or studies of masculinity. It is a literature that has developed, primarily in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, over the last two decades. The questions that I asked of this literature were drawn from my own experiences (briefly described in the Preface). Two types of experience were particularly relevant: my senior secondary education at one of the private, elite, single-sex boarding schools of the Midlands (Hilton College) and my engagement with my maternal grandparents who were, in their own way, ONFs. Some questions that came to mind were: What kind of boys/men did the families and institutions of the Midlands produce? Which values were esteemed and which denigrated? How did these boys/men come to be 'masculine'? What was the connection between being an individual in a school like Hilton and being an adult member of the Midland gentry?

In framing these questions, I naturally had a sense of some of the answers. I had experienced my years at Hilton as lonely, traumatic and confused. I had also known camaraderie and the satisfaction of being in a winning sports team. I had experienced the competitiveness of inter-house rivalry, the snobbery that went with wearing the well-known (and respected) school uniform. I had flaunted my membership of the school as a source of power in the face of those who felt themselves inferior because they'd only been to a government school. I had taken retrospective pride in having survived the cruelties and emotional deprivations of the school, I had come to value team loyalty and appreciate the power of male friendship. It has been more than twenty years since I was at that school. Inactive in the old boys' society, I nevertheless take quiet satisfaction from the academic and other successes of the school, presented in its quarterly magazine. These experiences basically left me with no doubt that the school experience produced a we/they dichotomised sense of belonging which was fiercely partisan and produced loyalties under the most unlikely circumstances. As an academic reflecting back on these boyhood memories, it became manifestly obvious that the sense of belonging reverberated with race and class connotations. It was with the help of certain gender theories that I came to understand better the gender aspects of this sense of belonging.

Critical men's studies proceed from the position that gender is a socially constructed identity. Men are not just men with a fixed masculinity. Masculinity is fluid, changing and historically constructed. For the individual, it is an identity that is realised throughout life and powerfully but not irrevocably in childhood. Masculinity is a gender identity which is personal in the sense that an individual has a specific experience of what it means to be, in this case, a boy/man. A person apprehends his (let us keep with the male example) gen-

der identity within a social gender environment and there is a constant interplay between the two. There are strong social prescriptions about what is (and what is not) acceptable gender behaviour. Such prescriptions originate primarily with the ruling class, which, through a process of contestation, disseminates these values throughout wider society. Here they operate in contradictory ways: on the one hand, they provide (ruling class) men with a verbal and bodily vocabulary by which class-based recognition occurs. In this sense these gender values are class-bound and exclusive. On the other hand, the dissemination of values through society interpolates all men as 'men', which is to say that it produces an inclusive system by which men come together with a shared understanding of masculinity. No system can ever be totally inclusive, and indeed it is an argument of post-modernism that every inclusive system requires for its success an 'other', who/which is not included. Nor is a system ever more than an approximation of what existed. No boy/man was ever or could ever be fully within the field of hegemonic masculinity. An example from school briefly will suffice to demonstrate the point: a school prefect might be (in his public self) a perfect exemplar of hegemonic masculinity, play rugby for the first team, carry out his duties fairly and efficiently, warmly greet the opposing team when it arrived to compete at sports, stand at the door for the headmaster's wife to go by (and doff his cap at the same time). But he might also sneak off and have a smoke, or leave the school without permission to see a girlfriend, or ignore the instruction of a schoolmaster, or have a clandestine sexual relationship with a junior boy.

Yet, despite personal defiance and exceptions to the rule, a masculinity that was hegemonic was established within society. This masculinity prescribed to males what to do, and there were generally unpleasant consequences for those who ignored it, defied it, or flouted it. Yet most boys/men accepted, contributed to and acquiesced in the existence of hegemonic masculinity. But some did not, could not or would not. Hegemonic masculinity marginalised individuals and groups of men. It is also the case that women are excluded by hegemonic masculinity. This is not to say that hegemonic masculinity is necessarily misogynistic. Chivalry, respect for the weak and honouring women (particularly the mother), for example, could all alleviate the exclusionary aspects of hegemonic masculinity. But these considerations do not conceal the fact that though women might be accommodated to hegemonic masculinity, they cannot be included.

My understanding of masculinity owes its greatest theoretical debt to Bob (R W) Connell. Since the early 1980s Connell has been analysing issues of gender inequality. His early work attempted to analyse class-based inequalities in schooling. This work led him on to consider, increasingly as his major intellectual interest, issues of gender inequality (Connell *et al* 1982). Coming from a position of political affinity with feminism, Connell's work tries to take the concern for social justice into the realm of masculinity. While I rely heavily on the

theoretical insights of Connell and allied writers, there is a body of work which is less helpful. This operates with a view of masculinity that is either biologically or psychoanalytically determined. This essentialist treatment of masculinity allows little scope for historical contingency. Another set of texts which have not influenced my thinking can be termed 'masculinity in crisis' texts. Popularised by Robert Bly's *Iron John* (1992), a number of American authors urged the need for men to rediscover their masculinity through a process of psychic healing. The concern of this approach is to restore men to a more vigorous, dignified, confident, responsible and assertive state. Frequently these goals are pursued via adventure weekends in the wild where men get in touch with their 'warrior' selves. Critics hold that this work is hostile, or at least indifferent, to feminist theory and its accompanying political concerns.

In attempting to get away from the idea of one archetypal masculinity, Connell drew attention to the existence of many different masculinities (for example gay masculinity (Connell 1992)). In the process he attacked the idea of an archetypal masculinity and critiqued the normative equation of masculinity with the behaviour of white, European, middle-class men. This opened up the possibility of examining how one masculinity becomes and remains hegemonic over others. It is important to stress that this is a historical process. While it may be inevitable that boys acquire a sexual identity called masculinity, the process always takes place within a historical gendered context and the form which that masculinity takes will always be historically determined.

What is hegemonic masculinity, what does it do, how is it defined, who 'belongs to it'? There is some disagreement over these questions, but we can identify a core of agreement. "Hegemonic masculinity" is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women' (Connell 1987:183). It can be defined as 'the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy' (Connell 1995:77). Not all men in positions of power and influence demonstrate or subscribe to hegemonic masculinity, but 'hegemony is likely to be established only if there is some correspondence between cultural ideal and institutional power, collective or individual' (Connell 1995:77). The function of hegemonic masculinity is primarily to legitimate patriarchy (men's dominance over women). Echoing the origins of the term in the work of Antonio Gramsci, this is achieved primarily through a 'successful claim to authority' rather than direct use of violence (Connell 1995:77).

But hegemonic masculinity is also contradictory. As Mike Donaldson puts it, it is 'exclusive, anxiety-provoking, internally and hierarchically differentiated, brutal and violent' (Donaldson 1993:645). And yet, many of the bearers of hegemonic masculinity seem puny and quite unable to meet its strenuous gender demands. Here Donaldson relates to a lit-

erature on the fragility of masculinity. This literature, primarily psychoanalytical, stresses how weak masculine identity for individuals can sometimes be, and finds in this, explanations for the formation of dissident and also extremely conformist masculine identity and the possibility of change in forms of masculinity (Brod 1987; Kaufman 1987; Sherrod 1987; Segal 1990; Tolson 1977).

Precisely who produces hegemonic masculinity is uncertain. Is it the elites, the broad mass of 'straight' men, or particular role models? Similarly, it is not clear what hegemonic masculinity can do for men. Jeff Hearn advances a gloomy view of hegemonic masculinity, arguing that men 'oppress each other, and in turn ourselves' (Hearn 1992:83). This view is predominant, though here again, Donaldson provocatively asks can not hegemonic masculinity enrich and satisfy? (Donaldson 1993:646). In order to answer these many questions, Carrigan, Connell and Lee set out hegemonic masculinity as 'a question of how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance' (Carrigan, Connell & Lee 1987:92).

Viewed from the perspective of a boy, the construction of hegemonic masculinity is a lengthy and complex process. Connell argues that in the process of becoming a man, boys develop a relationship with their bodies through and by which they express their domination of and distance from women.

The concept of hegemonic masculinity is important for historians to work with, argues John Tosh,

... because it reminds us that masculinity carries a heavy ideological freight, and that it makes socially crippling distinctions not only between men and women, but between different categories of men – distinctions which have to be maintained by force, as well as validated through cultural means (Tosh 1994:192).

Settler masculinity

In this book I attempt to weigh the ideological freight and measure its consequences by developing the concept of settler masculinity to capture the colonial and class character of masculinity in turn of the century Natal. This is not a term that has currency and it is the purpose of this book to give it some content and theoretical specificity. As a starting point we can simply identify its broad features: it was the masculinity of the Midland gentry. It was

produced in a variety of ways and locations which are treated separately in the chapters of this book. Settler masculinity was class and race specific and powerfully moulded by the colonial context. Settler masculinity became hegemonic as a result of the class and gender power of the Midland farmers which was expressed in the durability and influence of the institutions which that class created. It was through those institutions that masculinity was disseminated and perpetuated, and in which it was created and shaped.

Living in the colonies provided settlers with a social environment which in important respects was free of the constraints that operated in the metropole. On the frontiers, settlers (with guns) were virtually a law unto themselves. In the context, as Jock Phillips shows for New Zealand, they developed a frontier masculinity which was rough, loose and anti-establishment (1987). The freedom of the periphery was reduced by the development of the colonial state and closer economic ties with the metropole (McMichael 1984). In Australasia, the colonial state itself attempted to eradicate frontier masculinity and replace it with a more conformist set of gender values which stressed family life and workplace discipline, to meet the growing demands of the economy. This was paralleled by organic changes within the settler population itself, the leading sections of which attempted to develop a social image which mimicked that of the metropole. The phenomenal growth of settler economies (Denoon 1983) led to urbanisation. Both the nature of the settler economy and its urbanisation patterns were different from those in the metropole and generated distinct forms of masculinity and gender relations. In New Zealand, for example, a particularly assertive masculinity was formed around sport and military achievements (Phillips 1984). While metropolitan trends were always influential in the colonies, they were not determinant, and local struggles and conditions were always crucial in determining the state of gender relations (Gilding 1991). Interestingly, colonial images of masculinity also came to shape metropolitan ideas. This was specifically the case with novels by writers such as Rider Haggard and Kipling (Kaarsholm 1989; McClintock 1990). Settler masculinity was not just a derivative of metropolitan masculinity. It was both influenced and informed by metropolitan gender relations, but remained distinct.

In this study, I have selected a number of social institutions in which to examine the development of masculinity. These provide the context within which the historical development of masculinity can be examined. Institutions all have their own gender regime, comprising their own characteristic set of gender relations (Connell 1987:523). The gender regime of each institution is the result of contestation and struggle, as well as being shaped by, and reflecting, the social forces within broader society. The reading of masculinity within a particular institution's gender regime may differ from that of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1990b, 1991) but in this study each institution examined was an incubator for hegemonic masculinity. Since the late nineteenth century, social institutions have become prolific.

Many of these were created around the new professions, but many more were centred on leisure time use, shared interest and other middle-class activities. Their significance for gender relations in this period increased as they superseded private domains as the major sites in which gender relationships were worked out. The new institutions were organised according to strict hierarchy. Their rise was associated with industrialisation and modernity. It had the effect of converting the power of the male head of household into a social and cultural form which was mirrored through and created in a range of organisations which sprang up to regulate, to unite, to exclude (Hearn 1992).

Institutions which have been the objects of gendered research in other contexts informed my choice. These were schools (Connell *et al* 1982; Heward 1988; Mangan 1981); sport (Messner & Sabo 1990); professional associations (Hearn 1992:146–49); the military (Gibson 1994; Nye 1993; Phillips 1984); the family (Gilding 1991). I have chosen not to examine the colonial state or the labour market, both considered to be extremely important in advanced societies and in industrial contexts. In Natal, the colonial state was relatively weak, had limited resources, few personnel, and the senior personnel were, up until 1893 at least, primarily Britons on colonial duty, rather than settlers. For this reason, the colonial state was less influential than the state in advanced industrial societies in gendering life, though this is not to say that it was without influence. The laws passed and enacted were a major vehicle for the establishment of a gender order.¹ My discussion of production as a locus of gender relations is limited, being undertaken through the prism of producer organisations (farmer associations). Agricultural production in rural Natal was individualistic, independent and isolated. The mechanisms of the industrial context, for example described by Cockburn (1983), were clearly not at play here. Settler masculinity was a product primarily of settler institutions. These institutions, established by the settlers outside the realm of the state and the economy, were very much class institutions. They were never open to blacks, and seldom open to women. Outsiders (ethnic, geographical, class) were grudgingly admitted, and in the process were fitted into the class and gender mould. The institutions were places where settlers (generally male) met, interacted, identified, planned and socialised. Institutions not only regulated social life, they provided nodes of identification. They were critical in networking.

There was a very high degree of overlap of membership and participation in the Midland institutions discussed in later chapters. In explaining the success of the ruling class Tom Bottomore argues that as an 'organised minority' it is a 'more effective collective actor than are other classes' (Bottomore 1989:11). Efficient collective action is facilitated by family connections, the social and political interaction of members and by distinctive shared educational experience. The men of the Midlands met one another often in different places and locations and over long periods of time. Their histories were tied together and interwoven.

The concept of class is used in this study to refer not only in the Marxist sense to people who objectively have the same class interests or location in the realm of production. I use the concept more broadly where a 'class is defined as much by its *being perceived* as by its *being*, by its consumption – which need not be conspicuous in order to be symbolic – as much as by its position in the relations of production (even if it is true that the latter governs the former)' (Bourdieu 1984:483). For Bourdieu, classes so acting are 'real social groups' rather than the 'probable classes' conceived of by Marx (Bourdieu 1991:231). The real social group which this book is concerned with – the white farming community – is a social unit which has both class and gender aspects. According to Connell, in reality these cannot be separated, though conceptually it is useful and necessary to do so: 'gender relations are parallel to, interacting with, and in some sense constitutive of, class relations' (Connell 1987:46).

One of the major questions addressed in this study is: how are class/gender identities and relations reproduced over time? Bourdieu defines reproduction as the processes 'by which any group endeavors to pass on to the next generation the full measure of power and privileges it has itself inherited' (Bourdieu, quoted in Nye 1993:17). Such reproduction is not automatic. It involves processes which can historically be identified and understood. Such processes should not be reduced to the purposive actions of individuals or classes. In a useful attempt to explain ruling class power, the Marxist Goran Therborn suggested that 'class-specific collective action is ... sustained basically by inter-linking networks of class members' (Therborn 1986:117). This is an important point because it stresses the connection between the actions of individuals and the destiny of classes. Throughout this book I shall be examining how class and gender regimes are created and this involves examining both individual and collective action in institutional contexts. It also involves an examination of how the classes represented themselves – how they acted in class and gendered ways in public, for it is in the representation of oneself as a gendered and classed actor to the world that a class profile is created. It is in this process that social distance or social proximity is created (Bourdieu 1991:29). In the distinction made here between class action and class representation I am alerting the reader to two separate points. The first point is that individual actions do contribute to class identity and profile, but they may also be incongruent, contradictory, ill fitting, and unrepresentative of the class at large. Second, how a class represents itself is not necessarily the same as how the class is. Classes have histories which authorise their existence, which give them a gloss, which incorporate justification and rationalisation. These histories also omit, distort, emphasise and de-emphasise various aspects of the past.

Class and gender identity is formed and acted out in complex ways. Identity is confirmed and affirmed, for example, by constant participation in pastimes in which people come to

understand themselves as members of a class and having a particular gender identity. In the same processes, people equally can come to realise that they are not members of a particular class and do not have a particular gender identity.² Class roles and identities have 'not the power automatically or intrinsically to perpetuate (their) dominance' (Bourdieu 1991:58). It is thus critical for gender and class relations constantly to be repeated. Put another way, constant participation in public and private life constitutes the process of class creation and reproduction.

When the settler farmers acted, their actions were necessarily always gendered. Their actions created, consolidated or transformed class and gender identities. In a school, for example, the holding of assembly, the timetable, the sports matches, all contributed to the temporal structure and routine of settler life. In the farmer associations, it was the meetings set down by time and place, well in advance, that brought farmers together routinely, that reinforced their power at each sitting. These acts produced gender and class hierarchies, values and routines. Institutions were an ideal setting for repetitive social acts because they have their own rhythms and they outlive their members.

Settler masculinity, like all masculinities, was a dynamic, fluid phenomenon. It was primarily created in public, single-sex institutions, thus lending support to Hearn's view (1992) that hegemonic masculinities were from the 1870s onward primarily created within public patriarchies. Within the institutions gender regimes existed. These often bore a strong similarity with metropolitan models (for example the public schools). Hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion were more strongly accentuated in the colonial setting, however, because of the 'race threat' and because of an ambivalent relatedness to the metropole (explored in chapter 6) which made the settlers more English than the English on the one hand, and highly antagonistic to metropolitan snobbery and high-handedness on the other. Settler masculinity was markedly cohesive largely because of the limited numbers of white settlers. Settler masculinity was very class-bound. It was resistant to intrusion (by other races and classes) and showed itself to be quite intractable. In short, settler masculinity had a relatively small group of 'members', most known or related to one another in some way. Its content changed, but because of the exclusive nature of its institutions, it was not able to accommodate change easily. The status of settler masculinity as hegemonic masculinity, which this book attempts to demonstrate, was challenged, modified, never fully achieved. Yet it had a stately carriage which took it through turbulence. Its institutions survived a number of crises, with little change, and within these, new gendered adherents were produced.

Settler masculinity developed in the wider social setting of colonial patriarchy. Two definitions of patriarchy, one old, the other more recent, are equally apposite for this study. The

historian Lawrence Stone pithily, but narrowly, defined patriarchy as 'the despotic authority of husband and father' (Stone 1977:109). More recently, Sylvia Walby has offered an all-encompassing definition: 'a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women' (Walby 1990:20).

Gender inequality and Natal's settlers

In 1880, there were 25 271 whites living in the colony of Natal. Of this number 6 395 lived in the Natal Midlands.³ Most of the adult men were self-employed, many on farms. Their lives will be the subject of the chapters that follow. Most lived unquestioningly in a world of where their race and gender gave them power and privilege. 'Men gain a dividend from patriarchy in terms of honour, prestige and the right to command' (Connell 1995:82). The codes by which they lived drew on metropolitan ideas, particularly the ideology of domesticity which located women in the home. In terms of these ideas the woman's place was in the home. It was a slur upon the good name of a family, especially that of the husband, if a wife had to seek employment or engage in remunerative work. Women, it was held, should look after children and the home. In these labours, their lives were made more comfortable by the support of black, normally female help.

The view that the menfolk worked hard to keep their women comfortable masked acute gender inequalities. In Natal, white women did not have the vote. Few were admitted into the colonial service, industry or business. Where they were present in these spheres, they occupied junior positions. For example, in 1904, there were only 11 white women compared to 2 818 white men employed in local government, and 195 women employed in 'Defence' compared with 2 526 men (Beall 1982:226). While they had control over their own property (and could own and bequeath land), very few women did own farms or companies. In 1891 only 58 women were recorded as farmers in their own right (Beall 1982:120). The position with women and weapons was more complicated. Though women were not allowed to join military regiments, in the rural areas many women could use or owned rifles. In the wake of Bambatha's Rebellion, young girls (over 14 years) were encouraged to join miniature rifle clubs to learn to shoot. In 1912, for example, Mrs C D Hill (nee Speirs) won the Dargle Rifle Association shoot.⁴ And it was common for farmers' wives and daughters to join rifle associations (Reed Interview 1993) This could be explained in terms both of the way in which women were perceived within settler masculinity (see chapter 8) and with reference to the growing militarism in the colony (see chapter 6).⁵ In an attempt to beef up civilian military readiness, 700 rifles and nearly 70 000 rounds of ammunition were issued to members of rifle associations in 1896 and 1897.

In terms of employment opportunity, the position of women improved in this period. In terms of the law, however, areas of discrimination remained. For example, adultery was not considered grounds for divorce in the case of a man (until 1937) but until 1910 adulterous women were deprived of all maintenance by their former spouses. Even after that, moral opprobrium weighed far more heavily on a woman than it did on a man in a similar position (Beall 1982:103).

If settler men enjoyed the patriarchal dividend in relation to their womenfolk, they also enjoyed the colonial dividend granted them by their race. But their power and privilege was not exercised or enjoyed in an automatic, linear or unproblematic way. The hegemonic masculinity which the settlers constructed required constant work. Men struggled on occasion to conform to its prescriptions. Some rejected, contested or undermined it. But the major narrative was of men aspiring to maintain it because, in this process, socially shaped emotional and familial needs were met.

Notes

- 1 Bob Connell (1987) developed the concept of the gender order to define the state of gender relations in society at any one time. The gender order is conceived as the 'current state of play' in the 'macro politics of gender' (Connell 1987:139). The gender order is the sum of contesting gender practices, and includes hegemonic masculinity and the particular configuration of patriarchal relations operating at a particular point. The gender order, simply put, describes the extent and nature of gender inequality at any one point in society.
- 2 Judith Butler stresses the importance of repetition in the creation of 'intelligible identity'. The 'I' can only exist, she argues, through constant, repetitive assertion of individual agency and identity, in terms 'of rules that are partially structured along matrices of gender hierarchy and compulsory heterosexuality' (Butler 1990:145). Philip Corrigan explains this process as 'a structured set of exchange and use – that is, valuing – relationships which are gradually learned through *repeated* senses of what is, and what is not, thought to be 'the case' (Corrigan 1990:280 emphasis added)).
- 3 This figure is for white residents of Pietermaritzburg County (excluding the Borough which had a population of 6 085), Umvoti, Upper Umkomanzi and Weenen. The total African population in the colony was 362 477 (Natal, *Natal blue book for 1880*).
- 4 Name embossed on trophy in possession of David and Liz Kimber.
- 5 AGO 1/8/56 2069A/1897.