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From Foreskin's Lament to Skin and Bone: Challenging Perceptions Of Masculinity in New Zealand, 1980-2003

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Abstract

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Abstract

This thesis begins by arguing that the defining moment of New Zealand nationalism occurred not at Gallipoli but in Britain in 1905 with the triumphant tour of the All Blacks. The myths were later strengthened in the 1930s cultural literary movement which placed the 'ordinary bloke', and his traditions, at the centre of importance in New Zealand society. While this literary movement diminished towards the 1970s, it continued to exert a powerful influence in New Zealand up till the 1980s when authors, such as Greg McGee, sought to challenge the relevance of this nationalism and definition of masculinity. The intention of this thesis is not only to consider the mutually reinforcing areas of masculinity and rugby in generating a distinctively New Zealand identity, but more importantly to demonstrate how perceptions towards masculinity have been reviewed and reevaluated since the late 1970s. Rugby has also had a role in challenging and undermining those myths of identity. In order to chart the shifts in these perceptions, the thesis will not only focus on Greg McGee's Foreskin's Lament and its subsequent revision in 1985, but also on Whitemen, Old Scores, Skin and Bone and the accompanying literary criticism which deals with all of these texts to destabilise the myths and suggest where masculinity now stands in New Zealand.
Introduction
i. The 1905 All Blacks: The Origin of A Masculine Tradition

The myth was that we were all but perfect practitioners of rugby. If we were beaten it was usually the fault of the referee

(T.P. McLean, The All Blacks, 24)

We knew all about winning but what did failure feel like?

(Jones, The Book of Fame, 116)

Charlotte MacDonald observes that a masculine tradition could not have existed if there had not been a masculine majority. It is a commonplace that many more men than women were drawn to New Zealand to settle in the early colonial period. According to MacDonald, this unbalanced "sex ratio" played a major role in shaping not only political and social issues at the time but also the gendered cultural/national identity which still exists today (1). Jock Phillips's influential account of New Zealand's masculine culture is based on what he terms "truth by numbers": the overwhelming male population provided the necessary soil in which a masculine culture needed to develop and flourish (4). In the absence of women, men "naturally looked to other men for support and company" (Phillips, 4). Naturally, rugby became an occasion where men could not only develop a test for measuring their strength but also participate in social activity with other men. As we shall see, the simple myth of early masculinity was built largely upon New Zealand's international success on the rugby field (Naughrigh, 2-4).

McLean's statement above is a perfect place to begin considering the construction of a masculine identity in New Zealand as it serves to remind us that this stereotype emerged through the process of myth-making. The prominent sociologist
Hobsbawm defines the formulation of nationalistic values as an invented tradition (1). Hobsbawm refers to invented traditions as sets of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules (2). Hobsbawm then argues that the mythologising of certain ceremonies or events can be used by a dominant discourse to establish continuity with a suitable past (2). Hobsbawm's concept is indeed relevant in the case of the cultural grip rugby has long held in New Zealand. As John Mulgan once commented "Rugby football was the best of all our pleasures, it was religion and desire and fulfilment all in one" (Mulgan cited MacDonald, 1). Nevertheless, what needs to be taken into account is the reason why rugby, in particular, has succeeded in becoming an expression of nationalistic and male cultural pride. Aside from McLean's remarks, Lloyd Jones' quotation, from his novel The Book of Fame may hold the fundamental answer to this question. The myth could never have eventuated if the All Blacks had not excelled so impressively. Jones notes the famous tale of how the score was swapped around by several English newspapers because they could not believe that the All Blacks had beaten Devon, the current county champions, by such and emphatic score of 55-4 (34). Back in New Zealand, when the results were published in a number of local papers many people assumed that the papers had made an error. But when later results were telegraphed and published the public realised that these results were genuine and interest towards the All Blacks tour rapidly increased (Fougere, 115). While the wins were crucial in assisting the success of the process in formulating myths, the context is essential. That is, the myths needed a contextual and historical foundation upon which they could develop.

In locating the myth in history, historians and scholars have come to the unanimous conclusion that the myth of the all-conquering All Black male role model
emerged in the 1905 tour to Britain. Though the 1905 tour is the historical incident of
arrival in establishing this perception of masculinity, its sources maybe traced back
several decades earlier. Scott Crawford is one sports historian who emphasises that
organised rugby had existed in New Zealand since the 1870s and at an unorganised
level as early as the 1850s (146). Crawford argues that even before the famous 1905
All Black tour to Britain the game became an expression of a nationalistic mood.
Conceptually, Crawford places rugby at the centre of an egalitarian society in New
Zealand. Thus, even before the tour rugby had a unifying affect according to Crawford
(5). Crawford argues that the forging of a national identity was already developing well
before the successful 1905 All Black tour (6). Greg Ryan's work, Forerunners of the
All Blacks, reaffirms Crawford's argument about the influence of rugby in New Zealand
before the 1905 tour by focussing on the success of New Zealand first "Original" team
to tour Britain. This team that toured Britain between 1888 and 1889 was labelled as a
Native team though several pakeha did participate in the tour (Ryan 1-2). But Ryan
suggests that the tour was successful in perpetuating the image of New Zealand as a
racially and socially egalitarian country. Ryan's work is integral to understanding the
psyche of New Zealand society at the time as his research suggests that New
Zealanders were equally interested in the results of these footballers. The fact that the
team won an impressive 78 out of 107 matches on tour bestowed a great deal of
honour upon the colony from Britain which New Zealanders naturally were content to
embrace (Ryan, 31). Nevertheless, the title of "The Originals" bestowed on the next
New Zealand rugby tour to Britain suggests that the cultural image which New
Zealanders wanted to present in Britain while embracing certain Maori values was still
fundamentally a European identity and one that adhered to British values of
masculinity. On the other hand, as the 1905 tour progressed, a distinctively pakeha
masculine identity would be forged when British manly standards were shattered by the impressive victories of the visiting New Zealanders (Ryan, 73).

This construction of a distinctive New Zealand masculinity is noted by Jock Phillips. According to Phillips, in his critical text *A Man’s Country?*, the character of the pakeha male stereotype in New Zealand was forged by the interaction of two powerful traditions. The first of these traditions was the desire to keep alive the muscular values of the pioneer heritage (Phillips, 86). The second of these traditions pertains to a desire to contain and protect the masculine spirit which existed in the colony within a respectable yet healthy boundary (Phillips, 86). Phillips sees the significance of rugby as being a domain where the purest expression of this type of masculinity can be found and where the values of this masculinity are dominantly imbibed (86). At the same time, Phillips attempts to decipher the reason why rugby established itself as the cherished national pastime. Phillips argues that it was through war that the invention of a distinctive New Zealand masculinity began to evolve. Sinclair is one of the many social historians who identify the close connection between the rugby and war mythologies in the construction of the traditional New Zealand male figure.

According to Sinclair, this connection was strengthened by an imperial belief that rugby was an ideal preparation ground for combat. Certainly, rugby and war have become so closely linked in the national consciousness that the two are socially inseparable (Sinclair, 146). As Abdinor notes, Sinclair’s research acknowledges this ideological fusion of the terms through the fact that defining moments of New Zealand nationalism occurred at a time when service was likely and the games revolution was
unfolding (45). It is no mere coincidence therefore that sport and war played a crucial role in assisting the formation of a uniquely New Zealand type of masculinity. These features influenced society's attitude towards masculinity because they were dominant aspects of global politics at the time (Buchanan, ii). As Sinclair states in his text: "the Gallipoli of New Zealand sport was the famous game against Wales in 1905 - a defeat to be forever celebrated as, if not a kind of victory, at least a draw. It was a major episode in the mythology of New Zealandism" (147). From this interpretation, what is interesting is how the epic 1905 All Black match against the Welsh is associated with a military event which occurred ten years after the actual game. This presents New Zealand society with a chronological dilemma which Phillips has been critical of.

Phillips believes that this masculine tradition could not have been used to define rugby if it had not existed before the tour. In particular, Phillips refers to the significance of the New Zealand troopers' contribution to the Boer War in 1904 in formulating a number of perceptions towards masculinity which were later solidified by the All Blacks' successful tour to Britain a year later (45). Despite this contrasting position, Sinclair's perception is still intriguing. If Gallipoli is the defining moment in New Zealand's war mythology, more important even than the Boer War, does this mean that the myth could not have been founded were it not for the prior potency of the rugby myth. This position of Sinclair's is therefore all the more interesting because, unlike Phillips case, it places rugby as the original contributor to the values which would later be revered as integral to a distinctive male New Zealand culture. That is, while defining rugby is often connected with war, rugby's contribution to how New Zealanders have helped to construct the war mythologies has largely been overshadowed. Therefore, the significance of Keith Sinclair's dubious chronological
connection is that it seeks to demonstrate how it is not the events themselves that contribute to one's perception of identity, but rather society's imagining and juxtapositioning of them.

Keith Sinclair's work *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search For National Identity* is an essential text which points to the importance of the 1905 tour in the process of formulating both national and masculine identity in New Zealand. *A Destiny Apart* is special as it moves toward placing sport in a more central position in the search to understand masculinity in New Zealand. In the tenth chapter, entitled "'Peace Hath its Victories': Sport", Sinclair states that in "studies of Australia or New Zealand sport can scarcely be ignored" (143). What is exciting about Sinclair's work is the connection he makes between rugby and politics.

After a synopsis of early rugby history in the chapter, Sinclair makes a crucial initial link between rugby and politics. Seddon states that at a reception for the successful 1893 New Zealand tourists of New South Wales and Queensland, both Prime Minister Richard Seddon and the Leader of the Opposition, William Rolleston, spoke to the team. Seddon, the Governor-General and other government ministers were present at the Wellington match of New Zealand against Britain in 1904 (Sinclair, 145). Sinclair's research on the 1905 tour has shown that Seddon, like the public, followed the tour closely, having results cabled to him as government messages. Seddon was also the first to greet the team on its return from Britain. At the same time, Seddon also obtained approval for the government to finance the team's return via the United States as a reward for a successful tour (Naughright, 16). Clearly, the
relationship between sport and politics in New Zealand is an important area which Sinclair rightly emphasised.

As Finlay MacDonald notes in *The Game of Our Lives*: "From its inception, the 1905 tour was as much a political as a sporting venture -- at least in the minds of men like Seddon" (23). While few at the time took a great deal of interest in the tour, Seddon saw the tour as an attempt to strengthen imperial bonds (MacDonald, 23). The reason behind Seddon's interest in the success of the All Blacks was because it was great not only for New Zealand rugby but also for New Zealand itself. The All Blacks became a promotional device to market the nation abroad (Buchanan, 10). In particular, in a time when war was a reality, the results of the team helped to market not only the nation but also the people who inhabited the nation, particularly men. The New Zealand man therefore took on a masculinity which was admirably considered during that time in British Imperial history.

The 1905 tour came soon after Britain stumbled to victory in the South African War. After the war, a series of commissions were formed to investigate the state of the British military and male physical degeneracy. Within the British Isles, New Zealand's successes on the rugby field were seen as further proof of the decline of British manhood (Richardson, 4). The Colonials were praised in the British press for their physical strength and ingenuity which were attributed to the rural nature of New Zealand society (Richardson, 4-5). For some, as Phillips argues, the victories were taken as a symbol of hope by Britain and members of the Commonwealth who arrogantly feared for the survival of Aryan supremacy. This praise translated into an affirmation of colonial maturity in the New Zealand press.
Later, as Len Richardson's research emphasises, the mounting victory tally of the All Blacks enabled Seddon to promote the tour for another purpose, and that was to promote New Zealand society as distinctively unique (4). The myth of physical superiority due to the pastoral nature of the country was incorporated easily into an emerging national mythology of a rural Arcadia (Fairburn, 3). This position was especially promoted by opportunists such as Seddon. For instance, when Seddon was asked by the London Daily Mail to describe the reasons for the All Blacks' resounding success on the rugby field, Seddon replied: "The natural and healthy conditions of colonial life produce stalwart and athletic sons of whom New Zealand and the Empire are justly proud" (MacDonald, 25). Likewise, Jock Phillips text A Man's Country sought to understand how the image of the pakeha male came into being and how it has been perpetuated over the years.

Two themes predominate in Phillips's analysis: war and rugby. These themes have been central to both the pakeha and Maori male experience in New Zealand for over a century. Interspersed throughout his text are detailed analyses of rugby and how it forms part of the image of the New Zealand male. Phillips argues that the game developed so rapidly in New Zealand because it meshed well with the pioneer male culture (86). However, by 1900, as urbanisation increased there was anxiety over the emerging social order. Phillips argues that rugby was seen by the middle class as an

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effective antidote to hooliganism and an insurance of social conformity while permitting rough manly conduct (93).

Phillips also points out that rugby, and other outdoor games, were seen as valuable weapons in sublimating sexuality. As rugby became more organised and ritualised by the late 1890s it assumed a moral significance as a 'training [tool] for life'. In addition, the sport also encouraged a spirit of co-operation and submerged individual expression. Phillips rejects the argument that rugby was seen by the bourgeoisie as a way to create efficient workers. He suggests that economic utility was a factor in an emerging ideology, but contends that rugby was more important as a way to ensure military preparedness, especially in the period from 1900 onwards.

Nevertheless, despite the fears of racial degeneracy at the time, Phillips suggests that the tour stood as a testament to the desire of the New Zealanders to acknowledge their indigenous inhabitants. While focussing on the pakeha perception of culture, Phillips' work notes how Maori were peculiarly incorporated in this masculine tradition. Phillips believes that the reason behind this objective was an attempt by the nation to hypocritically promote an image of itself as a racially egalitarian nation. The consequence of this cultural integration was that it robbed Maori players of their cultural individuality as players.

Another myth which was perpetuated by the tour was the idea of New Zealand as a classless society. As Jock Phillips notes: "[F]or British commentators the apparent classlessness of the team became a source of fascination" (91). At the time of the tour, rugby in Britain was still exclusively perceived as a gentleman's game. Apart from this,
rugby was also a game associated with individual brilliance. Phillips notes again how values founded in the New Zealand troopers' prowess in the Boer War were re-employed and reestablished to promote this notion of classless comradeship on the rugby field (91). Indeed, this classlessness became a dominant component in the myth of the New Zealand male. For instance, one encounters this belief on the first page of Lloyd Jones text.

Billy Stead was a bootmaker
Bob Deans, a farmer
Bunny Abbott, a farrier and professional runner
Dave Gallaher, a meatworks foreman
Billy 'Carbine' Wallace, a foundryman .... (9)

While the British played a major role in promoting this notion of the New Zealand man as an egalitarian fellow (which had already been boosted by the triumph of the Women's Rights Movement here a decade earlier) New Zealanders also worked to strengthen this perception. In Why the 'All Blacks' Triumphed, the Captain Dave Gallaher attributed team work to the impressive victories. When interviewed and asked to comment on the emphatic victories he humbly stated that: "we [the team] reckon that every man of the fifteen has had a hand in every try" (MacDonald, 23). While the question is directed to himself, he is inclusive of his team and their efforts and not his own. Still, Gallaher capability as a leader was duly noted. Gallaher, like the New Zealand troopers, reflected the nationalistic desire to demonstrate skill on the field (rugby or battlefield) while repressing one's emotions off it (Phillips, 92). Gallaher represented the man who, while savouring victory, could do so without berating themselves off the field. The myth of the New Zealand male had now begun to take shape within the country. All that was required now was a place where these ideas
could be canonised. This would come eventually through the national/masculine literary
movement of the 1930s.
ii. Canonising and Spreading the Myths: The Literary Contribution

The 1905 tour formulated the myths of masculinity which set the New Zealand male apart from other men within the Empire and indeed the world. Hobsbawm argues that identities are not fixed in nature but rather have the potential to be adapted and molded during times of rapid social transformation (10). Thus, the process of change can either "weaken" these past identities, or it can serve to reignite the community's passion towards these myths as an integral component in telling the community about their history. In many respects, the triumphant 1905 All Black tour to Britain formed the foundation upon which later myths associated with New Zealand masculinity would be presented and indeed reinvented. However, while the tour was essential in founding the myths of masculinity, it would be wrong to imply that this original perception of masculinity remained uncontested in the evolution of New Zealand's attitude towards a socially idealistic definition of masculinity.

The formation of this platform for masculine national identity did not simply cease at the end of the tour. This tradition was reaffirmed and built upon in the next twenty-five years by other incidents which reinforced the original myths of masculinity. Again, war would become the centre stage where the New Zealand male would display his courage and determination on the front as he would do if he were participating in a rugby match. In reference to New Zealand's participation in the First World War effort, Mangan illustrates how soldiers saw war through the paradigm of rugby: "playing the game", "counting battles as by goals" and treating "fighting as a game" (147-8). These descriptions serve as an indicator that sport preceded war in terms of formulating New Zealand's emerging masculine identity. Indeed, when the supposedly official defining
moment of New Zealand's history occurred, at Anzac Cove on 25 April 1915 when the New Zealand man displayed his masculine prowess against a determined Turkish foe, the reason that a language came so easily to talk about it was that it had already been initiated in 1905.

While the relationship between rugby and war has frequently been noted by most of New Zealand's social historians, later tours would help to reaffirm the myths founded by the victorious Original All Black team. Given the crushing victories over American and Canadian teams, the Invincibles' triumphant clean sweep of the British Isles and France, frequent success against Australia and two drawn test series against the Springboks (1921 in New Zealand and 1927 in South Africa), many men in New Zealand now believed that they had the evidence to attest to their conviction that the New Zealand male was superior to his adversaries when it came to rugby (Chester, 10-11).

By the 1930s a number of ideas were in circulation as to what constituted a true New Zealand male. While the New Zealand male's interaction with the game of rugby and his participation in war, were two of the major contributors to the debate there were others also. These arguments ranged from the New Zealand man's engagement with the land to his resourcefulness during times of crisis (such as in the Wall Street crash). However, this diverse assortment of ideas pertaining to the subject was all that existed. The 1930s changed that with the canonisation of the tradition through literature.
Kai Jensen argues that an authentic recognisable New Zealand masculinism emerged during the 1930s' national literary movement (42). This movement which emerged in the early 1930s although arising from a relatively small circle of male writers, played a fundamental role in strengthening the notion of a distinctive New Zealand identity which had been lacking in previous years. This was because the literature used to express New Zealand prior to this period, especially during the Maoriland writing period, was still heavily based on an outdated imperial Georgian style of writing which failed to capture the modern essence of New Zealand and its people (Jensen, 42). However, it would be wrong to assume that the period which this rising masculine movement would supersede could be defined as strictly Georgian. Rather, the male writers who would form the masculine literary tradition applied the term 'Georgian' as a term of abuse to discredit an earlier generation of New Zealand writers. In short, it was a broad and misleading description. In many respects, the masculine tradition which emerged was a product of their time, influenced especially by outside literary developments and political ideals.

The rising group of primarily male writers, including individuals such as Frank Sargeson, Allen Curnow and Denis Glover, saw this Georgian style as outdated, flowery, sentimental and socially naive (Jensen, 42). They deemed its florid language too effeminate to define a nation which had historically claimed a kinship with strength and engaging physically with the land. They also objected to its amateur and journalistic association. Above all, it had been a nation whose defining historical moments had been created by men. Writers, such as the ones mentioned, reasoned that New Zealand literature needed to reflect its masculine past (Jensen, 43). The literature of the last twenty-five years, which had been dominated by female authors including
Katherine Mansfield and Jessie Mackay, failed to succeed in this objective. This did not mean that all women were attacked by the masculine literary movement as Curnow had praised the work done by Blanche Baughan and Ursulla Bethell. However, in the advancement of the movement a greater critique on other female writers often meant that even Baughan and Bethell were unfairly scrutinised. Attuned to the new modernist and social realist styles of writing being employed in Europe and the United States, this new generation of masculine writers regarded the old literary generation as failing to capture the essence of the ordinary New Zealander. Despite a desire to break away from a British literary style, Stuart Murray observes how New Zealand masculine writers were inspired by the realist writing movement taking place in Britain as well as in America and the United States (13-4). At the same time, the employment of the Georgian style of writing in their opinion could hardly be considered a nationalistic endeavour by the earlier generation of writers as it merely reinforced New Zealand's alignment to British ideals and failed to encapsulate what was distinctive about the country. While it may have been useful in defining the landscape, the language was regarded as too effete to define the accomplishments of a nation whose history had strongly been built on the pioneering, soldiering and sporting achievements of a fundamentally male governed society. Inspired by George Orwell's focus on the working class and Ernest Hemingway's war novels, these New Zealand male writers saw in these works a perception of masculinity which they believed also captured the characteristics and ideals of the ordinary New Zealand male.

On the other hand, the current context from which these male writers operated should not be forgotten. The 1930s and 1940s were also the high points of leftist thinking in New Zealand, and these values had an impact on to the emerging generation
of New Zealanders. For the male writers who emerged during the early 1930s, the literature which had appeared previously was certainly regarded as bourgeois and was regarded as pompously tied to capitalistic values. Writing which did not focus on a working-class readership was instantly regarded as bourgeois. This new type of literature which emerged in New Zealand had to be socially aware, dealing with important social issues, in an accessible and comprehensible literary style in which the ordinary working class New Zealand male reader could digest (Smithyman, 150). The fact that writers such as Curnow, Fairburn, Glover and Sargeson were attempting to produce pieces of work directed at the ordinary New Zealand male suggests that they were not merely driven by leftist ideals. In the opinion of Kai Jensen, these writers were equally driven by nationalistic endeavours which continued well after the leftist ideals had faded by the 1940s (45).

The new group of writers sought to produce work that would be relevant to a general New Zealand audience and by that, they were often referring to a 'working class' male audience. For most of these male writers it was not simply a leftist interest in working class male culture and it was more than just pure Marxism at work in these writers' objectives. Though socialism influenced the writing of male writers such as Curnow, Glover and Sargeson they should not be regarded as socialists. Instead, it seems more likely, and appropriate that their interest in the figure of the ordinary working class New Zealand male overlapped with Marxism. According to Rachel Barrowman, the movement was not so much about representing Marxist ideals but about exploring and building a congenial literary community interested in participating in a cultural agenda which encouraged nationalism (30). The focus thus moves away from Marxism to a focus on nationalism. What these writers were trying to develop,
Jensen persuasively argues, was a distinctive national literature, "and they saw the New Zealand working man as central to this endeavour" (45).

Jensen argues the fascination for these writers towards ordinary Kiwi males was due to their belief that it was working class men who had been the powerful historical source of New Zealand's national identity (44). National and masculine identities thus, were merged by these writers until it became almost impossible to separate the two (Jensen, 45). The writers who emerged out of the masculine tradition shared a number of agreed attitudes toward what constituted being an ordinary New Zealander. Frank Sargeson found a powerful source of New Zealand identity in the image of the working man of the land. In his autobiography, Sargeson centres his attention on his relationship with two men who he argues stand for "the kind of New Zealander I liked best" (356). The first is his uncle, Uncle Oakley Sargeson who is a farmer and the second man is his friend Harry, a disqualified horse-trainer. Apart from their relationship with the land it is the simplicity and ordinariness of the characters which attracts Sargeson so strongly to these men. This is also the masculine world which R.A.K. Mason envisions when defining his ideal perception of masculinity in New Zealand. In his poem "The Colonial Spirit", Mason observes that "[in] the blackblocks you'll find evidence of a blunt, free, frank manner. It's disappearing even there. In the towns, of course, the ideal is to be a third-rate imitation of a timid suburban Englishman" (191). The encountering of these men suggests that both Mason and Sargeson share a common view that the ordinary New Zealander is a man to be found primarily on the land but not even there necessarily. As Sargeson comments at one point, "I was rationally clear that this new world suddenly encountered was my world, the one I by nature belonged to; and that across the road was the one of my brother and his friends, of tennis lawns, and tennis
togs, office hours and after hours..." (187). The ordinary world where his uncle and
Harry reside is not only the world that Sargeson himself wished to belong to; it is that
which, he argued, New Zealand men in general desired.

This image of the man on the land is also complemented by other images of the
idealistic ordinary New Zealand male. Another attribute of manhood to be found in our
literary texts from the masculine period is the view of playing sport or at the least
displaying a strong interest in it. In particular, participation in rugby was regarded as
the rite of passage for men in New Zealand. One of Sargson's protagonists makes the
mistake of boasting about his tennis skills in front of a group of men at a party and is
disregarded by the group who see the sport as "a soft and sissy game" and one which
would not "seriously engage the attention of any real man" (Sargeson, 51). However,
others were not inclined to agree with Sargeson's awe of the rugby player as the only
ordinary New Zealander. Allen Curnow found that his skills in other sports such as
swimming and cross-country running were useful in helping him to gain acceptance at
his new school (92-3). What is intriguing about Curnow's account is that rugby is not
mentioned as one of the sports which he felt he needed to participate in. This raises an
intriguing situation given the social prominence rugby has had historically in New
Zealand society. Jensen suggests Curnow is not trying to contest this tradition. Instead
Jensen suggests that perhaps what is being blurred here is the definition between the
ordinary man and the idealistic man. For men to be regarded as everyday blokes sports
such as cricket, swimming and boxing were sufficient. But to be regarded as a real
man, participating in rugby was still regarded as the monitor of an idealistic perception
of New Zealand masculinity.
At the same time, rugby formed the centre of a number of other activities considered essential in the formation of the ideal man. The war and sport connection is one such area. The significance of participating in rugby was that it was regarded as an important training game for military preparedness. The view of war as central to New Zealand masculinity is largely a result of New Zealand's historical relationship within the British Empire. According to Mulgan, right from the Boer War up till World War Two war was a constant reality for the New Zealand male growing up and it is hardly surprising that it should have "seized the imagination" of young boys (and grown men) the way it has (51). Dan Davin strengthens the connection between the rugby and war when he states, "[there is] [n]o question what the war was about. There was a war and if you were a man you did your damnedest to get into it" (31). The argument of getting into it also suggests that to be a real man one had to be a team player. Rugby again played a crucial role in generating this concept. But it was not only integral to the arenas of engaging in rugby or the war. It also applied in the pub.

The centrality of drinking at the pub became ritualised allowing men to integrate themselves into masculine society. The geography of the nation from the 1840s up till the 1930s was still very frontier-like. In a frontier society where there was a lack of organised entertainment and the pub was often far away from the male workers' homes and this produced a drinking behaviour that still characterises New Zealand today. As Phillips argues, men coming into town. "instead of the regular and moderate nip" would venture into the towns and have a "burst" or a "spree" (35). In time, and as in the case of sport and war, drinking became incorporated as another way in which masculinity could be tested. The ritualisation of drinking, enabled people to integrate themselves into a social environment through the establishment of another
commonality he now shared with his fellow male peers (along with rugby and war). In forming the masculine tradition these were the fundamental values which writers such as Curnow, Sargeson and Glover saw as the main attributes of the typical Kiwi male.

Curnow argues that the new generation of masculine writers felt a literary obligation to establishing a nationalistic movement in New Zealand literature. As Curnow states, "They insisted that, as poets and because they were poets, they remained responsible adult New Zealanders: more responsible, because set apart for a special task" (51). This task according to Jensen was to achieve a style of writing which was not only manly but which also offered New Zealand literature itself the possibility to reach maturity/manhood (50). In order to achieve this, this generation of writers believed that the writer needed to reach out and embrace the values associated with everyday New Zealand manliness. However, in detailing Curnow's own inability to live up to A.R.D. Fairburn's manly prowess as a talented swimmer, this raises the obvious implication that those poets who were not physically imposing naturally would always fail to live up to this image of ideal everyday masculinity (90-3). As a consequence, the masculine movement which emerges is not as homogenous as it first appears. While there are similarities in the invention of the everyday man as being a worker (farmer), soldier and sportsmen there are frequent variations between the writers beyond these common images.

While the common thematic areas of the man of the land, the rugby player, the soldier, and the drinker, associated with the traditional image of the New Zealand male are raised by most of the male authors during the masculine literary movement agreement about the concepts is hardly universal. While Sargeson believed that a real
man worked the land, Mason was inclined to disagree, suggesting ideal masculinity could also be shaped in the cities of New Zealand. Likewise, Sargeson's understanding of "idealistic" masculinity was also contested by Glover. While Glover believed that participating in rugby shaped the ideal New Zealand man, men did not need to participate in it to be considered an 'ordinary bloke'. At the same time, the literature on rugby also raised contested arguments as to the ideal shape of the New Zealand male. Some writers, such as R.A.K. Mason, believed that "strength, size and height" typified the New Zealand male (26). During the Boer War the New Zealanders had been commended on features such as their splendid height. Yet, this image of the pakeha male did not remain fixed in the history of New Zealand literature. By the 1930s the old image of the tall New Zealander was replaced with the image of the stocky one by authors such as Mulgan. Traits of the New Zealand males personality also came under increasing debate between the male writers of the masculine tradition period.

Though many still argued that the typical New Zealand male was shy and modest in nature others were inclined to disagree. In one of Davin's works, Not Here, Not Now, a muscular character contesting a Rhodes Scholarship vents his anger when an academic boy wins the prize (228-9). In Sargeson's story The Salamander and the Fire, Davin observes how one man retelling his account of the war does so in a manner which challenges the notion of the traditionally emotionally conservative Kiwi male, "The feelings of course were there" (xv). Ron Sefton, a protagonist in Gordon Slater's piece, A Gun in My Hand, argues that contrary to belief the pub is not a place full of lifeless inactivity but a great deal of "gossip" and verbal communication between men (91). Owen Marshall stretches Slater's case out further when he suggests that, contrary to popular belief, men could engage in a female style of talking if they wished to. In one
of his stories, *At the Door*, a woman visiting her dying husband is amazed by his unusual desire to talk intimately about family memories (56-8). In noting this incident it is clear that the issue of changing attitudes to emotion have not only entered the debate about masculinity in New Zealand but also new ideas towards heterosexual relationships, sex and fatherhood.

The male body, something that was once repressed began to take on the dimension for some writers as something which could be regarded as beautiful. As an artist in M.K. Joseph's novel *A Pound of Saffron* states:

> How stupid it was that one could no longer say of a man's body. 'How Beautiful!', as one could of a woman's -- that is, without being taken for a pansy. The beauty of half the human race was blinkered out of the mind . . . . the rot set in early, dirty-minded old women and the unanswerable male snigger. (41).

While the male "snigger" suggests that male physical beauty must stay unrecognised, this passage raises the view that not all male writers agreed with this old-fashioned traditional perception. The same can be said about the sexual relationship shared by women. Interest in the heterosexual relationship emerged partly as a consequence of the shifting nature towards the male body itself. This change was fundamentally marked by changing attitudes towards premarital sex in the 1960s as well as the advent of feminism in the 1970s. As Jensen argued, "If robust masculine size guarantees heterosexuality, then heterosexuality is also part of the masculine ideal" (27). Indeed, changing times along with social attitudes would suggest that Jensen is correct in this observation. Felix Donnelly, attacking the traditional perception of masculinity in the 1970s identified that part of the hidden message of being a man in the past was achieved by "being a sexual conqueror" (78). The changing attitude to sex is clear in the prominence the penis receives from authors such as C.K. Stead. In his work *All
Visitors Ashore, the important association between having a big penis and being a real man is made when Patagonia de Thierry catches Curl Skidmore having sex with another woman where she admires him for having such "a big cock" (116). The desire of Curl for the mysterious woman also reverses the traditional notion of the female predatory hunger for sexual gratification by his willingness to please her (Stead, 116-7). Talking about girls is no longer a substitute for sleeping with them. Naturally, the desired product of this heterosexual relationship was children and the emerging myth of the New Zealand male as a father not surprisingly emerged from the sex myth. Still, as Sargeson proved, many writers such as Fairburn failed to see past the view that a strong perception of masculinity could be constructed by a man who failed to live up to these manly values (Jensen, 76).

It can be deduced from these accounts that it would be false to claim that the masculine literary movement in New Zealand produced a homogenous opinion as to what constituted as the ideal man. As times changed, old and irrelevant values were replaced and built upon by the next generation of New Zealanders. Hobsbawm reminds us that myths are hardly ever fixed and are constantly modified by the people who come into contact with them (3). Over time, traditional perceptions were adjusted to appeal to a new generation of New Zealanders in a society which was becoming more and more urbanised every decade. This change naturally brought about a change to the people and the new world they inhabited. In order to belong they needed to rewrite the myths so that they would be accepted within their society while retaining a shared connection with their ancestors. This raises the implication that the literary masculinity which emerged between the early 1930s and the late 1960s was far more diverse, contested and delicate than it may first appear. Nevertheless, the few values of
masculinity which this generation of male writers did agree upon left a long and impressionable legacy of what many New Zealand men now aspire to be when they talk about being real men.

Like all literary phases, this passage would eventually succumb to its own demise by the middle of the 1960s. However, the legacy it left behind is powerfully present. Greg McGee, born at the height of the literary movement in the 1950s, still could not escape the huge influence this cultural revolution had achieved in helping to fashion a masculine national identity. It marked the first concerted literary endeavour to form a nationalistic perception towards defining a New Zealander. At the same time, defining a nationalistic understanding of masculinity was at the heart of this often tenacious academic debate. There can be little doubt that McGee encountered these writers and their attitudes. Indeed, this debate as to what it meant to be a New Zealand male would later lead McGee to search for his own answer to the question.
iii. Buildup to The Lament: Greg McGee and his Relationship with the Tradition

Born in Oamaru in 1950, McGee grew up in a time (and indeed a place) when the image of masculinity in New Zealand was still heavily based on mythical perceptions founded by the Original All Blacks in 1905 (Carnegie, 321). When McGee attended the University of Otago in the late 1960s, where he graduated with a degree in law in 1973, McGee's perception of masculinity had still largely been influenced by the traditions of masculinity which he had encountered through the myths of iconic All Black heroes he had been raised to idolise as a young male. For many young boys growing up in New Zealand during the post-war period, participating and following rugby, like McGee, an interest in the game was an important part in demonstrating one's masculinity in New Zealand (Carnegie, 369).

McGee's involvement with rugby spans the two-decade period mentioned and includes such achievements as representing Otago, the South Island in 1970, New Zealand Universities in 1971 and 1973, participating in the Junior All Black tour to Australia in 1972 and being an All Black trialist in 1973 (Carnegie, 321). McGee's attachment to the game up till the mid-1970s suggests how rugby still strongly served as a vehicle for promoting the traditional perception of masculinity. Despite claims by sports historians such as Rod Chester (415), that McGee's writing career was inspired fundamentally by his displeasure at not being accepted as an All Black, McGee contests this claim. In an exclusive interview on the web site for his movie Skin and Bone McGee comments:

"I believe being left out of the All Blacks was a brilliant decision by the selectors. "I got close enough to the dream to realise that it wasn't what I thought it was. At that time
the rugby world was ultra-conservative and a long haired student would not have fitted in.\textsuperscript{2}

Despite this confident assertion from McGee there is a slight hint of disappointment in the fact that he never had the chance to represent his country as an All Black. As he states in the same interview, the "dream" of being an All Black was, at least for his generation, what all boys aspired to be when they grew up. While McGee states that not being selected as an All Black for the 1974 season made the decision to be a writer easier, one cannot help but wonder if \textit{Foreskin's Lament} and his other plays focussing on rugby would have eventuated if his rugby career had continued. Though McGee does not make the connection, it could certainly be argued that \textit{Foreskin's Lament} is a parallel of McGee's own situation in the mid 1970s. The fact that he played rugby so passionately and took it to such a high level up till 1973 before he was eventually rejected by the New Zealand Rugby Football Union suggests that prior to this incident and despite his university education the issue of masculinity had not been as important as it was to become for McGee.

\textit{Foreskin's Lament} was also largely influenced by McGee's experiences overseas. Previously, most New Zealand rugby players travelling abroad had taken their knowledge of the game to the British Isles. What is unique about Greg McGee is that he became one of the first New Zealanders to take the game to continental Europe and a season later to a stint in Washington D.C.\textsuperscript{3} In Italy his first enduring work \textit{Foreskin's Lament} was conceived. It seems that in a way McGee was right that not being selected for the All Blacks altered his life course to becoming a professional writer. Nevertheless, the decision to move overseas resulted not so much in the

\textsuperscript{2} http://www.skinandbonemovie.com/writer.htm
\textsuperscript{3} ibid.
abandonment of a country which he no longer could comprehend as a new ability to understand it from a number of perspectives. McGee freely admits in the interview how encountering foreign cultures outside of New Zealand, enabled him to see New Zealand masculinity from a new angle. While he admits that he never lost his love for the game, McGee admits that the impact the experience had in awakening him to the faults of the traditional definition of masculinity were painfully unpleasant at first. The perceptions of masculinities which he had encountered on his overseas expeditions left McGee with a feeling that the masculinity which had long operated in New Zealand was rather shallow in nature, lacking emotion and possessing even a cold dark side (as Clean later demonstrates). McGee felt it was time to bring this traditional perception of masculinity under the social spotlight.

In an interview with the New Zealand Herald in 2004 McGee argued that it is the New Zealand public where one should turn to find an authentic and genuine national voice. According to McGee, the image New Zealand men have traditionally striven to represent may tell them about where they have come from but it tells them little about what makes them distinctive from their forefathers. Though these men claim that they are representing an authentic model of New Zealand masculinity, McGee rejects this claim, suggesting that instead of liberating men it has the opposite effect. The traditional image of masculinity is irrelevant to our time, according to McGee, because it continues to promote the idea of masculinity as a homogenous category. Clearly, Foreskin’s Lament, and McGee’s later works reinforce McGee’s view that he does not hold the opinion that a universal perception of masculinity exists in New Zealand. McGee states that the people of New Zealand should be the shapers of their

own identity and not a select few privileged men in power. There can be no doubt that Foreskin's Lament and McGee's later works focussing on rugby and masculinity have played a phenomenal role in stimulating intense debate around the issue of changing perceptions towards masculinity in the span of almost a generation (Wells, 33).

However, the trip overseas was not the only event to affect McGee's attitude towards the traditional perception of masculinity. During the 1970s, the advent of feminism, gay rights and concern over the political situation in South Africa played a major role in challenging McGee's original faith in the traditional perception of masculinity. Television's arrival in New Zealand in the late 1960s, also enabled McGee to see groups such as Maori and feminist activists who no longer wished to be victimised by the dominant patriarchal discourse. At the same time, the televising of global incidents of brutality such as the Vietnam War graphically presented the true horror of war for the first time to New Zealanders. These disturbing images for individuals such as McGee, played a fundamental role in destabilising one of the major components of the myth linking masculinity with the game of rugby.

All of McGee's works centering on rugby and masculinity are vitally concerned with the loss of collective values and individual altruism in an increasingly materialistic and selfish society. Their "dramaturgical power relies on vigorous comedy to relax an audience into familiar territory; then bitter paradoxes and social pain emerge to leave the society uneasy about the society it frequently shares with the characters in the play" (Carnegie; 1998, 371) McGee's liberal protagonists encounter the same pain as the audience that watches them. The major male characters' attempt to fit in with their
society and the traditions of that society only to be rejected as they are deemed to be inauthentic men (Carnegie, 321).

An interesting feature of the play *Foreskin's Lament* is embedded in the title itself. The reference to the foreskin, in a number of ways, alludes to the biblical and historical tradition of circumcision. The title is significant as it stresses McGee's general interest in the issue of sex, society and ultimately the repercussions these have had on masculinity in New Zealand history. Michael Glass argues that circumcision is strongly connected with sex, violence and the rite of passage in many cultures including New Zealand. Glass argues that a sensitive tissue, the foreskin provides men with the ability to feel a great deal of pleasure. Apart from religious and medical factors, the removal of the foreskin in New Zealand suggests the masculine hostility towards the emotional satisfaction derived from possessing the foreskin. In the 1900s when the traditional perception of masculinity was fashioned, the expression of emotions was considered effeminate by a fundamentally male-influenced frontier society. Circumcising one's child thus prevented him from being considered a lesser man while at the same time ensuring that he would be accepted by his society. This societal view is reflected in the Bible:

Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant. (Gen, 17:14).

Returning to a contemporary New Zealand context, *Foreskin's Lament* may indeed be a metaphor for Greg's own personal lament at not being accepted as an All Black (and ultimately as a man) in 1974. If *Foreskin's Lament* provides a hint of McGee's

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6 ibid.
bitterness at not being selected as an All Black, Whitemen provides by far the clearest indication with its satirical take on individuals who represent the ideal traditionally ideal perception of masculinity. Unfortunately, the consequence of unleashing this repressed emotional hostility towards a past chapter of his life cost McGee in a number of ways. Apart from costing him a great deal financially, it also dented his respectability as a dramatist. It is interesting to observe that it took over a decade before McGee produced another stage play This Train I'm On (McNaughton, 370). Though this may be coincidental, it would still be safe to say that the failure of Whitemen to receive the same acclaim as Foreskin's Lament affected McGee's confidence in himself as a writer. On the other hand, film provided McGee with a new medium to reach out to the people of New Zealand. With the growth of the New Zealand film industry in the 1990s, McGee was definitely aware of the potential of taking his works from the theatre and applying them to a film which had the potential to reach a larger and more socially diverse audience (Carnegie, 321). The investigation to see what masculinity now meant to New Zealanders has always been a solid and constant objective in the twenty-five years McGee has been a professional writer and film producer.

As Neill states "When myths no longer serve to incarnate the values of a people, the customs that declare its sense of family, they become the maudlin properties of a lying nostalgia" (9). McGee's experiences as a young adult left him in no doubt that the myths which the people of New Zealand once subscribed to no longer reflected the views of all of its citizens. This was also relevant to McGee's investigation of where masculinity now stood in New Zealand in the 1980s. McGee then wanted to know for himself whether the perception of masculinity he was raised to believe in was still relevant in the context of an ever changing socio-cultural New Zealand landscape.
Foreskin's Lament was McGee's first literary attempt to confront the issue of masculinity in New Zealand.

McGee admitted later that he was nervous about how Foreskin's Lament would be received by the nation in general and particularly by men. While it had received a standing ovation amongst academics, McGee was curious as to how everyday New Zealanders were prepared to question the relevancy of traditional masculine values. A pamphlet produced by the Circa Theatre in Wellington in 1981 captures McGee's mood perfectly at the time of the release of the play (McGee, 25-6). McGee draws on the presence of a former All Black Ken Gray who was present at the premier release of his play with his wife. According to McGee, Ken was an iconic male figure at the Petone rugby club and he had more to lose by being present at the opening night performance than anyone else there (26). As the play developed and became more graphic, McGee recalls Ken's wife turning to him and asking, "It [masculinity] can't really have been like that, could it?" (26). Although Ken could have defended the tradition, his reply to his wife was "Actually, it was worse" (McGee, 26-7). It was this assurance from Ken, McGee recalls, that provided him with the courage to represent and direct the question of masculinity to New Zealanders over the next twenty-five years of his professional writing and film producing career.
Chapter 1 Two Serious Laments
i. Representing the Past in Foreskin's Lament

*If you were rugby you were everything.* Gay Alison

_Foreskin's Lament_ appeared during a time in New Zealand history when the traditional myths associated with masculinity were coming under increased scrutiny. While this challenge was largely provided by gay and feminist activists, the threat towards this traditional perception was also coming from men within the order itself no longer willing to oblige in perpetuating the image (Jensen, 107). By 1980, traditional perceptions of New Zealanders were threatened by a variety of forces which implicitly or explicitly questioned the place of rugby and the closely associated male gender role in New Zealand society. In short, Mervyn Thompson is correct in his observations in claiming that the play is about the "state of the nation" (Thompson, cited in Neill, 10). As has been established in the introduction, the traditional image of the New Zealand male was heavily entrenched in the often aligned arenas of rugby and war. Even Nanette Monin, a strong feminist critic of the play had to embrace the fact that when one talks about rugby in New Zealand the issue embraces everyone (333). Bruce Mason, likewise, is not surprised by the success which _Foreskin's Lament_ has had in New Zealand commenting: "It has been obvious to some of us for thirty years or so that 'the great New Zealand play', to call in that old chimera, would be about rugby football. This [Foreskin's Lament] is it" (Gribben, 88).

According to David Carnegie, the extraordinary force of the first production of _Foreskin's Lament_ lay in the correspondence between the world of the play and the experience of the audience (Carnegie, 1991, 13). The audience were aware of McGee's
use of the national game of New Zealand as a metaphor for New Zealand society. In defining the play, Mike Nikolaidi explains that the significance of the play lies in how it encapsulates the importance of the game in shaping our national masculine character:

Through a prism that captures, and then reflects, the attitudes of a group of rugby players in a small rural town, McGee illuminates, as no other playwright before him, a raw — and unnerving — essence that flows into our national character. (77)

It was at the 1980 Workshop that the power of Greg McGee's *Foreskin's Lament* was originally detected. Mervyn Thompson, who worked with the play, has said in his autobiography *All My Lives* that, "it is the only New Zealand play I wish I had written myself" (157). In the view of Thompson, the power of the play lies in its ability to turn the events and personalities surrounding a game of rugby into an examination of the state of the nation. Sebastian Black, in support of Thompson's idea, argues that the play "challenges many of the myths about the country" (12). Bruce Mason once argued that New Zealand's nature as a Welfare State nation was the crucible of artistic and intellectual flair in the country. Mason is reported to have said, "citizens are looked after from the cradle to the grave. The ideal of such a society will not be creation, but health and its heroic athletes (runners and footballers)" (255). McGee, himself seems to see a degree of truth in Mason's case. As a former athlete, McGee drew the conclusion that to understand one's own society one has to become acquainted and learn about the activities which that society cherishes (Black, 12). On the other hand, one needs to become familiar with how that game is shaped by history, tradition and changes in social thinking.

The clearest adulator of this traditional perception of masculinity in rugby and war is reflected in the speech of iconic coach Tupper:
Tupper: ...the finest thing I've ever experienced -- is that sense of comradeship, striving for the common goal, all together, one! ... And that standard has got to be one of guts, of character, of desire, of the spirit to go through the fire, the war, the dangers with your mates, and come out stronger for it at the other end. (51)^

In analysing the character of Tupper in Foreskin's Lament, Cordery argues that Tupper reflects a perception of masculinity which, while distinctively New Zealand, still seeks to align itself with British Victorian values (97). Cordery, in turn, believes that Tupper could be regarded as a metaphorical Tom Brown (97-8). This is reflected through Tupper's essentially Victorian ideals and desires to uphold traditional values associated not only with rugby but more importantly with a strict definition of what constitutes being masculine.

Just like Tom Brown, Tupper appears to be a promoter of social unity (Cordery, 99-100). As Stachurski has argued in her analysis of the play, just as "victory over the opposition is a matter of life and death; in Tupper's view rugby is almost as important" (36). As Tupper exclaims to Foreskin: "this is a team game, son, and the town is the team. It's the town's honour at stake when the team plays" (49). Tupper's earlier comments referring to participating in rugby as being all about "striving for the common goal" reinforce Tupper's view of the importance of the group over the individual (52). For Tupper, there is no room for individualism on the rugby field as he clearly stipulates to an unconvinced Foreskin: 'You're too much of an individual. You're a bloody romantic' (51). Tupper believes that rugby is "hard, serious, [and] important. A battle worth winning" (52). Michael Neill also observes Tupper's

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obsession with achieving a "victory at all costs" approach: "[t]he point of the bloody game ... is to win ... what is to be won doesn't matter, the goal is simply to have a goal" (10). While this statement reflects the cultural grip which rugby has long had upon the nation, closer inspection and interpretation of Tupper's remarks and attitudes show a disturbing underside to this male tradition.

The major character McGee uses to destabilise these myths is Foreskin. Unlike the other players in the team, Foreskin can view New Zealand society not only from the arena of rugby culture where many of the values associated with masculinity were formulated but also from the perspective of a university education. This latter experience, in particular, has helped to make Foreskin highly critical towards the traditional perception of New Zealand identity and masculinity. Foreskin's position in Foreskin's Lament as a questioner, searcher, challenger is reinforced when he remarks "I'm unaccustomed to leaving questions unasked ... why? why?" (92). According to Neill, people who ask questions to which they want real answers, as in the case of Foreskin's cries of "whaddarya?" (96), are a direct threat because of the challenge they pose to the myths founded by the old exponents of an outdated form of masculinity (14). As has been demonstrated earlier, Tupper is one such individual who seeks to protect these traditional myths of masculinity. From this perspective, Tupper's response to the question of "whaddarya?" is not an endeavour to search for a new more liberal definition of masculinity in New Zealand, but merely encourages allegiance with the traditional code of masculinity (Ross, 23). McGee, through Foreskin, attempts to critique the relevance of these myths in the present context of New Zealand.
One of the ways in which Foreskin questions the mythical perceptions surrounding masculine identity in New Zealand is by challenging the significance the tradition places on the united team and the victory at all costs. According to Abdinor, the euphoria precipitated by the All Blacks' success is the reason why so many New Zealand men are addicted to the game (44). Sinclair agrees with Abdinor's position, arguing that this male New Zealand audience identify with the team, and the team's prowess on the field is a kind of surrogate masculinity test (147). Consequently, the result of the match, as in the delivering of the play, is important as it actively affects how this audience feels about themselves afterward. It is significant then that Foreskin's Lament, a play which aims to destabilise traditional myths associated with masculinity begins with the team's desire to win in order to perpetuate this perception of hardened masculinity. At the beginning of the play Tupper forms the platform for this euphoria: "[g]et excited about it! Go over the top of him, don't hang off! Use your bloody feet you pack of poofers. Ruck! Ruck!" (1). The way it is achieved is also important for Tupper who stresses that rugby matches are won through "comradeship" by men all striving for "the common cause" (51-2). This traditional male desire to win in order to demonstrate one's masculine virility is reflected throughout the play. Larry, believing that the team will win against Ngapuk, organises a celebratory party at his house after the match on Saturday (40). Larry reaffirms this connection with the traditional standard of masculinity when he suggests that after the party they can watch the All Blacks play against (and beat) the Springboks on the television afterwards (40). This scene demonstrates the chance to perpetuate a masculinity which is not only victorious but stands united. As such, it can be argued that the desire to win, individually or collectively, forms the basis of the traditional understanding of masculinity. However,
McGee, through the character of Foreskin attempts to destabilise this notion by focussing on a number of character interactions.

In the changing room after the match, an angry Tupper confronts Foreskin for placing his "individuality" over the team which cost Ngapukurau the victory against Ngapuk:

Tupper: You didn’t pass. You lost us the fucken game ... You dodge through half their team. Only one man to beat, three men in support outside you. Why did you try to beat that man? Why didn’t you pass? What the hell were you trying for?


Tupper: Perfection be damned! We could have won the fucken game! (89)

Foreskin's desire for individual perfection runs contrary to Tupper's notion of perfection of team work or the "common goal" which all men should strive for. McGee questions the validity of Tupper's assumptions through the reactions of individuals within the team towards the coach's perception of masculinity.

In a play of considerable thematic subtlety and verbal richness, one of McGee's triumphs is to undermine the stereotype of the inarticulate Kiwi, strong silent hero or brutal backwoodsman (Black, 12-3). In contrast to Tupper, the younger men present a variety of male attitudes. An interesting feature of the play is how the game of rugby is paralleled with the "game" of life. Despite Tupper's assertion that life is a "smaller game" with "none of the grand emotions" which can be found on the rugby field (53), he is wrong in his attempts to convince Foreskin that he should accept this view. The reason for this becomes clear when the age of Tupper and the time frame when his ideological perceptions surrounding masculinity were formed, are contrasted with the
younger players. Tupper appears obsolete when compared with the other players in the
team. Tupper is middle-aged and quite unfit and no longer participates in playing rugby
but instead coaches it. McGee mocks the traditional perception of masculinity early in
the play when the players throw their discarded gear at Tupper in the changing room
shed (34). The fact that all of the team react this way towards Tupper, after he
attempts to inspire them with an account of a famous All Black myth, is symbolic as it
illustrates the players' rejection of the traditional rugby mythology which he is trying to
present.

In the cast list Tupper is described as "[m]iddle aged, with a paunch of
impressive dimensions" (18). The clothes he wears, such as his "old style high ankle
boots" (27) reinforce the anachronistic image of the coach. The appearance of Tupper
suggests that he is occupying a different reality from his players. When Foreskin
half-satirically calls him "dad" he responds sharply by criticising Foreskin's presentation
of himself as a man: "[I]d be ashamed to have a long haired git like you for a son" (28).
This indifference to the reality of others is reflected in Tupper's disgust towards players
who resist his perception of masculinity. Tupper also shows discontent over Foreskin's
open interest in women and in sex:

Foreskin: Tupper, you're living in the stone age. Women don't
give a fuck about rugby players -- why should they? All
they ever talk about is side-steps, hooks against the
head and working the blind-side. By the time they get
into the pit they're too shikkered and tired and knocked
up to even think about giving someone else a bit of
pleasure.

Tupper: Enough of this fucken heresy Foreskin! Play the game.
I'm telling you straight that any more of this Friday
night carry-on and you'll be out on your arse. (49)
Foreskin, in confronting Tupper, succeeds in challenging Tupper's traditional perception of masculinity as socially relevant today. Instead of embracing Tupper's view that women are merely sexual objects and that in a couple of years' time Foreskin would "rather have a glass of beer" (49), Foreskin attacks Tupper through a reevaluation of these myths. Unable to respond to Foreskin's critique of the cultural myths he himself was raised to believe in, Tupper luxuriates in the cultural power he exercises through his voice, which reflects the traditional dominant discourse, and classifies Foreskin as a "heretic" (49) and, as such, an outsider. Nevertheless, despite Tupper's demonising of Foreskin, Foreskin has still succeeded in making Tupper uncomfortable. Foreskin does this by forcing Tupper to confront the reality that his perception of masculinity should no longer have a place in society today, especially because it perpetuates misogynistic attitudes which a number of men no longer believe in. This is especially evident when Irish shortly after hearing the conversation between Tupper and Foreskin responds in support of Foreskin's appreciation of women and sex [Irish] "He does even when we lose [get the pick of the girls]" (49). One of the greatest proponents of this traditional woman-hatred can be witnessed in the language employed by Clean.

While Clean pejoratively refers to women as bits of "fluff", it is obscene language such as the terms "cunt" and "fuck" which serve not only to denote the lack of importance of women in society but to reaffirm his association with a traditional perception of masculinity. Terms, such as "cunt", are frequently employed by characters such as Clean to denote men who fail to project the expected mythical image associated with masculinity. An instance of this can be seen when Clean refers to Foreskin as a "cunt" for taking Tupper seriously (85). The term therefore denotes a
male society which perceives women as being inferior to men (Schaef, 1), associating them with values such as being naive; stupid, sentimental and soft. However, McGee sees deeper meaning in the fear men such as Clean and Tupper hold towards women and the answer can be found again in the vulgar language employed to demonise them.

The play contests the perception of masculinity through its creation of a "sexist/sexually restricted language" (Welch, 55). In the opinion of Neill, this language demonstrates more than just an attempt by men to establish a clear-cut definition between the sexes. Instead, it reveals a far more sinister attitude that men in New Zealand society have long held in the fear towards women as a potentially corruptive threat to the ideals which form the base of the myths surrounding masculinity (Neill, 12-3). As Neill argues, terms such as "fuck" and "cunt" are terms of abuse for precisely the same reasons that Clean persistently associates women with "shit" (13). That is, characters such as Clean view women as shit, in the opinion of Neill, because they corrupt the pure male world represented by rugby. An incident which verifies this position can be seen in the vulgar association made between women and faeces in the shower song which a great number of the team participate in singing:

Clean: Why I'd even fuck her as she lay dying.
Irish: And when she's dead and long forgotten ...
Clean: I'll dig her up and fuck her rotten. (36)

This song not only sees sex as self-violation, but also supports the old myths surrounding masculinity in New Zealand which disapprove of any association with women. McGee argues that this male tradition fears women so much because femininity is associated with an attachment to emotional feelings. To extend this argument further, the paradox which McGee is pursuing here is how men, despite the traditional image they project, are often discontented with the roles they are expected
to embrace. Irish is one of the first characters to challenge the myth of a universally
united perception of masculinity in New Zealand through its interest in rugby.

The stand by Irish is largely achieved through his denunciation of the game and
the rituals which have become entrenched within the game. In one statement Irish
laments the archaic perception of masculinity promoted through the game of rugby:

Irish: It's so bloody boring. Push, pull your head out, run
about till you find another heap of fellas, find a hole to
stick your head in where it's dark, push again, pull it
out, run along to the next heap. (23)

While McGee possibly attempts to link this statement with a lingering traditional
masculine fear of homosexuality, this is probably not the major incident which McGee
wants the viewer to notice. Rather, the quotation reinforces the myths of a patriarchal
society which constantly seeks to distance itself by 'hiding' away from the perceived
emotionally repressive world of women (Jensen, 152-3). Irish unveils the invented
traditional male fear towards women by demonstrating the irrelevance of this mythical
perception. Here, Irish shows how ludicrous this traditional way of viewing women as
oppressive and repressive is by comically juxtaposing it with a rugby image (of the
scrum) where men hide among fellow men. That these men in the scrum are trained to
go in one direction also suggests that Irish sees this traditional perception of
masculinity as one dimensional. Irish, if viewing the traditional myths of masculinity
from this angle associates this type of masculinity with a condition of abnormality or
social disfunctionalism. Thus, Irish denies the heroic representation of these men,
leaving them bare and vulnerable for the public to witness their limitability.
On another level, McGee again challenges the perception that rugby is a game which builds the emotionally hard men which the socially dominant discourse so strongly desires by suggesting that a contact sport like rugby is as likely as any sport to generate a diversity of emotions from its participants. While Foreskin's use of "women" (49) in contrast to Tupper's choice of "girls" (49), reveals a positive shift in Foreskin's attitude, Foreskin, like many men in the team, continues to associate women with the traditional value system. This is clearly reflected in the way Foreskin continues to view women from the traditionally male perspective as objects of possession. Instances of this adherence to a traditional perception of masculinity can be seen scattered throughout the text. One instance of this traditionally derogatory way of viewing women as sexual possessions can be seen when Foreskin attempts to convince Tupper that he is afraid of playing in rugby games because of the fear of losing his "cock" to an opponents' "sprig" (49): "the beautiful blondes I'll never have ... I'm going to have one last lovely lady" (49).

Still, McGee also sees a positive side to Foreskin's sexual interest in women. According to Gribben, Seymour is called Foreskin in the play, not only as a symbol of sensibilities cut off through choice by parents and custom early in life, but also because as a physically and intellectually talented individual, he is waiting for the "chop — for the [social] clobbering machine that reduces such upstanding figures" to a desirable size (90). While Gribben makes a strong case, I believe there is a deeper connection between Seymour, his nickname and male sexuality. The significance of this visually graphic image of Foreskin's fear of losing his foreskin represents not only a fear of losing his ability to procreate, but more so his ability to derive pleasure from the act. The foreskin, because of its sensitivity, becomes a metaphor for Foreskin's greater
desire to retain his ability to feel emotions in a society which has long tried to literally "chop" them away (69). For Foreskin, it is his genitalia which makes him a man and not the myths socially inscribed upon him. While Foreskin's sexual interest in women could be perceived as a natural way to continue objectifying women McGee contests this possibility. Instead, what McGee wants the audience to note is that through his desire to protect his foreskin, Foreskin metaphorically wishes to retain his ability to feel. Foreskin's interest in women, albeit through sex (though also through his steady relationship with Moira), suggests an attempt by McGee to draw these spheres together. This is clear in Foreskin's talk with Tupper. The significance of Foreskin's interest in women is that it clearly shows the limitations of the other player's interest in women because of their insistence on viewing them through a traditional lens.

One such instance in the play can be seen when McGee again combats the perception of masculinity by presenting Clean's unsuccessful interaction with Moira at the party. While Clean throughout the greater part of the play presents an image which falls roughly in line with the myths associated with an ideal perception of masculinity, Moira's entrance into the play is an attempt by McGee to destabilise this tradition. Moira does this by destroying the spheres which have traditionally regulated the male view of women. Initially, Clean firmly reinforces the myths which have historically become associated with the traditional gendered attitudes towards women in New Zealand:

Clean: Righto, fair enough. Now sometimes I joke about the, ah, fairer sex, though I prefer them dark meself, ha ha, joke, joke. But really, we're glad to have you here tonight because, thanks to you ladies, we've got a great feed coming up. All the ladies brought some goodies -- and a plate, too. (57)
Phillips has argued that by laughing at women men reinforce the myths associated with masculinity which perpetuate the image of men as the source of the dominant sexual discourse in society (246). This subjugating attitude towards femininity is reinforced when Clean sings a rather vulgar song entitled the "gash that never heals" which attests to Tupper's view that the aim of women is merely to "chuck a rock", which leads to children, mortgage and consequently emotional entrapment (75). On the other hand, Clean, while adhering to the traditional perception surrounding masculinity for his own social advancement, also at times contests this tradition. This is reflected in his encounter with Moira. Instead of establishing the spheres of division at the party, Clean is clearly sexually attracted to Moira at Larry's house. This is reflected in both his physical and verbal advances towards her:

CLEAN labours into a standing position, turns away from the rail and begins advancing towards Moira.

CLEAN: No one's eh? So what's a nice girl like you doing out here?
    Or maybe you're not such a nice girl, eh? (63)

Ross argues that Clean's self-revelation to Moira in an ironic way gives him a detestable integrity (23). Though the advances and the language used still suggest a link with the past way of perceiving women, McGee suggests that Clean's sexual advances towards Moira could also be interpreted from a positive angle. McGee believes that his ability to show sexual interest in Moira not only from his advances, but through his attempts to engage in conversation with her, suggest that despite his appearances Clean still has the ability to express himself emotionally. While he may have been symbolically circumcised in order to fit into the male world where he stands, McGee suggests that Clean could equally be viewed as a victim of the process as much as he is an agent of it.
Nevertheless, McGee employs characters, such as the obedient Ken, who despite their loyalty to the traditional perception of masculinity ultimately become nothing more than a tragic hero in the process. In *Foreskin's Lament*, Ken could be regarded as a Jesus figure because his death challenges the traditional values associated with masculinity. In many respects, Ken's death reminds the men of the faults within their society and attempts to redeem them of their sins. The death also provides a warning for a future generation of men who continue to uphold the violent aspects of masculinity embedded in the code of rugby. Unlike a number of characters in the play, Ken rarely crosses Tupper and is eager to please him and earn his respect. Ken's first entrance indicates his later role as a sacrificial victim of the traditional perception of masculinity. This is reflected in the image of him appearing through a back door in the stage (21) with his "arms draped over the other two players' shoulders" reminiscent of the crucifixion of Christ (22). What is more, the characters' use of the names "Jesus" and "Christ" as expletives throughout the play draws attention to Ken as a metaphorical modern day New Zealand Jesus Christ. The parallel between Christ and Ken is particularly clear when Foreskin comments: "Jesus Kenny [Christ], you're not thinking about playing" (34), and "Jesus, you've got the whole world to think of" (35). As in the the Christian tradition, Ken is portrayed as an obedient son to the father [Tupper] who maintains an unquestioning faith in the traditional male rugby culture of New Zealand. This is reinforced by how quickly Ken is convinced by Tupper's assurances that he will captain the match the following weekend:

Tupper:  Let me be judge of that. These bloody quacks have never even played the game! You won't get hurt son, I guarantee you!

Ken:  Well, okay Tupper. But I wish you'd put it in writing so I could show Cathy. (30)
Though this statement reflects Ken's unquestioning devotion to the game and the traditions of manhood associated with the game, his faith ultimately paves the way of his own destruction.

Ken's death, as a sacrificial victim, therefore, does not serve to glorify the myth of the New Zealand male who has died in the glory of battle (whether in the navy, army or on the football field) but is symbolically instrumental in the way it serves to 'redeem' masculinity in New Zealand. The idea that Ken's death is an attempt to save men from their sins shows the brutality of this tradition of masculinity and not the glory of it. The brutality of this traditional perception of masculinity and the need it asserts for Ken to die is highlighted by Foreskin's own call for an investigation and reevaluation of New Zealand masculinity. This is clearly presented in Foreskin's closing lament:

Foreskin: I suppose we really ought to do this right: sing 'For He's [Ken] a Jolly Good Fellow' and 'It's the way we do it in the army, the navy, and on the football field' -- he was a jolly good fellow. Ask the lads, the boys, to form a ruck at the side of his grave, rake earth over him with their sprigs, make a wreath of dirty laces, and ask the ladies to bring a tear -- would that I could, but like most of you, us, we were taught not to cry a vale of tears ago. We'll thank the referee, or the god almighty, he might have made a bad fist of it, we can't understand some of his decisions, but, lord, it's a tough game, a game still, for men, for men called boys. (93)

The game is powerfully transformed by McGee to parallel the emotion connected with the Christian burial ceremony. The seriousness accorded with the religious ceremony, however, is brutally mocked by a reference to the players dressed in playing attire using their feet to rake earth over the deceased. Foreskin's real feeling towards this masculinity is revealed when he refers to Ken's death through rugby as unemotional and a game still "for men called boys" (93). This final remark destabilises any serious chance the funeral had in attempting to glorify the myths. Foreskin claims the players
need to grow up and take responsibility for the events around them. The reference to the men as boys suggests that McGee believes that a respectable social attitude towards masculinity has still not reached maturity in New Zealand society. Nevertheless, the juxtaposition of religion and tradition also becomes a fundamental way in which McGee attempts to challenge the validity of the myths of masculinity which have long operated in New Zealand society.

McGee’s use of religion and in particular Christian references in Foreskin’s Lament is a way of showing the importance of national myth making. One of the dominant myths which has come to be associated with the image of New Zealand is the idea of the nation as "God’s Own" or "Godzone". This title has been used not only to refer to the landscape but also to the people who inhabit this space. It could be argued therefore, that New Zealanders did not so much take up the position of imago dei [image of God] but employed God to reflect "their" ideal citizen. Immediately, one sees the gendering of the Christian God in New Zealand society as a male. The most potent symbol of a God who reflects the conventions and ideologies of the old form of masculinity which have long influenced the way men were expected to adhere to is no more clearly encapsulated than in the vivid construction of Tupper.

In the context of Foreskin’s Lament, Tupper initially appears to be the personification of God on stage. Tupper believes that he has a power that will enable him to protect his men from the harm that will come to them from others. The respect provided to Tupper by his players, who ironically call him father, reiterates the view that Tupper is placed by McGee in a religious place of cultural prominence. Despite his education and self assuredness, even Foreskin finds it difficult not to be impressed by
the image of Tupper as a God/protector of his tradition as a New Zealander. This is evident when Foreskin confronts a dissenting traditionalist Clean over the importance of Tupper as the coach and ideological motivator of the team and ultimately the guarantor national definition of masculinity: "I do [take him seriously]" (85). According to McGee's presentation of Tupper, cultural devotion to the myths of masculinity, while outdated, continue to promote the traditional perception of masculinity over other interpretations. That is, Tupper's perception of masculinity is strongly governed by having 'blind faith' in the tradition through "just getting on with [practising] it" (53). This is evident when Tupper is confronted by Foreskin who is simply not prepared to embrace Tupper's philosophy of accepting definitions and traditions without questioning their relevance. Challenged by Foreskin to argue the question of goals, Tupper simply denies the relevancy of the question by refusing to answer. This demonstrates the traditional male attitude in New Zealand which has long argued that strength for the male comes from silence and not from asking questions. It is also ultimately a sign of obedience and faith towards the traditions:

Foreskin: How can we be mates? ... We don't agree on anything important.
Tupper: Important? Important my arse. The best mates I've ever had, we never got past the time of day. What's important? You just get on with it. (53)

However, McGee here is demonstrating that the question has been avoided for too long by a generation of New Zealand men who continue to hide behind silence for fear of addressing leading questions such as Foreskin's. In the words of Michael Neill "[it] has become the slogan of a willed self ignorance" (11). McGee's text pursues the quest of attempting to answer why men who refuse to question the traditions of masculinity, like Foreskin, continue to be marginalised in the process.
Unlike Clean and Moira's largely futile attempts to create a new identity for themselves within the context of the play Foreskin is a much more complex character who is caught somewhere in the middle. The reason for this is that Foreskin's notion of identity as a man includes the belief that to be yourself, you must know where you stand, yet at the same time you must know where you stand to know who you are (Neill, 15). While Foreskin criticises Tupper for his praise of the team over the individual, he is not satisfied by the simplicity of Moira's view that so long as people are "really themselves" then society should accept them (76). When Moira attempts to use the uncivilised manner of the men at the party to support her elite European liberalism, saying, "I've seen pigs at a trough with more style than that" (68). Foreskin is quick to assert his distance from Moira's intellectual individuality:

**FORESKIN:** This is the heart and bowels of this country, too strong and foul and vital for reduction to bouquets, or oils, or words. If you think they're pigs, then you'd better look closer, and get used to the smell, because their smell is your smell. (68)

Nanette Monin argues that Foreskin in identifying his own 'smell' is recognising without qualm his inherited social identity and at the same time mourning his erstwhile acceptance of it (334). Mike Nikolaidi makes a similar reference in his article published in Act in 1980: "The anger that arises from the bowels of his [McGee's] characters shows deep understanding of the New Zealand ethos. It is no mere flailing about in a quicksand of self-indulgence" (77). According to McGee the answer in addressing the question of where masculinity stands now in New Zealand needs to be found in the process of "coming back" instead of looking for the answer in "abstract places". This multiplicity also succeeds in emphasising the dilemma of those who avoid the quest to understand themselves by escaping into abstractions. As Stachurski argues, "[escaping
into abstractions is the privilege of a minority which ignores the reality of the majority of New Zealanders" (53). What McGee wants his audience to understand is that the traditional perception of masculinity cannot exist if one chooses to avoid it or operate from outside the contextual boundary.

"Coming back", therefore, is an extremely important theme in the play's critique of the traditional model of masculinity in New Zealand. Whether one thinks of Clean coming back from Vietnam, or Moira coming back from her "oversea experience" in Europe, or indeed Foreskin returning home from the university, the significance of these individuals, as far as McGee is concerned, lies in their privileged experience (Gifford, 32). As Neill argues:

It's going away and coming back which gives these three characters their peculiar perspective on the team and the community values for which it stands. Unlike those true outsiders, Irish and Larry, who camouflage their alienation by 'playing the game' and submitting to the corporate blindness of the ruck, Clean, Moira and Foreskin have their eyes open (14).

The theme of "coming home" is ultimately caught up in the problem of "finding home" and "being accepted at home". A quotation by anthropologist Gerald Weinberg is particularly useful in understanding the case McGee is attempting to make:

There are people who experience difficulty in fitting into their own native group, yet who always seem to be moderately successful at getting by anywhere else. The anthropologist, for one, tends to be this way. Although a professional at fitting into all sorts of exotic cultures, when he comes back home he never becomes smoothly integrated: a critic at home and a conformist elsewhere. (33)

Monin stretches the argument presented by Weinberg to suggest that the wearing of masks becomes an attempt to exist within their society yet it does not necessarily
suggest that the characters are pleased with the masks they are expected to wear (334-5).

What McGee wants to make clear in *Foreskin's Lament* is how the redefined image of masculinity and the New Zealander needs to be based on an authentic voice and not one which is trapped in history or imported: "blessed with the absence of [someone else's] resonance" (95). This is clear in McGee's critique of both Moira and Clean and their adherence to overseas ideologies. Despite Moira's education, ascribing her new-found sensibility to her experience while travelling, she merely mouths the individualistic clichés of "European liberalism"; as her discussion with Larry exemplifies: "[o]verseas people are more ... mature. They'd thought about things, they'd made a few decisions, they'd asked why?" (59). Clean's individuality and distance from the nation is also reflected in his selfish adherence to the American lessons of self-help which he learned during his military service in Vietnam. Yet, despite their desire to reinvent their image as New Zealanders, McGee believes that they fail to do so because the ideologies and the voice in which they describe themselves are not only inauthentic but also because subscribing to these radical ideologies detaches them from the land and the discourse which has helped to formulate this fabricated gendered value system. The character who McGee invests his greatest hopes in achieving this quest for an authentic New Zealand voice is Foreskin.

Foreskin's privileged position as an insightful character is hinted at throughout the play. His name Seymour could be reread and interpreted as "see more". This is reinforced later in the play by the position which Foreskin plays at fullback, which enables him to witness a great deal more of the action around him than those bound up...
in the tight unit of the scrum. As he tells Tupper: "You see a lot from my position Tupper" (90). Foreskin, upon finding out about Clean's assault on Ken, attempts to awaken Tupper and the team to Clean's selfish desires to win at all costs even at the cost of injuring others. Likewise, he exposes Moira to what she really is instead of what she believes she is when he defines her kind as "trendy lefties or trendy fascists [who] ... have nothing to do with reality" (68). Despite his own experiences outside of the rugby culture, Foreskin realises that challenging the traditional myths which surround masculinity cannot be found through imported abstractions or by ignoring the real world around him. As Foreskin states to Moira, "[o]ur reality is here" (68). McGee's endeavour here, however, should not be misinterpreted as an attempt to protect the tradition. Instead, what McGee wants his audience to extract from Foreskin's statement is a realisation of the faults within the myths of masculinity.

Foreskin's attack on Moira and Clean's philosophy suggests that Foreskin opposes their selfish desire to replace one value system with another. Foreskin holds the view that New Zealand should be a land where individuals can practice their beliefs without the fear of social prejudice. In his denunciation of Moira's European liberalism, Foreskin succeeds in destabilising one of these totalitarian imported systems. It can be noted that several times during the play a clash between Foreskin and Clean becomes imminent. The ideological clash which takes place between Foreskin and Clean in many ways ironically parallels a similarly aggressive scene which takes place as Phillip Mann notes, between Hector and Achilles in Shakespeare's play _Troilus and Cressida_. In Shakespeare's play, Achilles verbally challenges Hector exclaiming:

Achilles: Tell me you heavens in which part of his body
      Shall I destroy him, whether there,
or there, or there?

Hector in return responds by stating in similar language:

Hector: Henceforth guard thee well
      For I'll not kill thee there, nor there,
      nor there;
      But by the forge that stithied Mars his
      helm
      I'll kill thee everywhere, yea, o'er and
      o'er. (Muir, 161)

The point of this juxtaposition is to establish that contemporary New Zealand, in the
view of Phillip Mann, is as fitting a place for a mighty clash of wills as the Greek camp
outside the walls of Troy (3-4). According to Mann, while heroes may endeavour to
change their names this does not mean that they can change their natures and ultimately
who or what they are (4). Ian Fraser pushes this argument further in reflecting upon the
play and the impact rugby has had in shaping a masculine perception of ourselves.

Fraser argues that in many respects New Zealand is presented in the text in a Homeric
manner as a warrior culture (60). Fraser states:

[i]t is
not too fanciful to suggest that Troy and Taihape could lay claim
to a similar heroic code, in which matters of prowess and
endurance and physical courage bulked larger than the more
elusive concerns of morality. And at the centre of it all, giving
meaning to the code and providing us with our national [male] heroes
was the game of rugby (60).

Fraser goes on to emphasise the importance of understanding our history in order to
understand not only where the nation has come from but where the lessons of the past
suggest our people need to be heading:

Ours is a society negotiating a stormy passage from the
simpler Homeric virtues to a new arrangement more sensitive to
considerations of morality. Complex notions like Justice are
casting their shadow over the scrum. Rugby is no longer "just a
game" (60).
The uniqueness of Foreskin then is that he is prepared to embrace who he is more than, Moira, his girlfriend, or the rugby partner, Clean. In this sense, it would appear that Foreskin is the only character who is prepared to confront his identity through his engagement in the real world and not through hypocritical actions (such as clichés and kicks behind a team mate's back or against the traditions of the dominant discourse). Howard McNaughton argues that from its first read-through, Foreskin's Lament was recognised as bringing a new dimension into New Zealand drama. However, McNaughton notes the irony of the play is that the dramatic machinery it employs for this investigation of New Zealand society is as classically Aristotelian as anything in this country's literature (21). As McNaughton points out:

The normality which Foreskin thus articulates is something which the theatre audience can accept patronisingly: it is in the fact the stolid majority which the theatre-going elites has been sneering at comedies for decades. But -- and herein lies the germ of the theatrical dilemma -- Foreskin is not being patronising, or even playing the Romantic, slumming among the Antipodean plebs. Foreskin is a missionary (21).

Quite simply, Foreskin is not trying to prevent the team from playing rugby, he merely wants New Zealand society to play morally better rugby.

Phillips argues that the power in the play lies in its ability to challenge the whole nation. As Phillips states, "disengagement is not possible. We are all implicated" (Phillips, 30). According to Phillips, McGee achieves this effect through linking the experience of theatre-goers and rugby players in several ways. The purpose of this original play is to attack the traditional definition of masculinity which has tended to define men who engage in rugby as superior to those who engage in the arts (Jensen, 13). A major way in which McGee creates this ideological instability is through the process of blurring the distinction between rugby and theatre (Phillips, 29). This is
clearly observable on several occasions. Upon looking at the construction of the play one could argue that its shape and atmosphere in many ways resembles a rugby match. As Phillips notes, the play is composed of two acts which suggests that "[attending] the play is like going to a match two halves of some forty minutes each, stops for injuries, rising expectations and tensions until the final minute" [sic] (25). If Phillips is correct, then rugby could be defined as "pure theatre" (29-30). Mervyn Thompson supports this parallel and indeed establishes the same analogy in his autobiography where he states that: "it [rugby] is ritualised movement anticipated by rehearsal, it is an intense group performance" (124). The fact that McGee's main protagonist, Foreskin, employs the literary phrase "poetry in motion" (125) to define his attitude towards the game only reinforces both Phillips' and Thompson's argument that McGee's blurring of the distinction between the terms establishes his ambitions to re-address the definition of masculinity in New Zealand in the 1980s.

By blurring the definition between rugby and theatre, McGee ultimately destabilises the definition between rugby players and actors, for no distinction now operates to separate the two. If rugby can now be regarded as theatre, so too can the participants who engage in the match be seen as actors. While McGee is referring here to dramatic characterisation and roles, what he is also attempting to investigate is how rugby players are expected to satisfy traditional images of masculinity. Close investigation of the play has provided many instances of what Phillips would define as a distinctively male patois culture which is ingrained in the game of the nation (30). The most potent way in which this masculine culture has been presented is in the rich vulgarity of the language which earlier analysis of the play has clearly revealed. In the play, McGee makes this language a colourful poetry, as can be seen in the ritualistic
teasing, the exaggerated charades, the singing of vulgar (and often sexually derogatory) and dirty songs which characterise the manly virtues expected of men on and off the rugby field.

The question for McGee is how to distinguish what should be regarded as acting as opposed to what should be defined as reality. At the opening of the play, the audience is confronted by an image of the team rehearsing, or practising a set piece movement. At the end of this incident, one of the players falls to the ground curling up in a foetal position, pretending to be injured. Correctly, Tupper believes that the individual concerned must be feigning the injury in order to make the performance more "realistic". Yet, it provides a gruesome forewarning of the dangers of blurring the definitions between acting and reality. The irony of this incident leads to a more serious issue for McGee when performativity no longer becomes merely acting out a desired role harmlessly. After the real match, when Ken is undoubtedly injured by Clean's kick to the head, Tupper states to Ken: "Play the game son ... They're not dishing out any Oscars tonight, you know" (21). The problem with this incident, though, is that this time, unlike earlier in the play, Ken is actually injured within the theatrical reality of it. Confronting the condition of being a man in an ever changing New Zealand social reality becomes a pivotal concern within the context of the play.

The great strength of the play lies in the precision about time and place in its attempt to destabilise the traditional perception of masculinity. According to Phillips, it is a play which could only have been set in the 1970s when New Zealand's traditional perception of itself began to crumble as a consequence of both internal and external pressures (31). Voices from the 1960s, presented in the forms of the emergence of two
new technological advances, the silenced radio and the smashed television monitor, 
serve as metaphors for the search for truth and authenticity in the quest for a new 
identity. This desire to find a new identity is reinforced in Foreskin's cries that "the 
 masks have been on long enough" as well as Moira's welcoming of "the breaking down 
of stereotypes" in order that people who were once repressed by a dominant discourse 
can now be "themselves" (Phillips, 31). Nevertheless, despite the individual freedom 
which may be attained, the dilemma of embracing this freedom is that it may not 
necessarily represent freedom at all. Instead, it may reinforce one's detachment from 
the tribe. This implies that the problem is not just one way. This is succinctly reinforced 
by Tupper, and later by Foreskin, who tells Moira: "Man wants to know where he 
stands" (76). This time McGee does not make the parallel between rugby and theatre 
but what Foreskin calls a much greater "life", that being life itself.

In the view of McGee, it is this fear of losing a sense of one's collective 
belonging which is the major issue at the heart of Foreskin's Lament. That is, the play is 
not so much concerned with the tragedies of a few individuals but a national dilemma. 
As Mervyn Thompson puts it, Foreskin's Lament is a play which is about the "end of 
our [ideological and national] innocence" (460). What the audience witnesses in the 
play/game performed in front of them is therefore an effective demolishing of an 
identity and a tradition which can no longer speak for the entire nation let alone a 
clearly fragmented male community (Thompson, 460-61). This realisation is present to 
Foreskin's powerfully imposing finale.

Foreskin's position as questioner, searcher, challenger is reinforced in the 
words, "I'm unaccustomed to leaving questions unasked ... why?" (92). People who ask
questions to which they want real answers, such as Foreskin's rueful cries of "whaddarya?", are taken as a direct threat because of the challenge they present to the old value system. Tupper is one such individual who seeks to protect these mythical traditions which perpetuate an outdated singular perception of masculinity. In that sense, Tupper's use of the term "whaddarya?" is not a search for a new more liberal form of New Zealand male identity but one which merely demands silent conformity with the mythical tradition which he was raised to believe in. Tupper is the clearest reflector in the play of "the traditional Kiwi Male value system" — a system [heavily based on] hypocrisy, conformity, anti-intellectualism and crudeness, but also containing a simple altruism and a democratic faith in the good intentions of others" (Phillips, 29).

It was this limiting tradition, which provoked critics such as McNaughton and Thompson to counterattack it. This may have been why McGee chose to present his challenge of the traditional perception of masculinity, Foreskin, in an expressionistic manner. Thompson suggests that this was most probably the reason behind McGee's construction of Foreskin character. As Thompson acknowledges in All My Lives, "growing up in this country has something to do with learning to use words affirmatively and not just as weapons to clobber people with" (126). At the end of the play McGee breaks away from his naturalistic action, which was inevitably leading to not just verbal but physical violence (Black, 13). It is Foreskin's artistic articulacy which has prevented the linguistic and physical violence from escalating. The hero is no longer the traditional athlete of New Zealand myth but ironically the educated and artistic Foreskin. Possessing this power over the situation, Foreskin can now direct the relevancy of the traditional perception of masculinity to the audience in his final lament. Though it may be argued that the play ends inconclusively with the question of "whaddarya?", in many ways the play has succeeded in answering the question. Black
argues that the play has answered the question by showing that New Zealanders have values and virtues which intellectuals throughout history are prone to ignore (13). At the same time, the behaviour of the pro-tour members of the play anticipates the crude pragmatism with which the footballing community and unscrupulous politicians fought so strongly in 1981 (Black, 13). Thus, the myths of masculinity by the end of the play were dissected and left open for social critique.

McGee, however, wishes to challenge the relevance of these myths today by presenting a fragmented masculine community which is certainly far from being homogenous. As intrigued as Foreskin may have been in this mythical perception of an undivided masculinity, he no longer believes that they speak for every man in New Zealand. Therefore, Foreskin's question "whaddarya?", unlike Tupper's, reflects a need not to demand conformity but to seek an honest answer from the heart of the individual. Despite his desire to believe in these myths, Foreskin sees such a relationship as impossible, unrealistic and even absurd. This is because the myths no longer represent reality for Foreskin. It becomes nothing more than a fantasy. At the end of Foreskin's Lament, as Fraser notes, Foreskin cannot help but feel a "harrowing sense of loss" (61).

For McGee the new identity should not merely be replacing one identity with an imported one. The identity must be original and reflect the socio-ethnic diversity of New Zealand's population. When at the final curtain Foreskin turns to the audience and asks "Whaddarya?" it is no longer a rugby chorus but a philosophical and moral question which McGee endeavours to answer well beyond his first major publication. Greg McGee attempts to remind his audience that Foreskin's Lament is not an
anti-rugby play nor is it the obvious salve of liberal consciousness. McGee comments on the reception of the play as, in many cases missing the point:

"The rugby audiences have belly-laughed without recognising Foreskin's mourning of the game as he once knew it. But there have also been those who too easily accept and cheer the knocking of rugby, without seeing that Foreskin discredits liberal academia just the same". (Gribben, 91)

However, McGee in the interview with Gribben was undoubtedly pleased that the play was generating a great deal of interest towards the issue of masculinity throughout a large cross section of New Zealand society. In response to Patricia Bartlett's disgust with the nudity and offensive language present in the play McGee wrote replied in the New Zealand Times:

Theatre in New Zealand has, until very recently, been largely exempt from the attentions of Miss Bartlett and the like, probably for the very good reason that they seldom went. Free from that sort of scrutiny theatre here has gradually come to terms with one of its most important functions — to act as a social catalyst. (Gribben, 92)

This statement suggests that McGee not only had an interest in the present but also in the future and was keen to alter the play to map the changing nature of New Zealand masculinity. Natasha Hay in 1999 points out how the production of Foreskin's Lament back in the 1980 "spookily" predicted what was to come (42). Perhaps McGee knew something which his audience did not about the dangers of attempting to cling to an ineffectual and outdated system.
ii) Re-imagining the Past by a Return to the Present Through the Rewriting of Foreskin's Lament (1985)

Four years after the commercial success of Foreskin's Lament as a play, it was revived again by nearly all of New Zealand's major professional theatres. What is significant about the reemergence of the play, is how the new script, written in 1985 was an attempt by McGee to demonstrate what he believed was a substantial cultural shift in the way of understanding masculinity in New Zealand (Simpson, 50). David Carnegie observes McGee's wish to keep the play immediate:

Looking at the original script today it comes across as naive in the light of what's happened here. We're a much harder society since the Springbok Tour events of 1981. Both sides showed their ugliest faces to each other then. What I've done is to transpose some of those changes into the play - the new version will shock again. (13-4)

According to McGee, in the space of half a decade New Zealanders were beginning to challenge the original myths associated with the limited and regimented prescription of the old perception of masculinity. What is more, unlike the original text, set in the mid to late 1970s, McGee now had a major political incident on which to assert his claims that New Zealanders no longer stood united in their definition of a standard masculinity (Simpson, 49). The incident which provided McGee with this belief that definitions of masculinity were being contested amongst New Zealanders was the Springbok tour in 1981.

The Springbok tour was the climax of a build-up in tension towards the myths which had been developing since the 1960s. Geoff Fougere argues that controversy surrounding All Black and Springbok rugby encounters went back further than before the policy of apartheid was implemented by the South African National government in
1948 and the times of the organised protests which appeared in New Zealand during the early 1960s (111). In 1912, in a match between a New Zealand Servicemen's team and a South African one in South Africa, a West India-born New Zealand called Ranji Wilson was forbidden to play and was left upon the ship. When the first South African team toured New Zealand in 1921 they were disgusted when they were not only told that they had to play against a Maori team but were greatly offended when they saw pakeha New Zealanders cheering the Maori team on. In 1928, when the All Blacks toured South Africa, Maori players such as George Nepia and Jimmy Mill found the same hostile conditions that were present when the Services team had played in South Africa. With vivid memories of the match against a representative Maori team, South Africa declared that the tour to New Zealand in 1937 would only go ahead if this match was deleted from the itinerary (Fougere, 117). The point here is that the antipathy which took place during the 1981 Springbok tour was the result of a long and controversial historic association with South Africa. Many people who engaged in the 1981 protests did so because they began to believe that rugby was a vehicle which permitted the subjugation not only of coloured people but of less influential and weaker citizens (Fougere, 118). This was especially the case for minority male figures who had long been marginalised for their rejection not merely of the game but above all the image of the man who was expected to play the game.

The Springbok tour, thus proved a way for gay and female activists to speak against the dominant male discourse. According to Kirsty Cochrane, this version of Foreskin's Lament presents us with the inhumanity of New Zealanders to New Zealanders (4). Reflecting upon the play, Cochrane notes the presence of a greater degree of violence. Commenting upon how the play made her feel, she observes: "The
play reminds us that the theatre isn't just entertainment. It can make us stop in our usual pretty mindless round of work and food and drink ... and batter us a bit, make us think about who we are and why..." (Cochrane, 4-5). The power of McGee's use of the incident enabled him to demonstrate, through a reflection upon history, how New Zealanders no longer stood united in defining the stereotypical Kiwi male. The diversity of the characters in the revision and the depth in which McGee focuses upon them reflects McGee's belief in how diverse New Zealand's society really is, despite the myths propagated and held on to by a small and disintegrating patriarchal discourse. As Cochrane argues, "we're a society in which individual sensitivity is [still] battered and group identification is strength" (5). While there were not many major alterations made to the play, the changes make effective use of the reality of history as a basis to counter the traditional perception of masculinity that New Zealand had been built upon. Thus, while literary critics have criticised McGee for merely chopping and pasting and representing the story, to capitalise on the events which took place on the Springbok tour, the seemingly minor adjustments alter the outcome of the story substantially.

In 1985, the role of Clean was now reserved for a Maori performer. In order to understand the reason behind McGee's decision to designate Clean to a Maori person one needs to be briefed on the historical relationship between Maori and rugby. The relationship between Maori and rugby goes back to as early as the 1850s when it was employed by missionaries and the educational institutes as a means to teach Maori people European values. Rugby, thus, was regarded as a tool to assimilate Maori society (Ryan, 1). However, Ryan notes that while this assimilation happened to a degree it was the Maori who transformed the British game of rugby to express their cultural uniqueness. Instead of rejecting the Maori prowess and skill at the game, as
was the case in South Africa, New Zealand society embraced the fast style of play, rituals, traditions and values which Maori brought to the game. By the completion of the 1888 tour, rugby and Maori culture became inseparable in the early formation of an 'egalitarian' New Zealand perception of masculinity (Ryan, 81). Ryan argues that even before the 1905 tour, the 1888 tour had played a crucial formative role in providing the language which would come to be associated with rugby and masculinity in New Zealand (26). For this, Ryan believes the Maori rugby team of 1888 (and the Maori people as a whole) have not received the recognition which they so rightly deserve (26). Instead, it could be argued that the concept of egalitarianism in New Zealand society provided Maori society with little comfort. In time, the concept of egalitarianism in New Zealand would be questioned by an ever more distrustful Maori society. Controversial selections based on the idea of performance throughout history has left many Maori dubious about the goodwill behind the pakeha concept of a racially tolerant society. Even more so, New Zealand's relationship with South Africa and their desire to uphold sporting ties with them left Maori in no doubt about the pakeha indifference towards the suffering of marginalised people. The absence of Maori players in New Zealand teams along with the pakeha insistence on playing racist opponents such as the Springboks made many Maori feel that the game of rugby now being played was not the one which had attempted to form one land and one people. Instead, rugby slowly began to be regarded as a white game which sought to maintain prejudiced attitudes towards non-European ethnicities. Clean's presence in the play serves to articulate this Maori antipathy and provide the Maori with a voice to contest this often discriminatory white male tradition.
Unlike the original script, McGee's new play now addresses the place of race in challenging the traditional white myths associated with masculinity. McGee succeeds in doing this by enabling Clean to assert his values against those who have traditionally regulated this male hegemonic sphere. Whereas in the original script he is silenced by both Foreskin and Moira, Clean, in the new version, is provided with the opportunity to counter what McGee would argue are those two characters' predominantly Eurocentric (white) hegemonic philosophies. Clean's new-found dominance as a major protagonist in the play can be seen from the outset when he demonstrates to Foreskin that he is no longer prepared to passively accept Foreskin's derogatory white definitions of him. The fact that Foreskin no longer becomes the overriding vocal force in the play becomes apparent when Clean responds satirically to Foreskin's desire to disassociate himself from the Springbok tour: [Foreskin]: "What's that I hear you saying madam? Some of your best friends are Maori" (40). The mistake which Foreskin makes in applying this statement to Clean is that instead of removing himself from the traditional white masculine myths he only seeks to reinforce his association with this male hegemonic tradition where racialised minorities have frequently been discriminated against. In particular, the way in which Foreskin refers to Clean as "Madam" reinforces the derogatory Eurocentric tendency to associate foreign perceptions of masculinity with being effeminate (40). According to Ferguson, early immersion in society plays an important role in the process of shaping gendered identities (25). As sport has its roots in Western civilisation, Ferguson suggests that it serves an equally powerful and discriminatory function and that is to define one's masculinity based on racialisation (25). Sue Scott may be correct when arguing that masculinity and masculinity are often conflated within a society and its dominant
discourse which is often governed not only by gender but also by one’s race (82). This is no less applicable in the context of McGee’s production.

One of the ironies in the play is that despite his race (and his values) Clean uses his position as a policeman/law enforcer, a place traditionally reserved for white men, to counter the historical attack towards racially marginalised masculinities. While in the original script Clean almost passively accepts Foreskin’s “soapbox oratory” critique of himself, in the rewritten version Clean uses the language of the dominant white patriarchal discourse to confront its own masculine value system. This is clear in the way Clean responds to Foreskin’s insults:

CLEAN PULLS OUT A MADULOCK AND JABS IT AT FORESKIN
Clean: Move!
Foreskin: Hey, that’s no joke —
CLEAN SNAPS OUT THE GRIP.
Clean: Move turkey! (40)

The significance of Clean’s response is that it reverses Foreskin’s own attempts to impose upon Clean his own cultural ideologies. Instead of dominating Clean as he intends, McGee does not allow this to occur. This suggests that McGee is attempting to provide Clean with the space to challenge the dominant voice usually occupied by the white male. While it could be argued that Clean misinterprets Foreskin’s critique of the tour because of the issue of apartheid and racial segregation, McGee’s employment of Clean serves a valuable purpose. In the original script, published during the early 1980s when Maori were applying a radical approach to their literary works, many critics, such as Donna Awatere, criticised white writers’ use of a pakeha protagonist, such as Foreskin, to talk about the suffering of racially marginalised people such as the Maori (95). McGee’s use of Clean may have served to make the text more culturally inclusive and to appease these earlier critical reactions to his work.
Nevertheless, the strategic reason why McGee probably made this change was to stimulate the question of whether the masculinity in New Zealand was a true indicator of a society which claimed to be a culturally tolerant one. McGee, through characters such as Foreskin, suggests that before Foreskin points to the atrocities taking place in South Africa, he needs to take a closer look at his own society to see a brutal reflection of that society's equally repressive white myth-making traditions (Rothwell, 25). As Theberge argues, socialisation into sport is less a process of taking on roles than of actively creating them, albeit within the limits and constraints of social practice (43). McGee suggests that Maori were not exempt from this white masculinising mission.

This failure in Foreskin to see his connection with a white myth-making tradition is reflected in the following scene. McGee incorporated this scene into the play to stress the issue of conflicting perceptions of masculinities which are the product of a history of racial tensions between white and non-white New Zealanders (Carnegie, 213):

Clean: I don't believe you cunts — you get the fucken tour cancelled, but you're still trying to draw blood.
Foreskin: The only blood being drawn is black!
Clean: Fucken honky wanker -- you wouldn't know a black if you fell over one!
Tupper: Easy lads --
Ken: F'chrissakes --
Foreskin: Fucken Uncle Tom!
Clean: Arrogant little cunt -- don't tell me what I am. (40)

What is worth noting here is how Clean's aggressive retaliation to Foreskin's attempts to define him demonstrates McGee's attempt to diminish the idea of a nation in harmony with its understanding of masculinity. What Foreskin fails to understand when
he attempts to define Clean is how Clean may not necessarily share his perception or belief in what constitutes the pakeha tradition of masculinity (Rothwell, 25-6). As Ferguson argues, sport became one of the last bastions of a separate, identifiably 'white' male hegemonic tradition (48). In demonstrating her antipathy towards the tour, Emare Karaka states that when attacked by the police "they had it in for me [as a Maori/also as a woman]" (87). What McGee attempts to stress to his audience, yet again, is how the myths pertaining to the traditional perception of masculinity are heavily linked to a white perspective which has little tolerance for other racial contributions. Clean's rejection of Foreskin's categorising him are an attempt by Clean to liberate himself from a form of pakeha ideological colonisation. By electing not to subscribe to the masculine image represented by figures such as Tupper and perhaps Foreskin, Clean demonstrates that he is no longer prepared as a Maori to accept the idea of one nation, one people.

While this may seem a contradiction in McGee's quest to argue for a nation which needs to strive for equality there is something deeper which McGee wants the audience to see. While McGee does pursue racial unity, he still believes that the problem in striving for this can often lead to the dominance of one voice over the other. When Clean exclaims to Foreskin "don't tell me what I am", Clean is trying to reclaim his dignity and a racial identity which has long been scrutinised by a predominantly white and patriarchally governed society (Carnegie, 213-4). The dismay on Foreskin's face, as well as the fear that soon accompanies the response made by Clean, indicate the fragility of Foreskin's privileged position as the dominantly influential white patriarchal myth-making voice (Carnegie, 213).
The ultimate irony in this passage of empowerment comes when Clean employs the inherited language of his white masters to show the limitation of their perceptions: "arrogant little cunt" (40). Brian Pronger comments that, through sports, boys learn to occupy space and project what is seen in the essence of masculinity, not just as physical strength but the potential to dominate and control (2). If this is the culture Clean has inherited, it could be argued that he fails in his endeavours to liberate himself from this process of socialisation, instead reaffirming his place within the dominant order. McGee shows that Clean's use of the vulgar term is merely an attempt to use the most recognisably insulting word (of this white tradition) possible to highlight the faults of this tradition. As Ferguson notes in employing a powerful quote from Simone de Beauvoir, it should be remembered that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (22). The same may be applicable when talking about masculinity. Nevertheless, despite Clean's attempts to present a picture of these players as lesser men, the fact that he still does so through the language of the dominant discourse suggests the power of the old tradition to effectively manipulate its non-white subjects. Revington suggests that Clean's temperament reflects a man who has too much "mongrel" in him and while useful in serving to liberate himself from a fundamentally white order can, if overdone, merely serve to draw him back within that order (34-5). In order to elevate himself, Clean does so at the cost of demonising women.

In an earlier scene, Clean compares his cultural raping to that of a sexual act between a man and a woman. In the changing room Clean charges Irish with having intercourse with his sister without his approval let alone his family's, to which Irish replies, "Well I didn't know she was your sister" (38). What should be noted is how viciously Clean responds in the scene, at one stage forcing Irish to take refuge under
Larry's table in a foetal position (38). The significance of this passage suggests that McGee is interested in more than just racial relations and dismantling derogatory old racial perceptions. As in the original Foreskin's Lament, McGee, more than ever, is interested in reviewing the way women also are now perceived in New Zealand compared to when the play was first produced in the early 1980s. In particular, McGee is interested in how sport continues to operate as a hegemonic tool to perpetuate masculine traditions formulated several decades earlier.

The scene which took place in Act One involving the confrontation between Clean and Foreskin foreshadows an equally powerful ideological confrontation between Clean and Moira later in the second act. The way in which Moira is reconstructed shows a historical shift in McGee's interpretation of male perceptions towards femininity five years on from the original script.

Despite Moira's pride in protecting protesters and her attestation that she was proud to stop the game from commencing at Hamilton because "we were fighting fascism" (66), McGee again reveals that Moira, like Foreskin, fails to see her position as representing the dominant white discourse. Yet, unlike in the original Foreskin's Lament, where Clean is literally defined by Moira, without having the chance to contest this categorisation, the Clean in the 1985 version shows that just like Moira he is not prepared to have definitions imposed upon him. Foreskin and Moira face an equally emotional and powerful response from Clean in insisting that his uniqueness as a male be recognised and accepted:

**Clean:** So was I lady! I was out on the perimeter fence at Hamilton, a long way from where you punched through. I'll let you in on a little secret. There were
thousands of you out there, running for the gap in the fence. Do you want to know why only three hundred of you made it through?

Moira: Our brave police force plugged the gap.
Clean: Not the police lady. Two ordinary blokes from the crowd stopped you. When we arrived, there they were, two big guys standing at the top of the bank hurling protesters back down like there was no tomorrow. They stopped you lady.

Moira: Rugby cretins.
Clean: Maoris! They were both Maori!
(He now advances on Moira in the threatening pose of a Maori haka.)
A te ka mate, ka mate!
(Pause - Clean is very close over Moira)

We've been fighting middle-class pakeha wankers like you all our lives! (Pause)
How are your liberal credentials now lady!

Moira: Shut up!
Clean: You wanna make up? Wanna fuck a black? (67-8)

It seems unusual that two people who are similarly striving for independence from the invented traditions of the dominant patriarchal discourse should come into such conflict in the play. However, McGee believes that it is through their subconscious prescription or realisation of the myths from which they are trying to liberate themselves that prevents them from embracing each other's definition of individuality. For instance, Moira associates Clean's defense of the tour with a masculine appreciation of the game when she calls him a "rugby cretin" (67).

However, Moira's attempts to define Clean contradict her claims to being a liberal individual. Clean later taunts her: "How are your liberal credentials now lady?" (67). Clean has thus demonstrated that sport is still imbued with hegemonic values which benefit men over women. McGee, through Moira's attempts to find a place for herself in New Zealand society, shows the risks that accompany the process of challenging the myths and these makers of them. At the same time, McGee tries to vindicate Clean from the traditional racist view of the black male as having an insatiable
sexual hunger for white women (Wood, 195). The question which Clean presents is not a sexual one, however. Instead it is a question which challenges the cultural background of the individual who chooses to answer it. Because of the negative preconceptions attached to the historical way black and indigenous peoples have been presented, it serves to make the white recíprocator ashamed of their violent racist system (Wood, 211). It seems that as an educated individual, Moira understands this question and is ashamed to answer it (Carnegie, 214). The hatred directed towards Moira may also go beyond racial and cultural overtones. So many of the male characters in the play detest Moira because of the dominance the feminist revolution had in overshadowing the masculine one during the 1970s. McGee's silencing of Moira may have been a way to ensure that the all the male characters in the play had a chance to speak out.

However, Moira is not the only female character McGee uses to highlight the position of masculinity in New Zealand in the mid 1980s. Another enlightening incident occurs between Irish and a mysteriously obscured female who calls out from the bush. The fact that the audience only hears her voice yet does not encounter her body is relevant to McGee's investigation of the thematic issue of gender and masculine myths (Phillips, 218-9). That McGee allows the audience to hear the young lady's voice but not see her body suggests that the character has no essential being apart from the existence her male partner allows her to take in the story. She is a deficient character because the audience never sees her, which is reinforced by the distance of the girl's voice from her body. Instead, they can only imagine her through the way her boyfriend (Irish) defines her. Again, McGee is attempting to alert the audience to the tradition of masculinity which is still based on its ability to control, define and repress the voice of
women. The girl, thus, becomes a reflector of these traditional masculine philosophies. The fact that the girl has no ability to define or construct herself reflects part of the masculine tradition which has long regarded women as merely sexual objects of male ownership and desire. This derogatory view is illustrated in Irish's song:

Irish:

O the thing that makes me sigh
Is the sight of a sheila's thigh
With her short skirt riding high
And a view of the countryside (68).

The incident also emphasises the biased male belief of women as domestic predators.

The bush and natural landscape, where Irish and his female companion have been making love, is used as a metaphor by McGee to stress the traditional male fear of female emotionalism and the containment of men. The fact that Irish "staggers out of the bushes" with such tenacity suggests that McGee sees such masculinity as still childlike and ignorant in its views towards the opposite sex. The traditional view of the damage this emotional attachment to a woman can have on a man is verified in Irish's later struggle to return to the party (and true male companionship) much to the disapproval of his female lover:

IRISH EMERGES FROM THE BUSHES. AS BEFORE EXCEPT MINUS HIS SHOES AND SOCKS. HE'S ON ALL FOURS INITIALLY, AND IS STRUGGLING, IF POSSIBLE, TO EXTRICATE A LEG FROM SOME ONES GRASP.

Irish: Supper? Holy God and Mother of Mary, am I in dire need of replenishment!

Female: Irish!

IRISH PULLS FREE. (70)

Irish's return to Larry's house and the acceptance of an alcoholic beverage serve as an attempt to reintegrate himself with the traditional image of masculinity which he is expected to project. While this masculinity encourages the view of women as sexual objects, it discourages a relationship with women based on any other value than a
sexual one. Irish's attempts after the sexual act to disengage from the relationship with the young woman therefore serve an attempt to perpetuate this traditional notion. As Pamela Stirling notes [b]eing staunch is the dominant masculine ideal and to be staunch boys must display "sexual and social domination of women" (17). Irish attempts to perpetuate this myth.

A fascinating concept which McGee brings into the 1985 play is the way he connects the traditional male view towards women in New Zealand with the Christian male antipathy towards women for original sin. What McGee does here is to question one myth or tradition to destabilise another. What McGee wants, therefore, is for masculinity to progress and become more liberal in New Zealand. The breakdown in stereotyping women is an important step which needs to be taken in order to achieve this objective. While Moira provides Foreskin with the opportunity to do this through offering him her love and devotion, Foreskin fails to embrace "the female panacea" to the same extent as Irish (80). Irish, then, may be making more progress in the eyes of McGee than Foreskin in re-evaluating his position as a man in New Zealand.

Still, while Foreskin may fail to achieve the "panacea" which Irish begins to feel, Foreskin plays a fundamental role in leading Irish to the cure. Later in the play, Foreskin attempts to remind Irish that he needs to find a place where he is comfortable in standing and not where others tell him to stand: "Now now Brucie, we'll find you a place, don't you worry" (82). Foreskin's use of the term Brucie is an attempt to mock the traditional image and values of masculinity. While it could be argued in the skit between Irish, and his female companion, that Irish was in control of his own voice and that of his subject, it could equally be said that Irish has as little control over his voice
as his female acquaintance. Instead, Irish may be nothing more than a puppet speaking the values of the dominant discourse. Foreskin's use of the walnut game is not an attempt, as it first appears, to mock Irish but reflects a performative role which he is attempting to replicate. The impetus behind Foreskin's cynicism therefore is directed towards the tradition of masculinity and the roles it assigns to men from a young age. The walnut game is supposed to define the way men are expected to behave when they take certain positions on the field: "No chance for fullback. I'm afraid, Brucie, the higher arts of the game are beyond you" (82) ... "Got to move to the donkeys I'm afraid. Concentrate Brucie, for second row, for lock, where's the walnut" (83). While Clean intervenes, believing that Foreskin is making a mockery of Irish, what Clean fails to understand is that Foreskin is merely attempting to enlighten Irish on the shallowness of the old definitions of masculinity. Thus, when Foreskin responds, stating to Clean that he is merely attempting to "teach him to recognise nuts", he is teaching Irish to use his common sense (84). An interesting feature is how both Irish and Clean respond to Foreskin's use of the game to critique the invented images of masculinity which are historically embraced by rugby.

On the other hand, McGee may have succeeded in providing the reader with one relationship within the text which both contests the traditional mythical image of masculinity in New Zealand and embraces the "female panacea". This relationship can be seen in the brief encounter the audience have with Fred, nicknamed Mean, and his wife. Upon encountering Mean early in the play we are led to believe that his nickname is a reflection of his true character. In many ways he reflects and reinforces the traditional image of the hard farming man alone in New Zealand when he is introduced early in the play. Indeed, as Stachurski argues, "usually nicknames are a synecdoche,
signifying the whole from a part, but in *Foreskin's Lament* the incongruity of the nicknames emphasises the central theme of confusion of identity" (50). Trish Gribben notes another strategic and commercial reason behind McGee's use of nicknames. In an interview with McGee, Gribben notes how his characters' nicknames came from fellow team-mates' names whom McGee had played with. In the view of Gribben, and this is supported in the interview by earlier remarks made by Bruce Mason, Foreskin and his team mates' names, Mean, Clean and Irish, have extended the reading to attract people (including rugby players) wanting to see authentic characters. Apart from commercial interests, this was a major strategy Gribben states behind McGee's ambition to attract a large cross section of society to watch and absorb his play. Once at the theatre, McGee wanted to challenge the audience's perception of the characters' nicknames (Gribben, 90). What McGee wants his audience to understand is that appearances and nicknames can be misleading in the process of generating an imaginative response or creating an image of an individual.

As the story progresses, McGee's attempts to enlighten the audience to this perspective become more apparent. Later in the story, Foreskin informs the viewer that "Mean is actually Clean" (77). Yet, even before this, the viewer is presented with signs that Mean is by no means a symbol or reflector of his nickname. This is especially clear in the strong emotional attachment he has with his wife Pat. During the party at Larry's house, despite attempts from his mates to lure him away, Mean is determined not to leave his wife's side. An instance of this becomes clear when Clean attempts to reintegrate Mean into the tradition of attempting to replicate the images of masculinity by belittling those who fail to live up to its standards. Clean does this through his brutal critique of Larry's sexuality. However, Mean is reluctant to join in: CLEAN
LURCHES ON STAGE, DRAWING A RELUCTANT MEAN (62). This reluctance to participate in the demeaning of Larry demonstrates McGee's attempts to destabilise the traditional image of masculinity by creating a confusion of identity. Clean makes the mistake of assuming that Fred's nickname is given to him as a reflection of what Clean believes is a hard, traditional and uncompromising heterosexual male. Still, Mean's insistence not to join in on the assault of Larry proves him wrong.

The significance of fractured characters in Foreskin's Lament contests the idea of a homogenous masculinity. Contrary to the claims of the myths pertaining to masculinity, McGee wants the audience to realise that there is no such thing as a single true New Zealand male identity. McGee suggests this through the fracturing of characters within the text which stimulates the view that no character can be simply defined by appearances. The result is a shifting scheme of deception and misunderstanding. This becomes apparent when other characters fail to define the characters around them. The destabilising of Mean's adopted nickname, therefore, comes through his inability to project the definition expected from it. Unlike several of the other men at the party, Fred actually provides Moira with some of the "normality, warmth, and empathy" (68) which she is seeking from the individual. This destabilisation of identity is also destabilised through McGee's reconstruction of Larry.

Although it is easy to associate Larry with the traditionally stereotypical heterosexual view towards homosexuality in the original version, it is only through his openness that the audience becomes aware of his sexual orientation in the later play. What McGee may be attempting to convey through the reconstruction of Larry's character by vocal and personal presentation readjustments (the way Larry dresses and
acts) is that image, as in the case of nicknames, no longer turns out to be sound testament to the defining of an individual. Larry is testimony to the fact that it is no longer easy to distinguish a homosexual man from a heterosexual man merely by the way he behaves or presents himself (Buchbinder, 1). The reason for this lies in McGee's realtering of a myth which had a central role in the old perception of masculinity in defining who was a real man. This quality, according to McGee was the myth of machismo. The support for McGee's assertions is based on the historical reality of his contextual interpretation of masculinity in the mid 1980s and not in the early 1900s when the myths of machismo and heterosexual masculinity were so fervently strung together. Gay men, especially in the period when McGee rewrote this second edition of *Foreskin's Lament*, adopted the traditionally macho look spending hours each day in the gym to achieve the perfect, toned muscular body that would cause them appear no different from their heterosexual counterparts (Buchbinder, 2). Larry's appearance in the second version of *Foreskin's Lament* strongly attests to the attempts of a homosexual man, who through his interest in his physical conditioning, is desperately trying to be accepted within his dominantly heteronormatively governed society.

An instance of this appears in Larry's attempts to confront Clean over the physical violence he directs towards Tupper (92). Before the confrontation between Tupper and Clean takes place, Tupper states that rugby, as "a man's game" (89), provides them with the chance to prove their masculinity: "you've got to be fit to take the knocks" (93). What McGee is establishing here is the strong connection between masculinity and violence. Yet, if this is the case, McGee is also providing Larry with the chance to reassert his masculinity. While he is a homosexual, Larry's endeavours to shield his coach, from a man (Clean) who Tupper sees as reflecting his own values,
reinforces McGee's use of the confusion of identity to undermine the way in which viewers perceive characters. Through his attempts to intervene in the incident, Larry's actions overturn the traditional myths of the homosexual man as a passive and effeminate man. If Tupper bases masculinity on the displaying of instances of bravery McGee may be suggesting that Larry, in this instance, demonstrates more courage than any other of the men in the team by intervening in the battle between the two individuals. Larry has made a physical attempt to free himself from the traditional definition of masculinity and this is reinforced by his words, "No more!" (92).

Early signs of Larry's homosexuality are only really provided by comments and incidents by the other supposedly heterosexually normal players in the first act. This belief that Larry, because of his homosexuality and the type of masculinity he performs and projects within the team, is a lesser man than the other male members of the team is reflected in a number of jibes which Clean makes throughout the text towards Larry: [y]ou may be a bit of a poof, but you're okay ... at a distance of six inches" (58); [l]isten, how do you blow out a candle Larry? ...[p]oof" (62); and "[l]adies, gentlemen, Larry" (56). These comments, made largely by Clean, but nonetheless laughed at by the greater number of individuals in the team, reiterate the traditional heterosexual mythical fear of homosexuality as a perverse and untrue form of masculinity. Nevertheless, through the construction of Larry, McGee makes a bold endeavour to remind his audience of the fundamental difference between social definitions and biological ones.

As a masseur, for instance, Larry takes on the traditionally socially defined duties expected of women, because the role requires the individual performing the task to demonstrate emotional values such as being sensitive, supportive and caring. Yet, by
taking up this role and by demonstrating these emotions, Larry compromises his
position of respectability as a man in New Zealand society and comes to be regarded as
an inferior type of male role model. What McGee is therefore attempting to
demonstrate through Larry is the fallacy behind the invented male myths in New
Zealand which continue to define a man not on the basis of biology but according to
socially fabricated perceptions. That is, despite their sexual orientation, McGee believes
New Zealanders need to understand that the existence of the concept of masculinity
depends on a social awareness that all men come under this category. The way in
which Larry is treated by individuals, such as Clean, however, suggests McGee's
perception that the masculine sector of New Zealand society is anti-homosexual.

Evidence of this animosity towards men such as Larry, who choose to operate
outside the context of an expected gender role can be seen in Clean's constant
harassment of Larry. For instance, when Clean approaches Ken and begins to rub his
hands up Ken's legs as Larry withdraws, what Clean is doing is redefining the
sympathetic, therapeutic nature of Larry's massage transforming it into a perverse
image of homosexuality. This action is a direct attempt by Clean to insult Larry about
his place as a man in the context of New Zealand history and tradition. This abjection
of Larry and Clean's humiliation of him in front of the other players are attempts by
Clean to reaffirm his own pride in the tradition of New Zealand as a place which is still
regulated and defined by a heterosexually dominant discourse.

Stachurski raises another plausible alternative to this most logical idea.
According to Stachurski, the fervour with which Clean harasses Larry suggests that
Clean may have psychological doubts about his own sexual orientation (45). Scholars
such as Phillips have long held suspicions that rugby as a game may have been a place where homosexuality may have flourished (yet which ultimately had to be suppressed) (130-1). If this is the case, Clean may be just as much a victim as Larry, or even more so, because Larry, later in the text comes to accept his masculinity and the right it should have to exist along with other forms. While this may seem speculative, it still reinforces the original claim that Clean's need to victimise Larry comes from a need to reinforce his own respectability as a man in New Zealand.

The significance of the struggle which takes place between Clean and Larry, serves to highlight McGee's desire to find a more encompassing perception of masculinity. One of the achievements of this dualistic struggle is an attempt by McGee to disprove the myth of uniformity itself. The fact that Clean needs to perpetuate his worthiness as a man in New Zealand, suggests that the concept of masculinity is divisive and contestable among the male characters of the play. One scene in particular highlights McGee's argument that there is no longer the belief in New Zealand that the traditional definition of masculinity satisfies all of its male inhabitants regardless of whether they are heterosexual or homosexual:

IRISH comes up behind CLEAN and begins caressing CLEAN'S chest, seductively rolling up CLEAN'S jersey. CLEAN faces LARRY across the massage table, moaning and writhing in ecstasy. IRISH gradually begins to slip CLEAN'S shorts down ... CLEAN is nude except for a dirty jockstrap, boots and socks. CLEAN bends forward over the massage table and IRISH pretends to enter him from behind. They writhe to orgasm, then leap back from the table together, joining arms at the shoulder ... Both dip their shorts/jock-straps to expose their penises to Larry (31).

While this scene could be associated with a traditional chauvinistic male mockery towards homosexuals, Stachurski also believes that the skit may be embedded with
several less recognisable secondary functions. The fact that both Clean and Irish expose their penises presumably serves as an attempt to demonstrate the men's belief in their own heteronormality (45). Nonetheless, the fact that Larry is a masseur, and to a degree could be seen as a medical professional suggests that McGee reverses the power relationship in the skit. While Clean and Irish attempt to make Larry feel uncomfortable, which in many ways they do, the fact that Larry is a medical professional suggests that he is the individual who exercises the greater power.

Therefore, while Clean and Irish attempt to demonstrate the abnormality of Larry as a homosexual, what their audience really ends up seeing through Larry is the abnormality of the traditional perception. Thus, the exposing of one's penis may not necessarily be an act of faith in the tradition but the need for another individual's reassurance of one's adherence to the traditional image of masculinity (Stachurski, 45). Thus, what at first was an attempt by the heterosexual men to assert their cultural power over the non-conformist male is now reduced to an incident which shows insecurity towards their place as men within this tradition.

At the same time, Stachurski observes that the incident also highlights another interesting feature which shows the limitations of the traditional perception of masculinity. The performance provides Clean with a safe place outside of the context of reality to communicate repressed emotions that could not otherwise be disclosed in the real world (Stachurski, 44-5). As Stachurski observes:

[though] ... Clean states that their behaviour is "just kidding" (32) and McGee terms it a play in which realistically presented behaviour is often revealed to be an act, the 'pretense' of an homosexual act and the sexuality of the character are [undoubtedly] called into question (45).
Deciding whether Clean is a closet homosexual or not would be a difficult case to prove. Yet, there are suggestions that Stachurski may have made an insightful observation. For instance, it is clear that Clean is at his most secure in the presence of male companionship. In one of the rare incidents in which he confronts a woman (Moira) he feels even more uneasy than the Clean in the original script in confronting her from a position of heterosexual attraction. It could be suggested that the approach which Clean takes towards dealing with Moira is less sexually aggressive than sexually defensive. Indeed, Clean's conversation with Moira: "Don't fuck with me lady!" suggests more a desire to repudiate her than to attract her (66). At the same time, the emotiveness in the Clean of the 1985 rewriting of *Foreskin's Lament* suggests that the Clean in this text is very different from the one who emerged in the original production. Cold and reserved in the original script, the new Clean is not afraid to inform the other characters about his feelings. Yet, Clean is not the only character searching for acceptance.

The clearest evidence of Larry's desperate desire to be recognised by his fellow peers is no more emphatically revealed than in his personal discussions with his best friend in the text, Foreskin. One incident in particular represents Larry's type of masculinity which has long been repressed by the dominant male tradition. This incident occurs when Foreskin tells Larry how "society makes little prisons for us" (37). By prisons, Foreskin is trying to alert Larry to the pressure heteronormative New Zealanders place upon the success of a true man who works, has a mortgage and who raises a family. The point which Foreskin is trying to make is how New Zealand men, throughout the course of history, have been forced to take this option, only to find out
later in life that they are willing to do anything to escape from their obligations as husbands and fathers. In turn, Foreskin describes how rugby provides the escape route where men can go back to a time of irresponsibility and be "boys". What McGee is contesting here through Foreskin's retreat from the traps of life is a challenge towards the traditional perception of masculinity as it was understood by the early writers in the masculine literary movement. McGee no longer sees the man alone as an acceptable path for Foreskin to remain in in the 1980s as it continues to suggest that New Zealand society has remained unchanged in the course of fifty years. Though Foreskin is not married and has no children, the fact that Foreskin continues to engross himself in rugby still suggests a traditional fear of social responsibility. Drawing on an aspect which emerges through the masculine literary movement, McGee began to note that heterosexuality and fathering became distorted in the creation of a national masculinity. It could be argued, then, that Foreskin, and his team mates, use rugby as an attempt to shelter themselves from being domesticated. That Foreskin is unwilling to commit to his girlfriend Moira because of his desire to excel at rugby may mean that Foreskin may not be as different from his colleagues as he first appears to be. In attempting to reveal the faults in his other team mates Foreskin has possibly overlooked the flaws in himself.

One final thing that should be assessed in the second version of Foreskin's Lament is the lack of a single dominating figure in the text. In the first version, the text was clearly dominated by the vernacular presence of Foreskin. In the original production Foreskin is presented as a heroic figure, a Shakespearean tragic hero singled out as the anguished observer of a corrupt court and society. (Carnegie, 14). Foreskin's language sets him apart as a more direct commentator to the audience than any other character in the first version of Foreskin's Lament. However, in the revised
version, Foreskin's language has been coarsened, made ordinary and very often simply cut altogether. This reduction of Foreskin's rhetorical singularity presents the space for previously suppressed characters such as Clean to speak out. Foreskin, is frequently overshadowed by several characters in the second version. The reason for this suppression of Foreskin is unclear. Carnegie argues that part of McGee's initiative was to make the second version of the play more "natural, realistic and expressionistic" than the first play (Carnegie, 14). Another plausible reason however may lie in McGee's realisation of the flaws of having Foreskin as a revolutionary leader in the battle to combat the traditional perception of masculinity. In the original text, as a dominant figure, Foreskin's presence often overshadows the ability of others to express themselves and their feelings towards the issue of reinventing masculinity.

As Mann argues, Foreskin as a character also lacks substance and the realistic features of a truly balanced man (3). According to Mann, Foreskin's presence seems more prophetically perfectionistic than humanly realistic (3-4). The suggestion Mann is making here is that Foreskin, in a way, serves a similar function to what Jesus Christ serves in the Bible. Foreskin becomes the moral standard to which the other characters must aspire. Early in the text, a religious link strengthens this connection between Foreskin as a prophet through Irish's use of the term "bar mitzvah" to explain the way he felt in the outing he had with Foreskin (23). While he does not criticise the time he had with Foreskin, the association reinforces the idea that Foreskin is seriously out of place in the world which his more flawed male characters inhabit (Mann, 3). Foreskin is no longer a man, but a kind of divine preacher. Ironically, McGee may have realised that instead of creating a Messiah (or a male role model), Foreskin may be jeopardising the cause of challenging traditional perceptions of masculinity through his intention to
replace one value system with another (Mann, 3). This is clearly contrary to what
McGee had originally intended. The fact that McGee's deprives Foreskin of the power
he had in the earlier text to overshadow other characters suggests that McGee no
longer believes that Foreskin is a suitable role model for the future of masculinity in
New Zealand. By reducing Foreskin's rhetorical individuality, McGee deprives him of
his special observer status and of the sense that he does "see more" than the other men
in the text and perhaps even more than the audience (Carnegie, 217).

McGee suggests that the issue of masculinity in New Zealand is a complex issue
and therefore should not be analysed in such a simple manner (3). The fact that McGee
transforms Foreskin from a prophet to a man who now fears, cries, moans and finally
laments suggests a bold endeavour to correct the faults in his original text. This is
clearly reflected in one of the later scenes which precedes the eventual lament where
Foreskin resorts not only to prophetic ranting but also to violent actions to attest to his
beliefs. The conflict with Clean highlights the inner conflict taking place within

Foreskin:

(FORESKIN picks up an empty bottle by the neck, smashes the body
of the bottle against something, and begins advancing on CLEAN
holding the jagged bottle by the neck in front of him.)
Foreskin:  He's [Ken] dead you bastard, You killed him! You
killed Ken.

(FORESKIN backs CLEAN up against the wall, the jagged bottle at
CLEAN'S neck.)
Clean:  Do it ... Come on, do it!
Foreskin:  You ... you ... murderer ...
Clean:  Do it! ... We're all the same in the end, aren't we. We
want it in blood ... TAKE IT! GO ON!

(FORESKIN realises what he's doing, lowers the bottle, away from
CLEAN'S neck.) (92)
As Clean exits, Foreskin tries to redeem his saintly disposition by making his once prophetic lament portraying the apocalyptic struggle over defining masculinity within New Zealand. Despite his attempt he fails to regain his original authenticity.

The difference between the two Foreskin characters is fundamental. In the new version Foreskin foregrounds the murder and directly accuses Clean. But Clean's response that Foreskin is no different, that he too wants it "in blood", seems in performance to be justified by Foreskin's stage actions. Foreskin just prevents himself from doing to Clean what Clean brutally did to Ken. In the opinion of David Carnegie, in the Foreskin versus Clean confrontation we see a rerun of the loneliness of the long-distance liberal that is a major theme in another of McGee's works, Tooth and Claw. However, this is not the issue for which Foreskin has been trying to prepare himself (216). Just as Clean left Moira speechless earlier in the act, here his force, his goading of Foreskin and Foreskin's implicit admission of the truth of Clean's accusations, give Clean's position a stage authenticity. In the end, Foreskin has been reduced to the same ethical and linguistic level as Clean (Carnegie, 14). This authenticity leaves Foreskin confused and his final lament is more defensively humble than confidently assured (Carnegie, 216). The lament lacks authority and begins more as an apology, lacking the emotional force or theatrical conviction which it achieved in the original production. The once powerful lament which drew the audience to address the question of "whaddarya?" as a nation is now reduced from three pages to little over a page. The lament in the view of Carnegie became "no more than an unimportant coda" (14). The result is that Foreskin's lament at the end of the play has ceased to be either heroic tragic vision or emotionally representative of audience reaction. Instead, the weakness of Foreskin's final lament revealed to an even greater extent than the
original one the insecurities Foreskin, like the male characters around him, feels as a man in New Zealand. Thus, while Carnegie argues that the lament is "pathetic" (14) because of Foreskin's acknowledgements of his faults as a man, it could also be argued that the realisation of his imperfections as a man makes Foreskin not only a more realistic character but a better man. Elric Hooper supports this concept when reflecting upon the revision of Foreskin's Lament. Hooper comments:

Nearly five years have passed, the play has been performed throughout the country and is regularly taught in universities, but New Zealand, like the Bourbons, seems to have forgotten nothing and learnt nothing. "Foreskin's Lament" in the current climate is still a new play -- who says history does not repeat itself. (4)

Foreskin's ability to express a diverse range of emotions which contest the traditional societal definition of masculinity is considered the triumph of the encounter with Clean and ultimately the lament.

This crumbling of Foreskin at the end of the play serves as an attempt by McGee to draw Foreskin back into the 'real' realm of mankind. Removing the mystical element, which could be seen in the prophetic power Foreskin exercised in the earlier production, McGee suggests that the course for change will not be found through divine intervention but through the confrontation which will inevitably happen between men of differing ranks. The later version of Foreskin's Lament suggests that the confrontation is beginning to take place and that there is no longer a set prescription for what should be seen as a new ideal definition of masculinity but a world where masculinity comes to embrace all types of men. As Carnegie argues, "the team was no longer harmonious, even on the surface. It ceased to function as a model for Tupper's old-fashioned 'camaraderie', nor as a paradigm of the New Zealand consensus" (14).
When Tupper had scolded Foreskin, declaring that this is a team game and the town's honour is at stake, audiences realised that the town was New Zealand (13). However, the tension which exists between team mates questions the homogenous nature of masculinity which the audience could easily relate to a traditional New Zealand perception of masculinity in the original play. Masculinity and identity become even more fragmented and contested in this version of the play by McGee than it had been in the original version. As David Carnegie attests, "the myth of homogeneity in a social paradise was replaced by the uncertainties of adult nationhood (14). One of the many things McGee is interested in presenting to his audience is "what happens to the team -- and the town -- after the cathartic events?" (Gribben, 92). While Foreskin is a flawed character, in a number of ways in the revision, one cannot help but admire Foreskin's desire to speak for those swamped by social influences coming from both the brutally physical and effete intellectual. In analysing Foreskin's position at the end of the play McGee concludes, "If it's possible for any good at all to come out of the "Days of Rage", it will stem from our recognition of realities about ourselves, of things we didn't -- or wouldn't -- see before" (Gribben, 92). It seems that what McGee is trying to say is that while our past can tell us a great deal about where we have come from, it is not necessarily an indicator of what we are or have to be in the future.

In spite of Foreskin's attempts to tell Clean where he stands in society, McGee, through the demeaning of Foreskin's position in the play suggests that no man has the right to tell another where he stands as a man in society. The right to define one's masculinity should lie with the individual concerned and not with the state. Clean has just as much right to exist within New Zealand society as Foreskin does. As Black argues, "[traditional] habits of thought in New Zealand need to be changed" (8). In the
second version of Foreskin's Lament, McGee has made another bold contribution in order to push for a reevaluation of the definition of masculinity in New Zealand society. The emotional response by the audience [apart from ticket sales] to the play is the clearest place to look for answers about the success of a play according to Cochrane. The success of Foreskin's Lament for her was in the play's ability to strike an emotional impact from traditionally conservative individuals. Cochrane observes how apart from the surprise, shock, awe and laughter which was generated by the revision, the play was so brutally overt that it left some men in tears (5). By the end of the play one thing was for certain, masculine identity in New Zealand would be a contested issue for many years to come. Likewise, Whitemen would continue to dispel the traditional myths of masculinity where the revision of Foreskin's Lament had finished. However, Whitemen would do this through the medium of humour and not through drama.
Chapter 2 Two Humorous Laments
i. Laughing at Our Past: The Whitemen Fiasco

Just one year after the release of the rewritten edition of Foreskin's Lament, McGee unveiled another production called Whitemen which also sought to investigate the position of masculinity in New Zealand. Though little literary criticism exists on a play which only lasted one week at the Auckland Theatre, McGee, and producer-director Danny Vendramini, placed a great deal of emphasis on capturing the notion of New Zealand as a place where traditional attitudes towards masculinity were being reconsidered (Stratford, 64). As Vendramini states:

"I believe in trying to push New Zealand theatre out of the high-brow elitist area that it seems to have been in, into something more accessible. That's why I like Greg's stuff [Whitemen] -- he's not an elitist, he writes for a wide audience and people from all walks of life can get something from it. There's this attitude that there shouldn't be any kind of fun or enjoyment in art, and that's something I can't be fucked with (Stratford 70).

McGee attributes the failure of Whitemen by comparison to Foreskin's Lament to the play's far more scathing attack on the middleclass and their values. McGee may have felt that in the previous versions of Foreskin's Lament that the middle and upper class New Zealanders had failed to see Foreskin's failure to find an answer to his search to be a better Kiwi bloke in foreign text books (Shaw, 266). Unlike Foreskin's Lament, Whitemen asked the middle-class to come in and laugh at themselves and it was hoped that this humour would lead to a philosophical questioning of oneself. However, as Stratford notes, reflecting back on the play McGee realises that "that was never really on" (64). Nevertheless, Whitemen is still an important text to consider because of its questioning of the archaic institutionalised literary images whose construction of the New Zealand male aligns itself in more ways than one with the All Black mythology of the staunch man alone.
This challenge to masculinity, from a homosexual perspective, happens at the beginning of the play. The gay couple, Geoffrey and Kenneth, who are on the street protesting the disguised All Blacks [Cavalier] tour to South Africa are disgusted when they see the voluptuous prostitute Queenie across the street who mockingly taunts them about the inferiority of their masculinity because they are homosexuals: "[O]ooh, I do like a man's man". To this comment, Geoffrey surprisingly responds back by calling Queenie a "homophobe".8 Ironically, this statement forecasts what is to emerge later in the play when the reader eventually uncovers the truth that Queenie is really a transvestite and was born a man, whose real name is Leon the son of the Secretary, Mrs Scrabble. The significance of Queenie's (or Leon's) role in the play is an attempt by McGee to demonstrate the New Zealand fear of men who abstain from the traditionally accepted practices of masculinity (Neill, 70). Unlike Kenneth and Geoffrey, who publicly acknowledge their pride in being a homosexual couple, the case of Leon still evokes a fear ingrained in men deviating from the social myths which have formulated the image of the true New Zealand man. Leon is very much a man caught in the conflict between social expectations and individual rights. But it is not only the audience who Queenie initially fools, and the character succeeds in challenging the viewer's attitude in relation to fixed cultural values attached to male gender.

For instance, when the grotesquely obese Mister Jack Boy is ordered by the committee to sit on Mister Jack Crust to repress him from attacking the two "ordinary" men on the street, which the committee wish to have talks with regarding the tour, both

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Boy, and the extraordinarily right wing Crust, are fooled into thinking that Queenie is really a woman: "He takes out some frilly panties and throws them up to Queenie who examines them approvingly. Queenie hikes up her skirt [and] stands over Crust" (54). It is after this incident of Queenie hitching up her dress in order to put on the underwear that a shocked Mister Crust becomes conscious of the true biological nature of Queenie. He begs, "Lord, forgive me..." (54). The incident which takes place between Queenie, Crust and Boy demonstrates that looks can be misleading and no longer form the basis for attesting to one's true sexual orientation. This automatically brings a challenge to traditional definitions associated with masculinity in New Zealand. While the case for Queenie fooling the men into believing that she is a woman has been articulated, it has not been analysed from the opposite angle.

At the beginning of the play, Leon's allegiance to an old model of New Zealand masculinity is automatically provoked. For instance, while other male figures, such as the insatiable Mister Crust, show their allegiance towards the old definition of masculinity by continuing to view women, such as Lottie (Lamour), as sexual objects, Leon is sensitive and compassionate and is horrified by the conduct of these men. This refined and compassionate form of masculinity is clear when he shares his perception of Lottie about the insensitivity of the Councilors who still subscribe to the traditional definition of masculinity: "Creepy eh. Beings From The Lost Cosmos. Freaks From The Far Frontier. The Last Stand of the Dinosaurs. I'm glad I played soccer" (21). In this sentence two things are being challenged. The perception of masculinity and the source or foundation of this tradition. According to Leon, the masculinity being produced by referring it to arenas such as space reflects Leon's view that this tradition is inhumane, cold, empty and perhaps even dark. The reference to the era when
dinosaurs once ruled the earth seems to suggest the outdatedness of these myths and a hope that these archaic values will soon become extinct through the emergence of a society which offers more diversity, through less physically violent contact sports such as soccer, where perceptions towards masculinity will evolve and blossom.

While these emotive statements serve to demonstrate the potential for other types of masculinity to emerge in New Zealand they do not initially challenge societal definitions pertaining to gendered sexuality. At this point all that could be said of Leon, as a male, is that he is effeminate (not that he is a transsexual). This role reversal could also have been an attempt by McGee to incorporate a female audience while strengthening the case for the embracing of other forms of masculinity by placing women in the place of power traditionally reserved for the dominant patriarchal voice. Men take up the traditional space of objectification and lustful desire as one dialogue between the two clearly illustrates. Leon struggles to free himself from Lottie's passionate embrace:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lamour:</th>
<th>Leon. Women have feelings.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leon:</td>
<td>Beautiful feelings, I know!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamour:</td>
<td>Not all beautiful Leon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon:</td>
<td>And delicate sensibilities. I'll always respect them Lottie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamour:</td>
<td>Bugger your respect Leon!...I don't just mean feelings - I mean yearnings - I mean urges. I mean lust!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon:</td>
<td>You don't!. (21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What McGee achieves is a reversal of the knowledge structure that is empowering for women like Lottie. While Lottie is empowered in her ability to express her sexual longings towards Leon, Leon is able to neutralise the situation by making a dignified escape, taking up the tradition of the New Zealand male as the soldiering gentleman prepared to serve whenever an injustice may arise (Laffin, 31). Lottie is not merely
regarded by Leon as an object for his pleasurable consumption in the way that Lottie regards Leon. She is an individual of equal worth and one he endeavours to respect accordingly.

Yet, McGee portrays Leon's rejection as a truer form of masculinity than Crust's through the way he repels Lottie's sexual advances. This rejection could be seen as reinforcing the fear presented in McGee's earlier work, *Foreskin's Lament* (both the 1980 and 1985 versions), of a masculine society afraid of having its individuality repressed by a woman who desires and demands a home and a family. Interpreted from this angle, Leon no longer becomes the victim of Lottie's aggressive sexual advances. On the contrary, Lottie becomes the victim of stereotypes still placed upon women by the traditional form of masculinity. This fear of women in New Zealand is particularly observable in Leon's fear and ignorance of the female gender, sex and sexual feelings. Again, Ferguson suggests that this fear stems from the socially constructed values associated with gender taught to young New Zealand men and women through socialisation, the school curriculum and sports (21-2). Lottie's nickname *Lamour* indicates her physical and emotional distance from the masculine culture and its cold and repressive male characters that operate around her. This is not only reflected in Leon's verbal and physical attempts to protect himself from Lottie's advances but is also reinforced later in the narrative when his mother enters the room and effectively ends this scene of sexual sparring.

Scrabble enters ...
Lamour: Sorry about that. Got carried away.
Scrabble: Did he! [McGee's underlining]
Lamour: ...Not noticeably, no.
Scrabble: He's so bloody innocent. No father figure. He thinks he's the result of immaculate conception. (21)
McGee wants the reader to observe how Leon's mother serves to perpetuate the values of the traditional male cultural attitude towards women.

At the same time, Lottie's presentation of herself may not be as liberal as it first appears to be. Lottie's apology following Leon's mother's entry reinforces the idea that she is the one who has to accept responsibility for the act. The expression of love and indeed the hetero-normative relationship appear to be something which both characters are made to feel awkward about. McGee's purpose behind this denaturalising of the heterosexual relationship, while possibly serving to pave the way later in the story to allow room for the homosexual narrative to establish itself, highlights the unhealthiness of the traditional male perception of women. Thus, Scrabble's mother's question, "Did he?" reinforces the old perception of masculinity's attitudes to women as sexual temptresses (Young, 24). Scrabble, therefore, represents several generations of women who for years have been manipulatively forced to accept and embrace these constructed values attributed to their gender. Scrabble, in a way, not only serves to remind the audience of the power these male myths continue to have in making women feel insecure about their place in New Zealand society, but also serves to remind the audience that women are trained to become a successful part of the process of reinforcing this negative tradition towards women. If this is the case, Lamour learns her place in New Zealand society not only from Leon's rejection of her because of his fear of deviating from the image of manliness he is expected to project, but also from his mother, who is trained to accept this projected image. As such, the need to contest male heteronormative values is a major issue in McGee's work. The fundamental way in which McGee achieves this is through denaturalising the ideologies associated with heteronormativity through performativity.
Judith Butler argues that in the same sense that a drag queen performatively destabilises and denaturalises the category of femininity, two men in love can performatively lead to a reevaluation of essentialist notions of the heterosexuality of true romance (28). Prior to his relationship with Queenie, Boy is constantly obsessed with eating and with food and this is reflected in the first line of his entry into the play: "Christ I could do with a feed" (9). However, upon falling in love with Queenie, Boy's appetite for food fades. From a psychological perspective, a fixation with food could be interpreted as demonstrating signs of insecurity, nervousness and even remorse (McGraw, 81-2). Food for Boy serves as a form of escapism from a world where he feels insecure about his masculinity. This insecurity is emphasised when Boy is asked to give his opinion on the tour by Manuka (Tom-Tom): "[I] dunno Tom-Tom. I've hardly ever been right" (32). Up until falling in love, food also becomes a way of keeping Boy in line with the values of the old perception of masculinity. This control is reflected in Crust's attempts to bribe Boy to vote in favour of the tour to South Africa:

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Boy: Christ I could do with a feed.
Crust: Buy you a pie Fergus ...
Crust: As a mate! As a mate, there's nothing to stop me exercising my individual rights and offering to buy Fergus a pie, even a dressed pie if I like. With spud on top, and peas and beetroot. And gravy. Eh Fergus.
Boy: I second the motion. (33)
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Earlier in the play, Boy talks about how society has attempted to shape him in a manner which pleases them. This is clear when he talks about the change of his body over time to reflect the image of the stocky and staunch image of the prop forward: "I hated it [society]. I thought I hated it [conforming]. But all the time I thought I hated it, my body was growing to like it. I began eating more" (51). Boy's rejection of food lies not only in the importance of embracing the relationship but in the fact that it destroys the
symbolic control the old perception of masculinity had over him. In choosing to be with Queenie, Boy has made the first bold decision of his own without being regulated by the other men in the council.

Despite the power of performativity to empower and free individuals such as Queenie (Leon) it can also be argued that it still acts as a means of repressing individuality and perpetuating conformity to societal standards. When dressed as a woman, Leon is easily able to convey his/her very gentle and feminine nature in front of men he/she is interested in such as Crust and Boy. However, when dressed as a male, Leon loses the ability to articulate his feelings and is forced into repressing them. This is clear in his admiration for the British media journalist, Slate, whom he sees as articulating the "country's soul" (39). This suggests that, while attempting to break away from the heterosexual myths of masculinity, Leon is nevertheless afraid of the implications this may have in challenging his identity as a New Zealander. As an autonomous speaker notes: "there seems to be two types of New Zealand: the one we show off and the other we actually live in" (Bell, 11). McGee is determined to present the reality of masculinity in New Zealand as opposed to the mythical perception.

Part of Leon's fascination with Slate is tied not so much with sexuality as with his belief that Slate may be able to tell him where his position as a man in New Zealand society lies. Leon believes that he is filling the "void" within himself as to what being a New Zealand man is all about (31). However, Bunion merely sees the culture, which Slate is referring to as reinforcing the way in which men in New Zealand have traditionally seen themselves. The idea of the culture being static and dead is reinforced
by Bunion when he refers to the articulation of this culture as being "[p]inned to the wall like a dead moth!" (39).

McGee is also attempting early in the work to destabilise the perceptions brought into the play by his socialised audience. McGee is aware that masculinism has long governed the way plays have been produced in theatres within New Zealand (Shaw, 266). As Susan Bennett argues, "[t]he survival of the theatre is economically tied to a willing audience - not only those people paying to sit and watch a performance but increasingly those who approve a government, corporate, or other subsidy (4).

Research conducted by Thosby and Withers suggests that dramatic productions are attended mainly by middle-aged, high income, high education, professional, managerial and white collar groups (Thosby and Withers, 96). While the primary determining factor is the level of the individual's education, the majority of the audience members are white and male (Thosby and Withers, 96-7). According to Manfred Naumann, there is a cognitive link between the theatre goers and the producers of the cultural arts because they share similar cultural values (119). While engaging with the populace through the medium of artistic performance, McGee strives not to be a reflector of a tradition which has tended to represent masculinist practices. Several characters serve the role of destabilising this traditional masculinist conception.

Bunion is one of these characters who attempts to enlighten Leon earlier in the play to the fact that he will never be able to find acceptance in New Zealand if he continues to embrace these outdated associations of masculinity (31). Bunion appears more prepared to define himself as an individual than be regulated by the definitions placed upon him by society. As he comments to Leon: "We're both bastards, Leon. I
glory in it, that's the difference. I don't want a genealogy, a history. I don't need to be placed in the scheme of things, set in concrete by a Pom. And I don't want any part of a strange and agonised void" (31). This statement reinforces Bunion's determination to establish his own definition of himself without having to take on the role of performativity which Leon feels obliged to do in order to present the image of masculinity expected by the myths of the masculine tradition. It is this projection of masculinity which the Councillors assume they will come into contact with when they leave the Chamber to find the opinion of the ordinary everyday New Zealand man on the street.

However, venturing onto the streets they are stunned that the type of men who reflect their ideals are nowhere to be found. In attempting to generate support to back the tour to South Africa, Crust suggests that the average man on the street will provide the Council with the approval they need (47). When the councillors are on the street Tame questions Crust's assumption that the ordinary man on the street will represent Crust's own perception of masculinity: "The point is, we could have been back inside in the warmth addressing our responsibilities, instead of staggering around the streets trying to find this mythical-man-in-the-street" (48). While it was argued earlier that theatre viewers already share a body of cultural knowledge, Marvin Carlson suggests that despite this the community is still made up of individuals with the ability to express free will (13). The reader or viewer can be brought out to express the views pertaining to the self and not the community through effective theatre semiotics (Carlson, 13). What McGee wants the reader to take note of in this statement by Tame, is how he destabilises the tradition by implying that the values associated with Crust's perception
of masculinity are nothing more, as Hobsbawn would suggest, than invented traditions (Hobsbawn, 2).

This tendency to view men, such as Kenneth and Geoffrey, as inferior men is reflected in Tame's confusion as to how to address these characters: "We could simply ... [long drawn out pause] walk up to them, and say hullo, and discuss our different points of view" (49). McGee emphasises how the Councillors approach tentatively, "as if towards wild animals" (54). This mutual feeling amongst the Councillors reinforces how the traditional old myths of masculinity continue to associate lesser men with bestial metaphors. Upon confronting the men, the Councillors, and the protesters, immediately fail to start off well in their attempts to resolve the issue of the tour (54). Thinking that the Councillors are protesters from Khandallah, Geoffrey and Kenneth complain about how they have been waiting for their reinforcements "for hours" (54). In response to this comment, Embers remarks coldly back to the protesters: "We are not...who you think we are" (54). This hostility towards the protesters is also reemphasized in Embers' and Goodin's unwillingness to shake hands and formally introduce themselves to the protesters thus reinforcing the idea that they view the protesters as lesser men than themselves (54).

What is worth noting in the tenseness of this encounter is how Embers and Goodin are clearly the two individuals who hold the greatest hostility towards Kenneth's and Geoffrey's perception of masculinity and attitude towards the tour. Unlike, Goodin and Embers, Manuka and Tame are generally more receptive towards the men and this is reflected in their ability to put aside their heterosexual understanding of masculinity. This willingness to embrace the alternative perception of
masculinity is reflected in the symbolic gesture of the handshake which occurs between Tame and Manuka with Kenneth and Geoffrey (55). The significance of this scene, from McGee's perspective, is that it highlights the whiteness of these invented traditions. While it could be viewed as an incident which shows the shattering of the traditional hierarchical boundary which has long divided men, it is a scene which unifies Maori and pakeha New Zealanders. Manuka and Tame, can also be viewed as victims of the process of these invented traditions because these myths have manipulated their own racial perception of masculinity, as well as transforming them into enforcers of their new inherited masculinity.

Evidence which suggests that Tame and Manuka may be equally disadvantaged and repressed as men in New Zealand society is clear in the dissatisfaction Tame feels towards Embers' handling of the interview with the men in the street and the briefness of it: [Tame] "Wait!" Is that it? Surely there's more to be said?" (55). Tame's remarks reinforce McGee's belief that there is more to investigate in addressing the issue of apartheid. As well as this, there is also a need to reconsider the issue of masculinity in New Zealand society. What is intriguing about the engagement between the protesters and the Council is that the opinion of the Council is largely dominated by the vocally dominant speaker, Embers. This dominant voice is reinforced by Goodin's recording of it on paper (55). This scene reflects McGee's own belief that men in New Zealand still encounter the power of this tradition through a variety of everyday senses [hearing and reading]. The scene demonstrates the ability these men still have to shape the myths which New Zealanders have long held themselves.
Despite Kenneth's and Geoffrey's chances to confront this dominant masculine tradition, they fail to do this and end up submitting to what they have previously been arguing against. This is reflected in Embers' final statement: "Then we ... agree to ... disagree" to which Geoffrey and Kenneth state: "Yes. I suppose" (56). While initially believing that they have stood their ground against the Council, the statement suggests that the protesters have not come away with the autonomy and dignity which they were determined to achieve. In fact, what the protesters have agreed, upon closer inspection of the statement, is not that they oppose the Council's view but that they support the myth of the tour as bridge-building and reinforcing the myth of New Zealand as an egalitarian place. Instead of providing Kenneth and Geoffrey with the chance to free themselves from the power of the old perception of masculinity, the dominant discourse has drawn the men back to the masculine tradition. That Embers silences them proves that New Zealand is still a place where the voice of the marginalised continues to be suppressed.

McGee also suggests that the victims of this dominant traditional perception of masculinity are just as likely to be found within the walls of the Chamber as they are to be found outside its walls. What McGee makes clear at the outset of the play is that the investigation into challenging the cultural perception towards masculinity in New Zealand is specifically tied with a pakeha conception of it. The title is the clearest indication of this for it is powerful 'Whitemen' in New Zealand, since the signing of the treaty of Waitangi, who have influenced the image of the idealistic masculinity and culture in New Zealand (Fairburn, 1-2). McGee's drama plays on the belief of New Zealand men who see their land as a democratic paradise which enables all to practise
freedom of speech. Yet, Whitemen questions the validity of this belief on several occasions.

According to McGee, this democracy, instead of being liberal and open, is closed and selective. These selections are frequently influenced by how the individual reflects the values of one's society. This connection is established early in a conversation between Tame and Crust:

Tame: It comes back to this surely. That there is a moral obligation upon us-
Crust: Selective morality!
Tame: Morality is selective, Jack, that is the nature of it! A selection or choice is made by each individual-
Crust: That's it - individual choice - you've got it right their Phil!
Tame: The PM [Prime Minister] made it clear we do have a choice!
Crust: He made it clear he doesn't want us to go! (25)

McGee sees the democracy which exists in New Zealand as empowering a few powerful nationalistic white men instead of a much wider number of men regardless of status, race or faith. What is clear about this dialogue is that the racially dominant voice is that of the pakeha Crust. Manuka, is also a character who is frequently shown to be repressed by this tradition.

In scene eleven, when the Council is gathered in the Chamber to decide a verdict on whether to tour South Africa, Manuka makes four attempts to present his view to his fellow Councilmen. However, he is frequently waved down by the Chairman Embers (25-26). The white members in the Council frequently speak without being silenced by Embers. This suggests the hypocrisy which exists within the Council itself. While Embers and the Council are debating the morality of a tour to South
Africa, they are oblivious to their own suppression (of the Maori) in their own society. The room and the Council who reside in it, thus, become a metaphor for New Zealand society. McGee questions the Council's belief, and the national one, that they are exponents of democracy when racial equality does not even exist within their own Chamber. This inequality amongst the Council is later reiterated through an incident in scene thirteen when Manuka is again waved down four times by Embers before finally having the chance to speak (33-35). On both occasions, Manuka literally has to plead to be allowed to speak to a rather dismissive Council: "Tom-Tom [Manuka] please, we're about to break for refreshments" (38). When Manuka does finally get the chance to speak in scene thirteen he still firmly believes that he is part of a democratic society which is concerned not only with the welfare of its own culturally diverse population but that of others [South Africa]. This is emphasised by how he views his standing as a Maori within New Zealand:

Manuka: I remember when I was a boy on the marae and Te Rangi Hiroa- Sir Peter Buck - came to speak to us...
He was a great man, Sir Peter Buck...
He told us that Maoris were left out of the team that toured South Africa in 1928...
He said that was a gross insult to Maoris, to be classed as blacks. Because Maoris were of different extraction. (38)

The problem with this statement which McGee wants to clarify to his audience is in Manuka's perception of identity. It does not present so much a Maori perspective as it merely reflects the process of white ideological indoctrination. That is, Manuka still prescribes to the old myths pertaining to a New Zealand perception of masculinity which claims to disregard racial prejudice and stresses unity.

Manuka becomes aware later in the story that he may have more in common to that of the blacks in South Africa than what he originally believed. When the young
female protester Marama succeeds in breaking into the Chamber and halting the proceedings, Manuka, as well as the other Maori in the room Tame, are shocked by the actions of the Police in their beating of the girl: "[Manuka] cut it out!" (68). While Tame and Manuka call for the beating of the girl to stop, none of their fellow white Councilmen, who probably have more power to stop the assault, attempt to do so. The assault serves to remind Manuka of how similar his situation of repression is to that of the blacks; it also reinforces how violently similar the pakeha of New Zealand are to the whites in South Africa in seeking to enforce and protect their traditions. In the same way in which Boy is able to liberate himself from the heteronormative tradition by accepting and loving Queenie, Manuka succeeds in breaking free from the male myth of racial equality. Manuka succeeds in liberating himself from the values of the dominant discourse through his decision to leave the meeting: "I've had enough of this. I'm going ... After that kid. See she's being looked after. She had more guts than any of us" (72-73). Manuka's decision to leave the Chamber and his choice to "abstain" from voting on the tour is the first real time in the play when Manuka, and Boy, are able to express and assert themselves without being silenced by characters such as Embers and Crust who act as symbols of the invented white male culture. Crust's sharp insult towards Manuka, claiming that "You wouldn't even know what the bloody word [abstain] meant", only serves to verify Manuka's claims of the derogatory and racially one-sided nature of this invented masculinity (73).

One of the features McGee employed in the production of Whitemen to critique New Zealand's traditionally conservative nature is the use of international figures. The satire in Whitemen was heavily influenced by the Italian dramatist Dario Fo, whose plays Can't Pay? Won't Pay and Accidental Death of an Anarchist were previously
performed in front of an enthusiastic Auckland audience (Stratford, 68). However, the Fo-influenced parts of Whitemen were amongst the least popular in the play and were heavily attacked by newspaper critics such as Peter Calder from the Herald as well as by Dave Andrews (Stratford 64-5). Despite comments in the press, McGee does not regret the decision to place these foreign values in his play. Commenting on the critique of inserting Italian-influenced satire in a New Zealand play, he states:

"I lived in Italy for a year and a half and I've got some knowledge of the Italian political system. I know when I go to watch Fo here that very few of the audience would come close to appreciating the niceties of division within the Italian left, and yet an understanding of those things is quite crucial to understanding what goes on in this play. So I think there's a bit of the old cultural cringe there that says that the imported product is OK but were not allowed to deal with quite the same things. The TVNZ censor has admitted as much by saying that because people complain more about bad language and nudity in New Zealand productions, a different standard applies to them. (Stratford, 68)

McGee is here is referring less to the problems of applying overseas models to his play than to New Zealand society's attitude to these features. According to McGee, censoring prevents people from seeing the full picture and he suggests that some New Zealanders may wish to remain in a state of complacency about the events happening around them. McGee believes that until these conservative ways are changed New Zealanders will never be able to address important areas such as the issue of where masculinity now stands in this country.

An unusual element that enters into Whitemen, which does not appear in any of McGee's other rugby plays, is the use of magic realism in the text. This magic realist element appears in the form of a dead All Black angel called Ack Ack Slement who as he states represents the "Ghost of players past" (75). Stephen Slenon suggests that the appealing feature of using magic realist elements in a text is that it "carries a residuum
of resistance toward the imperial centre and to its totalising systems of generic
classification" (408). When encountering, Ack Ack Slement, the reader is led to believe
that the appearance of the All Black is an attempt to reestablish continuity with the
perception of masculinity perpetuated in individuals such as Crust and Ember.
However, Slement's appearance fails to deliver to these specific Councilmen the divine
approval of the myth.

Firstly, this divine tradition is visible in the image of Slement itself. Instead of
appearing in the graceful conceivable image of an All Black angel, his appearance on
the stage is far from majestic. This is reflected in the stage directions where McGee
refers to the scruffy appearance of Slement and how "he lands awkwardly on the table,
and falls over in a tangle of wings" (75). Apart from his inability to control his rather
"dirty" wings, Slement also lacks the vernacular eloquence from the heavens: "F-f-fuck
it! I never did get the hang of these f-f-fucken things" (75). Slement is also presented as
being old and rather ugly looking (75-6). What is therefore supposed to be a moment
of divine inspiration and spiritual enlightenment is transformed into a scene where the
image of the old masculinity is turned from something glorious into something
ludicrous.

One way in which this tradition of masculinity is challenged is through the idea
of communication. Slement encourages the men to use their senses and express
themselves before making a decision. This ability to encourage critical questioning and
expressing oneself strongly contradicts the traditional image of the New Zealander as a
man of few words who is trained to obey the commands of his superiors (Ausubel,
8-9). Slement challenges the men to disregard the image of the hard man for one who is
sensitive and even compassionate. Later in the play, Slement further challenges the traditional way in which the old perception of masculinity has encouraged the invented image of the New Zealand male as being hard and unemotional through his encounter with both his wife and son Leon.

When Slement encounters his wife Florence Scrabble, he is overwhelmed by emotion and is open in demonstrating his pleasure in seeing her: Ack sweeps Scrabble into his arms and gives her a huge smooch (77). Later he refers to how "young and pretty" she still looks and encourages her to die young so that they "could still have some f-f-fun up there" (78).

Attempts to dispel the tradition of masculinity are also reflected in his acceptance of his son, Leon. This is evident in the emotional joy and sensitivity he experiences when Scrabble tells Slement that he has a son: "A son? [surprised] By god I always wanted a f-f-fucken son. [now very excited] Where is he-Can I see him?" (77). When he sees his son, while initially shocked at the appearance of Leon as a transsexual saying: "That's a son?" (78), Slement's initial shock is quickly replaced by a demonstration of tender feelings and an acceptance of his son: "Pleased to meet you son. I'm sorry I can't stick around and see you develop" (78). The handshake and communication which takes place between Slement and his son serves to demonstrate McGee's hope that the old myths attributed to masculinity in New Zealand will slowly disintegrate and allow a much fuller definition of masculinity to develop in its place.

Crust also becomes entangled in the divine encounter. Crust's shooting of Slement conveys McGee's opinion that for many New Zealanders embracing this
effeminate perception of masculinity is still in conflict with the dominant patriarchal
discourse. The way in which Crust is removed by Superintendent Blunt, Constable
Gaulieter and Constable Craven after the shooting, resembles a parody of Jesus's
sentencing to be crucified at the request of Pontius Pilate. Ironically, the initials of
Crust's initials (JC) also reestablish the view that Crust could be perceived as a Christ
figure for the traditional perception of masculinity. The clearest association between
Jack Crust and Jesus Christ is to be found in the religious language which Crust
employs throughout the text. Before shooting Slement, Crust proclaims: "O Lord!
Smite thine enemies!" (76). This remark implies Crust's belief that he is "doing the
Lord's work" by protecting the virility of New Zealand's old perception of masculinity.
The male virility is portrayed early in the play when prior to entering the meeting Crust
gropes Loretta Lamour in the corridor outside of the Chamber: "It's the man in me, the
wild uncurbed primitive male urge" (6). An unusual feature in viewing Jack Crust is
how his name can be viewed in several ways. At the same time, the word crust
specifically can be viewed and interpreted in a geographical sense as well as an
economical one. Crust therefore not only becomes the voice for the nation's traditional
understanding of masculinity but also the physical manifestation of where it can be
found.

While Crust tries to present himself in a pious manner as a "prophet of truth",
religion merely serves to protect his selfish desires for the tour, for commercial and
personal gratification, and the demonising of all those who try to stop him from
sustaining this objective. Through the pious Crust, McGee uses religion to give an
insight into some of the faults with the old perception of masculinity. A clear one may
be noted in Crust's response to Embers, which reflects the danger of blind faith towards
the traditional perception of masculinity. Despite attempting to convince Crust of the
closest of hearing or making an informed decision, Crust reinforces his position:
"Some of us have informed ourselves Phil. Some of us know which side our bread’s
buttered on" (17). That Crust is not prepared to listen to the views of others suggests a
dangerous metaphorical parallel with a nation not willing to abandon its traditional
philosophy of masculinity.

However, McGee in the construction of Crust’s character suggests that Crust
should not be so confident in the way he is judging others, for he is ultimately being
evaluated himself. Despite Crust’s confidence that he is protecting the traditional image
of the invented New Zealand male and is setting an example for others to follow,
McGee attempts to critique this belief through Crust’s problematic encounter with the
angel who is supposed to verify his convictions yet ends up destroying them. This is
clear in the failure of Crust and Slement to relate to one another:

Slement: You wouldn’t know, would you Jack Crust? The only
f-f-fucken f-f-football you ever played was left-right-out in the
six stone sevens! So don’t give me any shit son, or I’ll box your
ears, just like I did Jaapie van f-f-fucken Hosrweasen’s (75).

The act could be interpreted from a Lacanian angle. While Crust shoots the angel, it
could be argued that the image he shot was really a reflection of his own ideals. On the
other hand the angel (mirror images) represents what Crust wishes to see when he
looks at himself in the mirror (Fink, 2-3). That is, the mirror represents in a way the
traditional perception of New Zealand masculinity which men have long aspired to
represent and reflect (Mahy, 20). However, the rejection of Crust by the angel/mirror
image suggests that even Crust too fails to live up to the perception of masculinity.
Nevertheless, it is not merely through Crust that this traditional perception of New Zealand masculinity is challenged. In Embers also this culture is contested.

Despite the cultural respect shown by the other Council members towards Embers, there are indications within the play that not everyone has faith in his leadership. In that sense, Tupper is far more innocent and pure in his adherence to the traditions than Embers appears to be. On several occasions in Whitemen, actions made by Embers suggest a defensive desire to protect himself from the questions directed towards him by other Council members. For instance, when Embers enters the room he orders all the men to move around him so that he is at the centre of the room and all are facing him (13). This Platonic formation by McGee reinforces the idea that men such as Embers still wish to see themselves and their single perception of masculinity as being the masculinity which all men continue to subscribe to within New Zealand. At the same time, Embers is furious that the men, shortly after, begin talking amongst themselves before he has opened up the meeting for procedure: "I see you've started already" (13). As Embers continually reminds the other Councilmen throughout the play he is the man who is in charge of regulating the meeting: "I am the Chairman ...

Please keep that in mind" (16).

This ability to control others can also be seen when he orders Boy to physically prevent Crust from confronting the protesters (the so called mythical ordinary New Zealand bloke on the street) despite his supposedly democratic right to express his freedom of choice and opinion. It could, however, be argued that the desire to suppress Crust is an order made by Embers in an attempt to allow the protesters to be heard in the traditionally heteronormally dominated texts of New Zealand's literary tradition.
Later portrayals of Embers suggest that McGee does not necessarily see him as the democratic example that he presents himself to be. This is evident from the outset of the play through his often conflicting relationship with his Jewish secretary, Goodin.

Nevertheless, the thing that disturbs McGee most is that New Zealand is still regulated by a patriarchal discourse that fails to separate a "good joke" (35), as Crust later puts it, from something that deserves serious consideration. Thus, while McGee is using Crust as an example of this perversity, it is Embers that McGee regards as the worst offender for he has the ability to do something about it. While Embers attempts to make Crust apologise, the apology lacks the democratic sincerity or seriousness. In fact, Goodin's statement, "I accept it [the apology] if indeed it was given", suggests that the intention of apologising was not even a part of Crust's intentions. Crust not only mocks it by sarcastically laughing "whoopeedoo" but by returning to the act of persecuting Goodin because of his religious leanings: "Bugger your grace Harold, you're not a Catholic are you?" (35).

McGee implication here goes further than the battle between Goodin and Crust. The action taking place in the Chamber is a microcosm of what is taking place between the black and white people of South Africa. Embers therefore, could be perceived as the man in the centre of the conflict or even be regarded as the New Zealand conscience at the time. The actions which he takes show that McGee believes the perceptions of masculinity will never change for men such as Crust if others permit the behaviour Crust exhibits to continue. Thus, while Embers may be the man who has the ability to nullify and neutralise the outcome of this conflict, Embers becomes nothing more than a reflector of Crust's own aspirations. This is apparent when Embers
embraces Crust's traditional Kiwi male perception of taking things humorously and getting on with it: "Oh don't be so thin skinned Harold" (35). The issue of skin raised here by Embers, followed by his use of religions to classify people, emphasising the issue of race in defining men, may also be at the heart of McGee's investigation into masculinity. Embers is attempting to protect here not democracy or indeed Harold, but a tradition which is strongly based on early nineteenth century Anglo-Saxon roots. McGee is conveying through his characters that New Zealanders cannot be expected to tackle issues of global relations if they are unable to take domestic issues such as these ones seriously. Thus, humour can no longer be regarded as an effective medium to redefine a new definition of masculinity in New Zealand.

The issue of redefining masculinity is an issue at the centre of McGee's Whitemen. Frequently, Embers elects to abstain from voting yet later Crust questions him over it: "You lily-livered worm -- you're just covering yourself for posterity! (74). Crust's criticism of Embers is a strong and valid one. While Embers suggests to Crust that there is no need for him to take part in the vote for there is already clearly a majority for avoiding the tour, the point McGee is making is not numerical but moral. As Foreskin states in the two versions of Foreskin's Lament, "I'm not measuring my protest by its effect -- the principle's enough at this stage" (41). Likewise, Crust could be regarded as correct in calling Embers a coward because like so many New Zealanders they have chosen to ignore issues which are pivotal in reassessing where the nation is positioned. The meeting room no longer reflects a homogenous group of men.

Embers and the symbol of the Chamber room serve as metaphors for the traditionally repressive nature of the old regimented perception of masculinity. While
the men are in the room it is Embers who is able to control and govern the actions that
the men proceed to display. In Whitemen, the room in which the deliberations were
held, were saturated with images of victorious All Black teams. They have the effect of
reaffirming an allegiance with the invented perception of masculinity that Embers so
fervently endeavours to present to his fellow councilmen. Nevertheless, the departing
of several characters throughout the text symbolically serves to suggest that this room
can no longer serve to speak for a collective male audience within New Zealand. As
Gwendoline Smith observes in her critical text Will the Real Mr New Zealand Please
Stand Up?, contrary to popular belief, there is division as to who is the authentic Kiwi
bloke (10). In an interview with several men, Smith concludes that all share differing
attitudes towards what constitutes a real Kiwi bloke. Likewise, the fact that several
characters desert or reject Embers’ assertion that he represents the real Mr New
Zealand suggests that these individuals do not share this opinion.

At the same time, the chaos which takes place in the Chamber room is
employed by McGee in a Lacanian manner to mirror the faults of the audience
watching the play. According to McGee, just as the highly traditional and patriarchal
Council members are afraid of what lies behind the walls of their order, McGee
suggests that the same could be said of the theatre-goers who fear these men. Like the
Councillors who eventually venture into the outside world and find perceptions of
masculinity which differ from their own, McGee suggests that the audience needs to
understand that in walling themselves in their own buildings they are no better than the
rugby oafs they are scrutinising. McGee believes that a new more tolerant perception of
masculinity will only eventuate if both parties are willing to bring down their walls and
actively engage in shaping a more liberal New Zealand masculine identity. In many
respects, McGee is also trying to win back support from his audience by drawing on his own personal struggle, along with other playwrights, to produce New Zealand plays which serve to inspire the nation. As Vendramini argues, "I think it's good for New Zealanders to be confronted by their own culture" (Stratford, 72). Yet, as McGee and Vendramini both argue, if theatre is an important place to investigate New Zealand society, good venues along with challenging traditional perceptions associated with theatre-goers as snobs need to be addressed. McGee argues that part of the reason the play spectators did not like Whitemen was because they felt different from the men that they saw on the stage when in fact upon closer inspection they share a number of attributes. That is, they could not understand each others' mentality. In other words, McGee suggests that the class barriers which have long existed in theatres need to be removed in order for it to become more accessible to a greater number of people. As McGee observes:

"[The] concept of art [in New Zealand at present is with a capital A. It's very much the temple of art where the theatre is like a church and everyone comes in an kneels and is highly reverential". (Stratford, 74)

If theatre was made more accessible, according to McGee and Vendramini, a common social language could be developed which in turn would lead to social cohesion and the formation of a harmonious perception of masculinity in New Zealand (Stratford, 74-5).

Though Embers in a way succeeds in passing the motion for the Cavalier tour to South Africa, McGee suggests that the faith that would protect him fails to do so. Ember's death is uncanny in the context of the play for, despite attempts made by the police to determine where the shots were coming from, it is not known who delivers the shot that succeeds in bringing down the man (85). Since the killing blow hits him on
the top of his cranium it appears that the wound emerged from a celestial direction. Thus, McGee suggests hope that with the death of the old perception a new more liberal form of masculinity will replace it. This is an important association which McGee establishes as the makers of the traditional myths associated with masculinity have perceived New Zealand as "God's Own country", a place blessed by the approval and intervention of a higher force (Pearson, 332-3). The death of Embers suggests a society no longer prepared to stand back and embrace this traditional definition of masculinity especially when it comes at the cost of the demeaning and killing of other men and other races. Embers thus, is terminated by a force which he thought of as being on his side. While the force may appear in a supernatural sense, McGee suggests the power which really kills Embers is the changing nature of New Zealand society.

McGee's intention to avoid defining this judgement may parallel his own position as an individual (and as a writer) who cannot presume to intervene in defining the fate of others. If McGee had been the judge of Embers, instead of freeing himself from a tradition which has sought to regimentally define and categorise others, he would have been no better a man than Embers himself. What McGee is thus attempting to suggest is that the death of an individual does not necessarily mean the termination of a legacy. That is, the audience have the choice to decide whether Embers (and the tradition) dies or not. So long as New Zealand men subscribe to Ember's definition of masculinity, Embers will continue to escape his judgement day and will live on.

Perhaps, in the assigning of wings to Embers, McGee believes that every man deserves a chance to exist within their society. Slement is not totally pessimistic about Ember's chances. To Embers he states: "You never know. He's [God] a decent old
f-f-fucken rooster" (85). McGee points to the need for New Zealanders, in reevaluating their perception of masculinity, not to move from one form of extremism in defining masculinity to another. The past according to McGee should be remembered and the new masculinity which emerges should be one which while new and liberal should be prepared to tolerate and permit the existence of all men whatever their beliefs. Old Scores, McGee's first feature film, would reflect his desire to search for a new understanding of masculinity while retaining desirable components of the old perception.
ii. A Humorous/Dramatic/Confused Lament? *Old Scores* and the Fear of Facing the Future

By the end of the 1980s, McGee was seeking again to reevaluate the constantly shifting attitudes towards masculinity and identity in New Zealand. McGee saw the ideal arena to investigate these new emerging perceptions of masculinity as the game of rugby. Yet, instead of visiting this issue of masculinity through the theatre, McGee elected to pursue the quest through the medium of film. This led to the historic creation of New Zealand's first film to focus on the interacting forces of rugby, masculinity and invented traditions. The film, produced in conjunction with Dean Parker, was released in 1991 to coincide with the Rugby World Cup. The strategy behind this release time greatly helped to market the film in New Zealand where it received its acclaim from the public and critics alike. In 1992 McGee's and Parker's film won the film of the year at the New Zealand film and theatre awards where it was declared a breakthrough for its contribution to reviewing New Zealand society through its myths (Clark, 22).

McGee challenges traditional masculinity by way of a comic treatment of traditional perceptions of masculinity emerged. As in A.P. Gaskell's classic short story, "The Big Game", McGee begins the film by capturing the feeling of mateship, tradition and the bruised glory that permeates the body after a difficult match (2). As Zavos argues, most New Zealand males, from erudite scholars to burly shearers, can relate to the "dying fall of the light after a hard match and the liniment scented mateship of the dressing room. It is one of the those tribal experiences that has helped to create that unique and underrated species, the New Zealand man" (118). However, the integrity of this masculinity is challenged shortly after on a death bed confession by the referee who
refereed the first All Black match against Wales, where the former were reputedly cheated out of victory. However, in time, McGee reverses the question to argue how innocent the traditional perception of masculinity in New Zealand has really been historically.

The focus of the film is the 1905 tour (though in the film the date becomes 1966) and in particular the controversy which has long surrounded the final match which the All Blacks lost to Wales through a strongly contested disallowed try. McGee appears to argue that this match alone provided a major platform on which many myths contributing to New Zealand's traditional perception of masculinity were established. While Galliopli is often regarded as the defining moment in masculinity, Old Scores reflects McGee’s belief in Len Richardson’s argument which draws a parallel between that test match and the military battle (7-8). By focusing on the 1905 match against the Welsh, McGee in Old Scores attributes the foundation of the traditional perception of masculinity through the All Blacks and rugby and not through war. After establishing the match as the place of central importance in the formulation of a New Zealand masculine tradition, McGee, as in Foreskin’s Lament, attempts to challenge the credibility of these myths and the relevancy of these myths in New Zealand society today through the rematch. This is achieved by superimposing past role models on the present. Acid, the old fashioned coach is the clearest example of this strategy.

The most visible character in the film is the unscrupulous coach who the team collectively nickname 'Acid'. The role is played by Martin Sanderson. According to critic Chris Hegan, Sanderson, in the best acting of his career, turns in a wicked caricature of the notorious Fred Allen whom many simply knew as "The Needle" (57).
While a talented All Black, Allen is more fondly, and fiercely, remembered for his unforgiving coaching style. As sports historian Bob Howitt notes, he sought nothing but perfection from his players on the field and off the field (321). McGee's alignment of Acid with the perfectionist Allen is an attempt to show the futility of attempting to achieve masculine perfection. If Acid is a parody of Fred Allen, McGee is in a self-aware way being deeply anachronistic in his presentation of his character. In the view of McGee, characters such as Acid who continue to mirror the image of Fred Allen seem inappropriate to the context in which they inhabit. That the players fail to relate to him or develop a meaningful relationship with Acid throughout the film is a testimony to Acid's inability to relate to the other male characters (Old Scores). Throughout the film, Acid is obsessed not only with the chance to re-correct the myth, which will not only transform the tour into a perfect success reflecting his own perfectionist philosophies of the "complete performance", but in his endeavours to shape men who uphold his own beliefs.\(^9\)

From the beginning of the play, the objective to infuse his traditional perception of masculinity into his men is obvious through his frequent remarks which convey disappointment over how the men no longer present the image of masculinity they projected twenty five years ago when the original match was played. This disgrace over the men's lack of masculinity is noticeable in his treatment towards the now pacifist Salvation worker Murray: "You bloody great fat ewe. You were once the meanest bastard in the whole team" (Old Scores). This statement, through the reference to the female sheep, reinforces a traditional antipathy towards effete forms of masculinity and

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in turn denigrated femininity. According to John Berger, animals become a reflection of men's own fears (504-5). Steve Baker goes further to argue that the way we assign a person an animalistic feature or bestial title reflects the nature of men to encapsulate other men (11). Yet, Baker at the same time suggests that men themselves should not forget that they also belong within the animal kingdom and are beasts themselves (11).

The military training camp at Piha forms a powerful link between Acid's militaristic past and the contribution war has had on rugby in formulating the myths of masculinity which traditionalists such as Acid tenaciously hold on to. Acid aptly makes the parallel when he compares rugby to a "battle" (Old Scores). The significance of the training camp, therefore, from the perspective of McGee is that it reestablishes the traditional imperial view of rugby as an ideal place for shaping fine men ready for combat. The purpose of the camp, in the view of Acid, is that it represents his attempt to "make men of them", at least in his understanding of what true masculinity is (Old Scores). When the team are reunited at the camp, Acid's technique of imposing his perception of masculinity upon them is swiftly applied. When the players begin to shake hands and engage in physical embraces and conversations, Acid, sickened by this displaying of emotion, attempts to reimpose his cultural authority on them: "order now we've got work to do" (Old Scores).

An interesting feature of Old Scores is how Acid at times strikingly resembles Tupper. As in Foreskin's Lament, it is obvious that McGee has invested a great deal of time in moulding a character who while wildly passionate about the game and "winning at all costs", seems absurdly outdated. Yet, his disposition as a reflector of New
Zealand society's way of perceiving itself through myths makes him nonetheless a person one can relate too, and even accept and idolise today. As Hegan states:

In fact, Sanderson is so good, with his scrappy, sly looks and his sergeant major's manner that his performance is somewhat tainted by overexposure. It is hard to avoid the suspicion that the producers realised at some point that they were on to a good thing with Sanderson, and wrote him an extra-generous helping. By the end of the film we have seen decidedly too much. (58)

The reason for this prominence may be because he represents a past perception of masculinity which many New Zealanders can identify with and even share warm recollections of. In the opinion of Tim Watkins, "when a New Zealander is overseas, rugby, alongside Maori culture, is the piece of nationalistic clothing that most sets you apart and defines you" (12-3). Thus, Acid serves McGee's aim of presenting a traditional image of New Zealand which many New Zealanders long to cling to instead of embracing a future which seems vague, cold and unfamiliar. As Barry remarks, "He hasn't changed a bit" (Old Scores). McGee shows through Acid's character the fear New Zealanders have of embracing new perceptions and attitudes towards other ways of defining and viewing masculinity. The consequence of this is that Acid can no longer be viewed as an innocent reflector of our past.

The dominating presence of Acid in the film, while highlighting the power he holds over the men, is also used by McGee to provide the film viewer with ample opportunities to see the imperfections of a man whose theories pertaining to the ideal perception of masculinity are flawed. The reunification of the team for Acid serves not only as a chance to re-correct history but to reestablish history. After a training match when the men are seated in the shed and Acid comments on how disgraced he is over
their lack of drive, Murray comments, and a number of the players agree with his statement: "Give it a rest Acid. We're not getting any younger. It's not 1966" (Old Scores). To this Acid responds, saying: "Don't give me that answer. It's 1966 for the Welsh" (Old Scores). In many respects this reiterates Tennyson's famous line in his poem, 'The charge of the Light Brigade', when he states: "Thiers was not to reason why, theirs was but to do and die" (509). Acid's hatred of the present and the players' personal and physical changes reinforce the determination he has in attempting to reinstall in these players the perceptions towards masculinity they once held back in 1966. The match, and the preparation for the game against Wales, is turned into a historical journey to reflect upon why this traditional perception of masculinity should be remembered but not adhered to in the present. This is achieved by McGee through a careful balance of humour and dramatic techniques. For instance, Acid clearly highlights a number of the faults and untruthful components in the myths of masculinity. Perhaps the clearest of these is the idea of rugby as a classless game.

At the beginning of the film, McGee presents Jim in a way in which it is easy for the audience to laugh at him. Because of his professional career background he stands out from the other players and becomes the easiest target for Acid to make insulting jibes at. When he is brought on the train the other players struggle to identify him with the player they remembered playing with back in 1966. One player, in the background of the train even makes the sarcastic remark: "[he] must be the team doctor or something or other" (Old Scores). This demonstrates an attempt by McGee to undermine the traditional myth that New Zealand's perception of masculinity embraces all men. In fact, the incident highlights how the myth continues to promote a stereotype of masculinity which is still very much tied to the working class (Bell, 160-1). The
perpetuation of this type of masculinity is strengthened in the film through the
evictimisation of men deemed to be effeminate such as Jim. Though many of the players
are discontented with the coaching style of Acid in the play, Jim is the only one to
confront him about it at the camp: "Now just wait a minute. Don't tell me..." (Old
Scores). Shortly after this attempt to speak up he is told to "Shut up" by Acid (Old
Scores). This incident demonstrates two things. Firstly, McGee challenges the tradition
of the father-child initiation. Clearly, a number of the characters, through hypocritical
facial expressions when Acid is not looking, demonstrate, as Jim has, that many of the
men do not agree with Acid's definition of manly conduct (Old Scores). These
expressions of discontentment and ridicule directed towards the old coach help to
disestablish the myth of collective male unity. Secondly, those who seek to challenge
the stereotype will inevitably become victims of a tradition which regulates the actions
of men in New Zealand. Jim becomes a victim in his quest to broaden the boundaries of
masculine perceptions. It seems that just like Larry in Foreskin's Lament, Jim is playing
rugby in an attempt to provide himself with a false sense of security that he is a real
Kiwi bloke (Zavos, 109).

This realisation that he is no longer embraced by his fellow men as an equal is
demonstrated when he secretly meets up with Helen (his secretary) on the border of the
camp and holds her for one last time (Old Scores). This act of the two embracing
between the border of the camp and the outside world is a symbolic image which
emphasises the cold reality of the traditional perception of masculinity (represented by
the military camp) against the liberating image of the surrounding landscape and the
city in the background (Old Scores). At the same time, while the scene may convey a
desire to break free from the traditional male perception of conformity, it could
generate the power to reintegrate men who deviate from it back towards its core
central values. This is evident when Jim refrains from kissing and holding on to Helen
for too long while trying to repress his urge to cry: "I better go ... if Acid saw me [in
this emotional state] I think he would kill me" (Old Scores). This prevention of the
heterosexual relationship shows the power the myths continue to have even on
strong-willed men, such as Jim, who do not wish to be a part of this tradition. Because
Jim does not reflect this image of the emotionally repressive hard man, he struggles to
fit into a team which is slowly encouraged to reflect Acid's definition of masculinity.
Yet, Acid's position as a role model for this "perfectionist" form of masculinity
becomes questionable as the film progresses.

As in Foreskin's Lament, Acid's confidence in his coaching methods and in his
perception, like Tupper, transforms him into a personification of God. His frequent use
of the personal pronoun "I" is a constant reminder to the team that it is his ideas and his
values which the team need to adhere to (Old Scores). One scene in particular
strengthens this idea of Acid as the personification of God and that is in a scene at the
camp when Father Frank asks the Lord about where he stands in this world (Old
Scores). Overhearing the Father's prayers, Acid delivers an answer to the question at
first in the form of a confession which shortly transforms into a revelation:

Victory I see! Though I doubted I now see God's plan. He has
provided me [and the team] with the chance [through the rematch]
to see the greatest half back ever reemerge so that not only one
generation may bear witness to that man's greatness but in fact
two (Old Scores).

Acid's intervention in Father Frank's quest to address his question only serves to mock
the concept of inner gratification which comes through seeking intervention from a
higher spiritual force. However, like Tupper, Acid fails to live up to the Godly image
which he attempts to perpetuate from the beginning of the film, though this is not to say that he does not give up trying to convince himself about the perfection of his own image.

Throughout *Old Scores* Acid reiterates Tupper's philosophy that the point of the "bloody game is to win". At the start of the play, when the viewer is first introduced to him leaving the bus, he attempts to inspire the players over the game and its traditions in a similar fashion to Tupper's early line of "get excited about it". Acid kicks a ball and orders "c'mon black" (*Old Scores*). According to Stachurski, the euphoria precipitated by the All Blacks' success is the reason why so many New Zealand men are addicted to watching and participating in sport (33). Stachurski argues that these men vicariously identify with the team and the team's prowess on the field as a kind of surrogate masculinity test; the result of the game actively affects how the viewers and participants feel about themselves (33). Upon hearing Acid's call, the viewer of the film, according to McGee is encouraged to feel a degree of pride which for so long has united the nation and several generations of men. It is a call which is supposed to reflect the image of the All Black, presented in myths as an invincible, Godlike and statuesque figure. Acid, is clearly expecting these players to reflect this tradition (*Old Scores*). An interesting feature at the start of the film is how the camera focuses on looking up at the coach in an attempt to present the man as massive and imposing. From there on the shots show him around the other men and this Godly aura is lost in the fact that he is not as 'big' or powerful as what he first appeared (*Old Scores*).
However, McGee's presentation of the players in the reunion scene with their coach helps to dispel the myth. The players trip over one another, some give up the chase puffing, while those who catch up with the ball frequently fumble the ball and fail to form correct formations in the forwards and in the back-line (Old Scores). Like Foreskin's Lament, Old Scores challenges the traditional perception of masculinity by focussing on an All Black team which fails to live up to New Zealand social expectations.

Perhaps a reason behind McGee's employment of this strategy is that it forms an attempt to destabilise the perfectionist visions held by Acid. As James and Saville-Smith would argue:

"this identification is formed perhaps because rugby so neatly integrates the disparate elements of male culture (the group dependency, the violence, and the virility), the game has been the means by which the images embedded in male culture [masculinity] have become synonymous with the national character". (51-52)

As a consequence, the rugby team's inability to reflect and reinforce the myth, as is evident in the disgust and humiliation reflected on Acid's face as well as several observers, demonstrates the imperfection of the myth and the visions of men such as Acid. It also serves to destabilise the viewer who may be expecting to witness a group of men who present the myths they have from a young age psychologically been expected to see and believe.

The importance of this scene is that it is an attempt by McGee to highlight the reality of masculinity in the 1990s. McGee wants the viewer to become aware that the traditional image of a universally agreed upon perception of masculinity has now been
shattered, and in fact what really exists is what Arthur Brittan would call a need to address the "crisis of masculinity" (Brittan 179). Until the traditional myth of masculinity is adjusted McGee believes that the embracing of other masculinities will never eventuate. From this scene, McGee endeavours to slowly break down the aura attached to the traditional perception of masculinity. The crisis of masculinity is manifested in *Old Scores* and is revealed especially in the coach's inability to mould his team around his perfectionist image of masculinity. This fear of effeminacy is apparent in Acid's suspicion of women.

The language in *Old Scores* is as pejorative towards women in the film as was the case in *Foreskin's Lament*. Upon arriving in Wales, Acid demands proper conduct from his men. After getting off the plane and noticing the presence of a large number of women there he also warns the team "to be wary of the wily Welsh women" (*Old Scores*). While this reference to the women as an emotional threat to men perpetuates the traditional derogatory perception discredited in *Foreskin's Lament*, what is interesting in the scene is that Acid is the one who is actually engaged in the sexual gaze on a female spectator in the crowd (*Old Scores*). It confirms that McGee still views the masculinity which operates in New Zealand as one which continues to objectify women. The impetus of this scene is yet again an attempt to destabilise the traditional male perception of masculinity. The act in many ways becomes a reversal of the temptation scene which takes place between Adam and Eve in the Bible.

Acid also presents a mixed image of himself when he talks about the honour which surrounds his perception of masculinity. Acid frequently asks the men where they stand as New Zealand men, yet he never makes an attempt to address and answer
the question himself. Instead, he represents the mythical perception of masculinity.

Acid deviates from the aspirations of this myth on several occasions. As the viewer has already witnessed in Acid's dealings with Jim, Acid fails to promote the myth of rugby as an all-embracing and classless game. However, McGee notes a more sinister way the coach fails to replicate the model of masculinity which he is staunchly attempting to defend. McGee shows that Acid, like Tupper, does this through his over-passionate desire to achieve victory at all costs.

At a training session while the team is still in New Zealand, after telling the team about the honour of the All Black tradition he goes on to say that this tour will produce the perfect record which the 1966 All Blacks failed to deliver (Old Scores). To this claim, Father Frank responds: "Don't forget now Acid but those Welsh bastards cheated" (Old Scores). In reply, Acid makes a drastic deviation from the speech of honour and tradition he was talking about earlier: "They [the Welsh] cheated. We've [All Blacks] cheated. Husbands cheated on their wives. Wives cheated on their husbands. But we bloody lost. The Welsh bloody won. That's all you need to know. The Welsh bloody won" (Old Scores). McGee's inclusion of this statement is an endeavour to convey what Jock Phillips has termed as the "unofficially unappealing other myths" which became attached to the New Zealand perception of masculinity over time (122).

According to Phillips, while the New Zealand public rarely admitted it, rugby sustained and even promoted an unofficial culture of disreputable male behaviour (122). Phillips goes further to state that violence directed against other men on the field formed the process where men would test their masculinity through how much pain
they could deliver and by how much pain they could sustain (123–4). Loss, for a man or a team thus is associated with effeminate values (Phillips, 218). Clearly, this is contrary to the official image of the All Black as a gentlemen on the field. By highlighting Acid's desire for victory, McGee demonstrates the validity of Phillips' argument. Acid's conduct as a coach throughout the film clearly evokes this underside of New Zealand masculinity which McGee is trying to bring to the surface in Old Scores.

When the team is training, Acid encourages the use of "raking" which has historically become synonymous with the violent image of the All Black male tradition (Old Scores). According to Acid, while he still believes that he is subscribing to the official myth, his thoughts of what made the All Blacks great would clearly align him with the unofficial myth which points to the aggressive and intimidating tactics of the All Blacks on the field. In the rematch, when the team, in an attempt to please Acid, employ the use of aggressive tackling and rucking against the Welsh, it is the only time when the Welsh crowd become hostile towards the team (Old Scores).

McGee's use of the stadium as a social theatre is an attempt to reflect the changing social perceptions towards this violent perception of masculinity. In an attempt to align themselves with the images of the past, McGee believes that these characters lose the essence of who they stand for in the present. The response of the crowd renders the All Black players speechless. Yet, McGee illustrates that this silence is not a sign of defeat. In response to the crowd, and possibly the realisation that they are playing the game along the traditions of early generations of men, the men change their game plan to reflect what they believe in as men living in the present (Old Scores).
The importance of this scene is in the power the theatre is actually able to have over the performance taking place at the centre of it. McGee, sees the centre as the cultural force or tradition. Yet, it is not the nucleus of tradition any longer that regulates the people around it and how they should act according to these traditions. Instead, the crowd's influence demonstrates how people have the freedom to reevaluate and have the ability to freely express their perceptions towards the tradition of rugby and ultimately masculinity. Acid's inability to inspire his team to follow his ideals, let alone to lead them to "the promised victory/land", clearly indicates that Acid is no God but an ordinary man who can make mistakes like everyone else can (Old Scores).

Phillips believes that the fear of beer was due to the fact that it had the power to generate emotions within men (128). If this is the case, it would explain why Acid is so ashamed of Barry in the training match. It is not because he is drunk that Acid is ashamed of Barry but because the alcohol has taken away his ability to control himself as a man or the man Acid expects Barry to be. McGee is attempting to direct the viewer to the hypocrisy behind Acid's condemnation of alcohol. What Acid fears is the unofficial myth of masculinity overriding the official one. On the tour, Acid does not condemn alcohol, as a film shot of him and the team at an old English tavern (with the exception of Barry) clearly shows (Old Scores). Phillips comments that "[a]lthough all knew that rugby tours produced beery hooliganism, the official view of the All Blacks as ambassadors and gentlemen had to be maintained (127). Barry, in the view of McGee, might be perceived to be the victim of a masculinity which presents a different image of himself when he is away to when he is back at home. While Phillips points to the fact that "[b]eer served as a cloak for emotional repression" (127), he overlooks the
fact that beer has the power to evoke a number of emotional responses from the individual.

In a male society which has disapproved of displaying emotion, McGee may be attempting to demonstrate how Barry's alcoholism may be an emotionally liberating vice in a society which demands the repression of feelings. For instance, when he is excluded from playing in the match because of his alcohol problem, McGee shows the viewer a scene of Barry crying in his hotel room (Old Scores). The power of this scene is in demonstrating the inability of men such as Barry to publicly display their emotions. It emphasises a society which still insists that manhood is based on the ability to repress emotions and that those men unable to control them should be segregated from the community. Barry's desire not to be alone, by stopping his drinking and arriving sober for the second half of the match, may be viewed as a form of social redemption (Old Scores).

One noticeable feature of Old Scores is the split dialogue which takes place on the development of the teams in both New Zealand and Wales. While the nations are different, it is not so much the differences which McGee wants the viewer to take note of. Instead, McGee wants the viewer to note how Wales reflects a number of the dilemmas present on the issue of national and masculine identity in New Zealand. The narrative which takes place in Wales, therefore, becomes a mirror of the social tension present in New Zealand society. This is especially reflected in the journey of discovery which Bleddyn Morgan makes, which is revealed in the full story of the replaying of the historic match. The idea of breaking away from traditional perceptions is reflected in Bleddyn's original desire not to participate in the match. As Bleddyn states to Morgan,
the Welsh Rugby Union ambassador sent to lure him back to Wales for the match:
"[let] bygones be bygones. I am a New Zealander now" (Old Scores). Bleddyn's
statement is important in the context of the story as it suggests an early attempt to
destabilise the power traditions and myths generated from the past which can still have
a devastating effect in regulating the actions in the present. The fact that Bleddyn is a
Welshman may also be an attempt by McGee to shatter the imperial bond in the myth
that New Zealanders perpetuated an image which reflected British principles of
masculinity. This raises a psychological dilemma which McGee may be attempting to
convey to his audiences.

Perhaps a reason why Bleddyn is unwilling to perform in the match for his
country is because of the psychological trauma which has come from embracing a New
Zealand perception of masculinity and a New Zealand attitude towards rugby. That is,
Bleddyn reflects the post-colonial trauma of being a New Zealand citizen obliged to
stand loyal to the British values of masculinity while wanting to practise a masculinity
which reflects his uniqueness as a New Zealander. Bleddyn's fear of going on the tour
could be because he fears that he will be socially rejected by both parties. Because he
embraces a barbarous form of masculinity, Bleddyn is afraid of how his newly inherited
identity as a New Zealand male will be perceived if he goes back to Wales to play for
them in the test match. This, in turn, could also suggest that Bleddyn is ashamed of the
masculinity he has been forced to embrace in New Zealand. McGee's use of a foreigner
to interpret the myths of masculinity is a powerful and perhaps even a truthful way to
investigate these myths. Nevertheless, the time that Bleddyn takes to decide whether he
is going to play for Wales or not in the famous rematch suggests the power these myths
continue to have in encouraging outsiders to conform to this traditional perception of
masculinity. In this case a strong parallel can be made between Bleddyn and Irish. The aim of these two men in their new homes is a desire to fit in and be accepted by their community.

The significance of Morgan's return lies not in the fact that he convinces himself that he is a Welshman but in the fact that it provides him with the power to recognise his uniqueness as a male individual and not to lose that freedom in adhering to the expectations present in past myths. Again, though, the power of these myths continues to regulate Bleddyn's fears that his decision will leave him as a social outcast within the patriarchal structure of New Zealand society, when he says to Ngaire his wife that he still cannot help but feel like a traitor over his decision (Old Scores). What Bleddyn ultimately fears is that by playing for Wales, he will denounce the mythical perception of masculinity which he has striven for so long in New Zealand and is unwilling to let go of it. Bleddyn says to Ngaire, "there's no point in going back to Wales because nothing has changed over there" (Old Scores). Bleddyn's comment implies that he is afraid of confronting a society which has changed beyond his original recognition of it. Nevertheless, the narrative which takes place between Morgan and his endeavour to convince Bleddyn to return to Wales serves as a serious device in the play to reinforce McGee's stance towards the issue of masculinity and identity. The eventual convincing of Bleddyn is a symbolic triumph for McGee who shows that the trip represents the idea that in order to address the issue of masculinity in the present one needs to face and understand the perception which for so long stood unchallenged within this society (and in Wales as the viewer later sees). As in Foreskin's Lament, McGee may be suggesting that going away and then returning provides people with the chance to reanalyse their society.
McGee's setting of the story in Wales provides the viewer with a powerful outsider's view into New Zealand's traditional perception of masculinity. The significance of the Welsh perspective towards this perception of masculine identity in New Zealand again serves to challenge the way men in this country have promoted themselves overseas. For instance, upon asking another Welsh Rugby Union official whether the New Zealanders have agreed to the rematch in Wales, the Chairman gloats: "Yes but it was bloody difficult. You should have offered them money. Bloody New Zealanders" (Old Scores). At the time Old Scores was produced, rugby was still an amateur sporting code yet the rugby world, especially in the British Isles still had reservations over the professional nature of rugby in New Zealand. However, though this statement may represent an attempt by McGee to question the myth of the All Blacks as amateurs, I would be inclined to disagree. Instead, the statement reflects deeper reservations towards the New Zealand perception of masculinity. The key word in the statement which suggests that there is a deeper meaning is the use of "bloody" twice in the speech (Old Scores). The use of this word is an attempt to destabilise the military nature of the myth of masculinity which associated being a man with violence.

Though early in the story the Welsh are deemed to be "cheaters" by Acid, the team and the New Zealand public, Welsh representatives and officials later stress the brutality and whinging that has frequently accompanied the New Zealand game (Old Scores). McGee again succeeds in using an outsider's perception to challenge New Zealand's traditional perception of its masculinity. By observing New Zealand culture through the position of a foreigner, McGee provides the viewer with a brilliant vantage point to see the faults of a masculinity which in the process of glorifying itself has done
so at the expense of demonising others. Going into the match, the All Blacks are heavily favoured to win by the Welsh public who in recent years have become used to seeing the constant victories All Black teams have scored against their national team. In a way, McGee sets the match up in a biblical fashion as a David [Wales] versus Goliath [New Zealand] match. The Welsh, in the position of underdogs, could represent the perceptions of masculinity which have long been repressed in New Zealand society. What McGee may be alerting the viewer to here is that Wales is not merely a nation caught up in the process of challenging traditional perceptions towards masculinity but more or less acting also to mirror New Zealand society's own fears of evolving perceptions.

Thus, from serving as an arena to glance into New Zealand's traditional perception of masculinity, Wales also exemplifies a number of these old practices. McGee's choice of Wales is fundamental in achieving this investigation as it is one of the few countries in the world which have embraced the game as passionately as New Zealanders have. More significantly, the Welsh perception of masculinity was formed at the same time as the New Zealand myths of masculinity and share many similar features (Richardson, 3–4). As shown by the coach and players in the New Zealand team, the Welsh also reiterate fears of changes to these perceptions. For instance, Bleddyn's old friend, David, after being told that they will be trained by the present Welsh team shouts in disgust: "What would they know about rugby? Or about winning? They've never beaten the All Blacks" (Old Scores). Later, in a confrontation with David, Owen tells his father that he needs to accept that changes are often made for bettering a situation and not for worsening it (Old Scores). The cornering of David into confronting the need to reevaluate his principles as a man provides a powerful image of
the voice of the new generation, a symbol for a new more enlightened and liberal perception of masculinity, with the ability to finally overpower the old tradition. David then proceeds to address this threat in the only way he has been socially trained to challenge individuals who threaten this traditional perception of masculinity, he punches him in the mouth (Old Scores). This scene is powerful in two distinct ways. First, it evokes the traditional passing down of values from a father to a son. The incident perpetuates a form of violent masculinity which has been passed down from generation to generation. Yet secondly, this brutal initiation fails to satisfy either subject. The brutality of the incident only reaffirms Owen's belief in the brutality of his father's perception of masculinity and strengthens his convictions that this masculinity needs to be challenged.

However, the incident also fails to satisfy David. Instead of executing a perception of masculinity which is supposed to generate pride, David feels guilty and ashamed of what he has done: "I'm sorry" (Old Scores). What this suggests is that David is equally ashamed of the perception of masculinity which he has been expected to perform throughout his life. The fact that when Owen goes inside and his wife Bronwyn confronts him as to what happened, he turns away from her so that she may not see his teary face (Old Scores). Yet, the fact that she and the audience are able to catch a glimpse of it suggests that McGee also wants David to be viewed as a victim of a tradition which still seeks to repress men's ability to express themselves openly without the fear of being considered lesser men for doing so.

This fear of appearing effeminate is clearly observable in another incident which takes place at the reunification of the Welsh team when David meets up with his former
friend Bleddyn. David detests Bleddyn not only because he deserted his homeland but also because he did so without warning anyone before leaving. While Bleddyn is aware of his past misdemeanors, he attempts to atone for his mistakes by apologising to David and when he does not respond Bleddyn asks: "why can't we talk?" (Old Scores). To this David replies: "there's nothing to talk about" (Old Scores). David's inability to engage in talking with Bleddyn reflects a traditional perception of masculinity which deems the displaying of evocative and emotional communication to be effeminate.

The challenging of traditional perceptions of masculinity forms a powerful platform for characters such as Bleddyn to continue to destabilise these old myths. The most visible way in which McGee perpetuates the possibility for a reevaluation of masculinity comes through the reunion which takes place between Bleddyn and his Welsh son. Although his apology to his ex-wife Bronwyn suggests the ability of men to confront the image of the (sexist) emotionally repressed man, a more powerful image emerges in the scene shortly before the match when Bleddyn embraces Owen. After the embrace he tells Owen: "I'm sorry I wasn't there for you. But. I just want you to know you're a fine man. I'm proud of you" (Old Scores). What Bleddyn achieves here is what David fails to achieve in his moment with Owen and that is an answer to Owen's question. It symbolically signifies the older generations acceptance of newer perceptions of masculinity.

At the same time, the embracing of his son and his ex-wife becomes a literal and figurative reminder that he is embracing his past. With this ability to accept his past and how it has shaped him as an individual, Bleddyn can now move on to confront his
present and what he must now become. Upon confronting Ngaire and his son Dye, Bleddyn makes an interesting reference to John Mulgan's classic *Man Alone*. Bleddyn states: "[a]nd as they wander down that beaten track it turns my heart to stone, that I am a New Zealander, and therefore man alone" (*Old Scores*). However, McGee does not want the audience to interpret this statement as a sign of Bleddyn's belief that New Zealand society limits his ability to challenge the traditional myths of masculinity. Again, all Bleddyn is doing is acknowledging the past. As far as McGee is concerned accepting the past is vastly different from embracing it or perpetuating it. Instead, what McGee wants to take note of is what he embraces after he makes the statement, and that is his family. Bleddyn, through this final incident reverses any chance the traditional myth had in keeping Bleddyn under its control. Dye, thus, succeeds in convincing his father that he cannot remain in Wales because it is "so old" (*Old Scores*). The embracing of Ngaire, a Maori woman, is also a symbolic act as it suggests that Bleddyn has chosen to embrace New Zealand (as a European settler) as his true home and his acknowledgement of Ngaire suggests that New Zealand can now be a place where all identities can be embraced.

Nevertheless, not everyone is inclined to agree with Bleddyn's new inherited attitude towards other forms of masculinity. Before the match, Acid attempts to reinstate the John Mulgan myth of the man alone when he says to the players in the dressing shed: "you are alone" (*Old Scores*). In attempting to motivate his players, Acid slaps several players across the cheek, thus reestablishing in them the old perception of masculine belief that real men were men who were prepared to deliver pain and equally to receive it. Acid's final statement of "kill em" reiterates the violent tradition of winning at all costs (*Old Scores*). These are all attempts to reestablish the
voice of the dominant patriarchal discourse in New Zealand society. At half time, when the New Zealand team is losing, while Acid is trying to inspire the team one of the men yells out "Give it away Acid" (Old Scores). Acid's response reiterates the determination of the old perception of masculinity to continue to regulate the actions of its men: "I will fight till my dying day ... every obstacle that comes in my path. That's how I've lived. That's how I've squared up to life. Because of what I fear. The scorn of generations to come" (Old Scores). It seems that what Acid fears the most is change.

The Welsh drive to win at all costs thus becomes an extension of the problematic nature of the patriarchal nature of New Zealand society. They become symbols, as the underdog team, for the minority men who exist within New Zealand's own society who are forced to take on the actions and expressions of their dominant discourse. Nevertheless, McGee questions who the real imprisoned men are, suggesting that the mirror operates in a dualistic manner. This is evident at the hotel in Cardiff, where after being dropped for the match against the Welsh, Barry takes a long hard look at himself in the mirror and feels ashamed of the image and tradition of masculinity which he sees looking back at him (Old Scores). As an extension of the existential self, it can only reflect back what it is designed to do. If this is the case, what the existential man sees in the eyes of the mirror man are the faults of his own character.

The reason that McGee elected to end the match in a draw could be viewed from a number of angles apart from the need to make the film commercially appealing to audiences in both Wales and New Zealand. From one perspective, it may have been an attempt by McGee to destabilise the myth. McGee believes that the loss by the All
Blacks in the Welsh test contributed a great deal in the formation of the old perception of masculinity. By drawing the match, the All Blacks while able to rewrite history to a degree have countered a foundation which their traditions have been established upon. The draw could also be an attempt for McGee to enable the All Blacks finally to see themselves and their values reflected in the faces of their opposing Welsh team-mates.

McGee uses the Lacanian concept of the mirror image to show the reunification of the man with his real shadow and not a shadow which he has imagined or invented as being his own. However, the reaction of the men after the final whistle gives the clearest indication perhaps of why McGee elected to end the match in a draw. Seeing the ball land in the centre of the cross bar, Acid runs out onto the field and starts shaking the posts to try make the deflated ball fall over the cross bar while he yells to his team: "come on boys, give us a hand to tilt it over" (Old Scores). Aware that the game could go in the All Blacks' favour, the equally passionate Welsh rugby union Chairman runs onto the field and attempts to tilt the posts so the ball will fall back onto the field of play (Old Scores). While both teams are silenced at first, the farcical nature of the two administrative figures on the field sends the men into a rapture of laughter, clapping, shaking hands and even embracing (Old Scores). The players' laughter represents the first time in the play when Acid and the Chairman are no longer revered as credible images for the old perception of masculinity. Their behaviour takes away any honour the men formerly had, leaving them looking foolish. Apart from destabilising the traditional perception of masculinity through these two men most closely associated with such perceptions and values, the scene ultimately enables the men to liberate themselves from the traditional definition of masculinity. The two teams thus merging together suggests the hope for a future in which the traditional definition
of masculinity can finally be shattered and rewritten. The display at the end of the All Blacks shaking hands and embracing their Welsh mirror images suggests that a resolution to the faults of the old tradition of masculinity can be resolved in the foreseeable future (Old Scores).

However, McGee does not want to suggest that the old perception of masculinity has been completely nullified at the end of the film. While the last decade has presented a threat towards the myths associated with the old perception of masculinity, this tradition has not been completely subdued. The final scene shows a conference, in the Welsh Rugby Union headquarters, between the Welsh chairman and the New Zealand chairman. The Welsh official finally exclaims: "The game still does not address the issue of where we stand. As such, it is of the opinion of this chairman to state that the match should be replayed" (Old Scores). The final scene, in providing the chance for the dominant patriarchal discourse to reestablish its social prominence becomes a symbolic indicator of these ambassadors' endeavours to continue to perpetuate these old myths. However, that the Chairmen are rejected signifies a shattering of the traditional respect these men once held amongst the players. In preventing the answer which these men are desiring to hear, McGee further disestablishes the ability of these men to determine the definition of masculinity. Instead, the opinion remains open like the question in Foreskin's Lament of "whaddarya?" (96). It is the audience who McGee wants to have the final say in reevaluating masculinity and not the enforcers of the original perception. To a degree it reflects what Bronwyn exclaims to Bleddyn after their meeting: "Wales expects" (Old Scores). Wales expects could be reinterpreted as New Zealand expects in the film. While not a question, it is left open to be interpreted not just by one character but by
the audience. The inclusion of the audience in the film suggests the power of McGee's work to transcend the boundaries of the text and generate a powerfully liberating effect upon his diverse male audience. *Skin and Bone* will be McGee's boldest endeavour to investigate whether the perception of masculinity in New Zealand has truly made progress and to what extent.
Chapter 3
i. Dispelling the Myths: The Bold Challenge from Skin and Bone

In 2003, Foreskin's Lament made its successful transfer from play to film. However, the name was not retained. Instead, McGee called the film Skin and Bone.

With the fifth Rugby World Cup taking place in Australia in 2003, McGee was aware that coinciding the release of the film with the tournament would stimulate the sponsors' and public's interest in reviewing where masculinity now stood in New Zealand in the era of professionalism.

While the film has struggled on the commercial market, when shown on Television One (as a two part mini series) it was viewed by a large percentage of the viewer audience. This audience was made up of people from a diverse range of gender, social and racial backgrounds but was watched predominantly by male viewers. The focus on professionalism turns the play into a rejection of the amateur values which many men still attempt to retain even in the current era of professionalism. McGee's aim is to dismiss the values of this amateur male rugby tradition as outdated and irrelevant to New Zealand in the new millennium and attempts to persuade his audience to accept the commercialisation which has accompanied the game. McGee's title thus alludes to his ultimate objective which is to search under the 'skin' of New Zealand society to discover the 'bones' of what New Zealanders are now as opposed to what they once were.

The idea of progress, change and shifting time is established early in the film when the audience is introduced to the major protagonist in the film, Seymour Collins, played by Anthony Starr. Seymour is seen in the first close-up shot in the film running
on a treadmill while sports scientists are shown in the previous scenes monitoring his heart rate and coordination (Skin and Bone). Later, the viewer is made aware of the fact that Seymour is a professional rugby player who is a prominent member of the Vulcans Super Twelve franchise (Skin and Bone). Interestingly, shortly after the scene of Foreskin training in the sports laboratory which is likely to be in the Vulcans' training headquarters, the scene is paralleled with a recognisable image of the traditional rugby training ritual which the readers of the first two versions of Foreskin's Lament recognise. In this scene, the viewer sees players, all vibrantly clad in mismatching uniforms, training on a specially cleared muddy paddock while Tupper, in his characteristically militaristic manner, hurls insults in an attempt to motivate them (Skin and Bone). McGee's intention in these contrasting scenes is to demonstrate the distance between these two worlds of professional rugby in Auckland and the amateur game which continues to be played in small towns such as Ngapukurau. Nevertheless, McGee does not use the contrast to promote one scene over the other. He acknowledges the emergence of professionalism yet presents rugby in a way in which many New Zealanders still like to see the game, as a celebration of masculinity and camaraderie.

In both the original version and in the 1985 rewritten version, the Foreskin characters in the plays have willingly returned to Ngapukurau after experiencing the other side of living in the city which supposedly represents the force of enlightenment and the corruption of the rural component so essential in forming the identity of the hard New Zealand male. Nevertheless, the Seymour in Skin and Bone expresses no desire to return to the place of his roots. The narrowness of the old perception of masculinity is never strong enough to lure Seymour back. Instead, it is the
circumstances and consequences of his own mistakes which present him with the inevitable decision to return, as he has lost his two major forms of income (his job at the restaurant and his professional footballing contract). Seymour's attitude at the outset of the film is opposed to returning home and it is only out of necessity that he accepts the fateful revisiting of a past he wishes to forget. At the same time, McGee's reflection on New Zealand's past provides instances which remind the audience that it is time to move on in the present. In particular, the traditionally restrictive nature of New Zealand's past masculinity need to be left behind. The moving away from this culture is a paramount concept in the story itself. In particular, the contrast between space and freedom versus confinement and disability is established early in the film through the parallel of city life and the traditional image of the small New Zealand town.

Seymour's move away from the restrictive nature of small towns, such as Ngapukurau (and indeed their opponents' town Kaitaki), which continue to adhere to traditions central in the old myths of masculine culture, demonstrates, as his name suggests, that he can "see more" about the faults of the traditional perception surrounding masculinity. The town which seeks to show the restrictive and limited nature of this traditional township is New Zealand's largest city, Auckland.

In particular, the scene which shows Seymour and his girlfriend at the night club in Auckland is an attempt by McGee to disestablish traditional masculine attitudes (Skin and Bone). Shots at the club of men modelling clothes, men drinking fancy alcoholic beverages and men engaging in dancing while another sings are all things that were once seen as unmanly by the dominant male discourse (Skin and Bone).
Significantly now, the club is a meeting place for both men and women as opposed to the traditional image of the pub as an exclusively male-only domain. At the nightclub men are engaging with women freely, comfortably and in a relaxed fashion as opposed to a later scene when Moira arrives at Ngapukura and the players seem unsure of how to act in her presence (*Skin and Bone*). At the same time, the scene seeks to destabilise the myth of a rugby tradition built on a working class foundation. The scene in Auckland thus serves as a reality check for the viewer in reminding them where they are in history. New Zealand can no longer be regarded by the majority of the populace as a frontier nation.

For instance, the men at the nightclub behave and act in a different fashion from the characters in the Ngapukura rugby team dressing shed. These men combat the myth of the quiet and reserved New Zealand male as they are expressive and portray a variety of emotions which the traditional myth discourages men from showing. These emotions include felicity, sexual gratification and pain. A testimony to this can be seen in Seymour's relationship with Moira when they are at the club enjoying themselves and later when he says he wants to go home to "show her his love" (*Skin and Bone*).

Foreskin also refers to his love of rugby through a traditionally unmanly activity of comparing his passion for the game with his love for Moira's talent as a classical musician: "[smiling appreciatively] when you play the cello you become part of the music ... it is the same when I play rugby. Something great takes over me" (*Skin and Bone*). However, other emotions apart from contentment are displayed by the major male protagonist. Later, upon failing to arrive on time for his final law examination and the news of his dismissal from the Vulcans because of allegations that he has been
taking drugs he breaks down in front of Moira, revealing the pain he feels inside for disgracing his family and himself (Skin and Bone). On one occasion it looks as if he is almost about to cry, yet the anger is visible. These are all emotional responses which the old form of masculinity repressed as effeminate.

The procession and flow of time reminds the audience that the perception of 'whaddarya?' no longer exists in the same context as it did in the early 1980s. McGee demonstrates the changing of time in the film again through the parallel of the city of Auckland against the township of Ngapukura. The town of Ngapukura, when introduced later in the film, is instantly associated with the conventions and values which have existed since 1905. The idea of New Zealand as a 'man alone' country overwhelmed by the power of nature is shown before Seymour even arrives at his home town through the shot of him riding down a deserted highway on his motorcycle (Skin and Bone). This shot is followed shortly after by the camera lens moving away from Seymour on his motorcycle to capture the seemingly endless coastline which he rides along and the equally endless forest behind him (Skin and Bone). These shots continue to reproduce the myth which many New Zealand men still hold of the hard man working the rugged land (Mulgan, 20). This myth has long dominated the way New Zealand men perceive their masculinity. At the same time, the point of this return to Ngapukura is an attempt by McGee to answer the question of "whaddarya?" by presenting what we no longer are.

The way in which Ngapukura is presented to the audience is in a similar fashion to how Alice may see Wonderland or how Dorothy may see the land of Oz as unusual and perhaps mysterious. Essentially, it is presented in an archaic fashion. On
Seymour's arrival home he remarks to his mother how little things have changed around the township since he has been away (Skin and Bone). On the other hand, his mother, when she first sees Seymour walking down the driveway is slow to distinguish her son and her comments, "My Lord, Seymour is that really you?", reflects this astonishment at Foreskin's change in personal and physical appearance and also at his interest in trendy modern clothing as opposed to the working style regalia (swanndri and gum-boots) worn by the men in Ngapukura (Skin and Bone). An interest in fashion and physical manicuring were all things that were once deemed unmanly in New Zealand society. Indeed, Ngapukura represents a New Zealand society locked in time which still exercises strong practices of order and conduct. This order, apart from in the apparel worn by the men, can be seen in the Victorian presence in New Zealand society, through Mrs Collin's early 1900s villa with its neatly tended rose beds and shingle paths (Skin and Bone). Since the villa was produced in the era when the myth was formulated, this emphasises the house as a metaphorical fort for the protection and enforcement of the myth established by the All Black heroes of 1905. The house thus becomes a symbol for the imperial foundation on which the New Zealand myths of masculinity were formulated.

Mrs Collins, like many New Zealanders up till the 1960s, uses what is linguistically termed received pronunciation or RP. Received Pronunciation is more commonly known in New Zealand as BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) English (Gordon, 34). Evidence of this desire to mimic a British accent are frequently encountered in the film. For instance, upon welcoming her son back into the home she asks him in a distinctively British-accented tone if he would "love a cuppa" (Skin and Bone). On another occasion, when Foreskin is talking to his mother at home, to place
emphasis on how badly things have turned out for him in recent weeks up in Auckland, he uses a vulgar word to express this change in fortune. Seymour's mother responds in an agitated manner saying, "Excuse me Seymour but you will not be using that type of language in my house" (Skin and Bone). The sentence is worth noting for the sense of cultural power and the authority which it evokes. The power in the sentence lies in its authoritative tone, partly enforced by the English accent, which reflects the tradition of British dominance over her colonial subjects. Sinclair would postulate that individuals, such as Seymour's mother, represent a need to satisfy imperial standards by being uncompromisingly practical and "hard as nails" (150). The statement, is imperative as it expects the son to oblige with the values and image with which the mother is presenting.

Still, while Foreskin undoubtedly loves his mother and attempts to please her, he has no desire to mimic the values which she so strongly reproduces herself. Foreskin probably sees these values as outdated and perceives an ugly side to this culture to which his mother is oblivious. After their talk, his mother suggests that his friends will be waiting anxiously down at the tavern wanting to meet up with him and find out how he is. The reluctance of Foreskin to go initially demonstrates a fear of something he knows is no longer a part of his perception of the New Zealand male identity.

The purpose of the tavern scene and later the party are an attempt by McGee to show the dark side behind the old traditions of masculinity. The tavern scene has a central effect in promoting what McGee believes is one of the most negative components in the myth of masculinity. This antipathy towards the pub is due to the fact that it continues to perpetuate an exclusively male environment. In the pub, the
developing scenes also present images of a gloomy place with little lighting or interior vibrancy. The darkness caused by the lack of lighting contributes to the effective image of turning the pub into something which appears ageing, outdated and even dirty. There are a number of posters up on the wall portraying images of manly conduct, particularly illustrating the image of the man of the land or notable rugby figures, while attempting to promote another image of the New Zealander as a hard drinker (Skin and Bone). This symbolic iconography is also complemented by a number of framed black and white photographs of previous Ngapukurau teams which attempt to perpetuate the tavern's objectives of being a preserver of past ideals and a place which fosters a continuity with these several male role models in the pictures (Skin and Bone). The most likely intention behind McGee's inclusion of this scene in the film is to use the tavern as a reflector of the old male traditions.

The pub, once a place which brought together and united a great number of men in New Zealand (Phillips, 35) now turns into a sombre reflection of its former glory. It is no longer the place where a universal perception of the male myth is commonly accepted. For instance, although the men of the town drink together at the bar, there is little conversation or bonding taking place. While Larry is a male, and in this version of Foreskin's Lament, is genuinely more liked by the team, except by Clean, Larry still continues to be expelled from this male cultural circle because of his open admission to being a homosexual (Skin and Bone). At the same time, Seymour is frequently mocked because of his university education and jealousy arises at his fortune in securing a place as a professional rugby footballer on the Super 12 team, the Vulcans. While anti-homosexuality and anti-intellectualism have been considered in the original two versions of Foreskin's Lament, what is unique about Skin and Bone is how
individuals are free to contest the issue of masculinity. Despite Tupper's claims to Foreskin that "this is a team game son" and that one should play or serve the "town in its greatest hour of need", what Tupper forgets is that not all of his players are inclined to share this position (Skin and Bone). An environment which was once a place where masculinity could be celebrated now evokes an atmosphere where this perception of masculinity is cumulatively detested by many of the men in the room. When Foreskin talks to his mate Tank about how he and the other men have been while he has been away, Tank responds pessimistically by spinning Foreskin around to look at the other men around the pub and states: "You see. We're all losers" (Skin and Bone). This is a visible sign from one of the men that not everyone agrees with Tupper's perception of masculinity as reflecting camaraderie. The discontent of the men in the tavern and the hunger to make a name for themselves through the era of professionalism suggests that the old values once associated with playing the game do not exist in their fullest and purest sense within the men in the tavern. At the same time, geographic loyalty becomes uprooted in the era of professionalism with the desire of many of the players to seek professional contracts outside of their birthplace. This is not a new concept which McGee presents but stems back to the play Whitemen. It is profit and not pride which now regulates most of the men in the play. While rugby for Tupper remains amateur and is imbued with old values which promote the importance of team work, for others rugby, as a professional game now, represents a chance for the individual to break free from the old myths associated with rugby and ultimately masculinity. Skin and Bone also focuses more on the individual lives of the several major protagonists in the text. McGee devotes a considerable deal of this time focussing on the aspirations of Clean.
Though Clean is prepared to use brutal violence to achieve his objectives of attracting the selectors' interests in promoting him to a professional rugby contract with the Super 12 team the Hunters, Clean is not necessarily an evil character. The traditional beliefs which emphasised that the real New Zealander was a man who was closer to his mates than his family is challenged early in the film by focusing on Clean's relationship with his family. Unlike the cold and hardened image which Clean presents in front of the other male characters, at home he demonstrates that he is a sensitive and loving man. After leaving the bar he arrives home to his wife Jackie, telling her how much he loves her and how he "wants to get them outta here" [Ngapukurau and poverty] (Skin and Bone). This is followed by a scene showing the couple settled together on a sofa kissing and caressing each other before their son enters the room. Confronted by his son, instead of feeling embarrassed by presenting what once would have been considered to have been an effeminate incident, he gets up from the chair embraces his son tenderly and offers to read him a bedtime story (Skin and Bone). The image of Clean comforting his son contests the original myth of the hard man who is proud about his macho self image. Clean is a man who shows signs that he is ashamed of the stereotypical masculinity which he is expected to portray. He is ashamed that his lack of qualifications means that he cannot attain a better job and provide a better quality of life for his family. The presentation of Clean by McGee thus serves to destabilise the stereotype formed by films and literature, such as Once Were Warriors, where Maori men, and not pakeha, were shown to be the violent people in New Zealand society.

Clean's desire to break away from the old male tradition of anti-intellectualism is also evident in the pride he has in his aspirations for his son's educational future.
When reading the story to his son, Clean struggles to read the book and feels awkward when he cannot say the word "sorcerer" despite his son's reassurances that he enjoys the way that his father is telling the story (Skin and Bone). Clean's admiration in his son's interest in reading and learning is set against his shame at the cultural perception which discouraged him from excelling academically. The significance of this scene is that it represents a transition of ideals between two different generations. Instead of the old values of masculinity which were passed down to Clean by his father, Clean clearly does not desire his son to have to embrace the value system which was forced upon him. Thus, in the traditional perception of masculinity, the home, was once portrayed as a repressive force which deprived the man of his individuality and was emotionally repressive, now the home is no longer a prison but a place where individuality and emotion can be expressed. This is not only evident in Clean's household but also in other characters such as in Ken's relationship with Catherine.

The warmth in this relationship is shown personally by the characters' conveying of emotion through words and environmentally through their house with its lights and warm open fire (Skin and Bone). McGee's contrasts between light and dark suggest that it is places such as the dark pub which are really the places where men lose their individuality and ability to express their emotions as human beings. Nevertheless, for players like Clean raised on this traditionally cold perception of masculinity, the only escape from the limitedness of their lifestyles is to play the game. Again, this raises the importance of Foreskin's search to find an answer to the question of "whaddarya?" in order to free the players and enable them to find a more substantial and satisfying answer to the question of what being a man in New Zealand is now about.
Sebastian Black is correct when he states that the issue of masculinity is still very relevant today (200-1). But what Black seems to overlook is that there will never be a definite answer to the question of "whaddarya?". The difficulty of finding an answer to this question lies partly in the evolution of time and the crossing and interception of competing cultural values. Thus, the question is quite different and difficult to answer as the answer will depend on the respondent and even upon the questioner. This two-way pull suggests that a cohesive interpretation of what a true New Zealand male is is becoming more fractured and contestable than it has ever been. Because of this change, one can assume that the traditional image of the male pakeha, heterosexual New Zealander is no longer the sole representative of a New Zealand identity, or "the voice of the country's conscience" (Black, 183). Instead, what McGee attempts to alert the reader to is that it is one small part of what makes us the cosmopolitan nation that we are. It is a nation which does not worship and enforce one statutory form of identity but encourages originality and freedom of choice. Roy Billing, who has played Tupper on several occasions, has stated that "actors are revelling in the roles created by McGee". It's almost a liberation after all the parts grafted on to us from overseas; these ones come from our root stock" (Gribben, 92). Jan Prettenjohns, the woman who directed the all-male cast in the Palmerston North Centrepoint production said that it would be hard going back to other plays after the success Foreskin's Lament had in stimulating national interest towards New Zealand masculinity and identity (Gribben, 92). In many ways she is correct, for McGee's play changed not only the social attitude towards local plays and but also inspire debate towards thematic areas such as New Zealand masculinity and identity.

http://www.listener.co.nz/printable, 416.sm
Stachurski argues that the appeal for audiences in watching New Zealand characters is due to the present and continued uncertainty of what exactly constitutes a New Zealander (182). At the same time, Stachurski also notes how this definition of national identity can also be broken down into gendered classifications to define what should be determined as the authentic male or female New Zealander (182). McGee attempts to emphasise the multiplicity of New Zealand society through scenes which show contrasting images of the nation along with altering perceptions from different New Zealanders. In particular, Skin and Bone highlights male and female relationships, and offers a promising conclusion that men and women can finally merge together in New Zealand history (Phillips, 216).

McGee's inclusion of a female character in the text is an attempt to challenge the traditional male image of a desirably all male scene. Moira's presence, therefore, alters the text from solely being regulated by the vocal and physical presence of men. Her voice serves to promote the concept of multiplicity which McGee so desperately wants the film to project. As in the previous texts, Moira does not reflect the traditionally regarded male cultural attitude towards women. She is a threat to the man because of her education and her ability to articulate and express herself in front of men, as she demonstrates in the way she dominates the conversations with Tupper and Clean (Skin and Bone). However, while Moira makes it clear that she is able to "frighten a lot of men", what she never succeeds in doing in the early works of Foreskin's Lament is to open up Foreskin and draw him closer to her. The first two characters in the film who are introduced are Moira and Foreskin, unlike the original scripts which begin in the traditionally exclusive male domain of the rugby changing shed (Skin and Bone). The setting of this early encounter of the two characters, in a
kitchen, where Foreskin works as a kitchen hand, is also intriguing as this is an area which has socially been regarded as a female domain (Phillips, 218-19). Yet, Foreskin's willingness to reject this perception and embrace the work demonstrates that from the beginning he is prepared to disregard traditional perceptions of gender-appropriate activities. Nevertheless, the relationship comes under threat with the sad events which later take place in Foreskin's career and sporting life.

Shortly after these personal crises in Foreskin's life, a number of tragedies emerge which will prove a major challenge to the survival of the pair's relationship. The timing of Tupper's arrival in Auckland is a pivotal threat which will soon disrupt the relationship. This is because it is through Foreskin's protection of Tupper, in a physical fight with his boss, that he loses his last source of revenue and with that his last chance to remain in Auckland (Skin and Bone). This act draws Foreskin back into the traditional perception of masculinity, signified by a desire to protect his mate and indeed a preparedness to use violent means to do so. This act reintegrates Foreskin within the traditional perception of masculinity. These are all values which are strongly imbued in the old myths associated with being a real man who, Michael King states was, expected to display manly qualities by being fearless, by going hard in the rucks, by tackling hard, by going down on the ball in the face of on-rushing opponents, and by playing as a team (140). Despite Foreskin's attempts to demonstrate a strong traditional masculine character in front of Moira, her interrogation of Foreskin shows us that he is a far weaker character than we may have previously believed.
Moira unveils the weakness in Foreskin by demonstrating how susceptible he still is to being pressured into taking up traditional practices associated with being a real man in New Zealand. When asked to express "how he feels" about returning to Ngapukura, he responds by attempting to avoid the question firstly, then, upon being pressured again by Moira, responds stating: "I feel...nothing" (Skin and Bone). This comment reaffirms one of the traditional values associated with an idealistic perception of masculinity in New Zealand and that is the man of silence. However, close-up shots of Moira looking directly into Foreskin's eyes show that Foreskin is feeling possibly many emotions ranging from sadness to fear (Skin and Bone). Foreskin is later drawn closer to this traditional perception of masculinity as a result of the fear of leaving Auckland, and all he cherishes, to facing a past he is afraid of. When confronted by Moira again, he is reluctant to express how he is feeling inside as opposed to the earlier scenes when the pair are very open with one another. This is observable shortly after Foreskin loses his job at the restaurant when he gets onto his motorcycle ignoring Moira's pleas to remain with her. Later, "after searching for ages" for Foreskin, Moira finds him sitting alone by the bridge (Skin and Bone). Again, when she tries to interact with him he refrains from these attempts to be comforted and tells her to "leave [him] alone" (Skin and Bone). This return to the image of the hard and emotionless man alone is finally solidified when Foreskin goes home and tells Moira that he is leaving Auckland to go to Ngapukura. When asked why he has to go, he again represses his opportunity to express how he is feeling when he states: "What other choice do I have? I have nothing left here" (Skin and Bone). Failing to convince him to stay, Moira attempts to keep the relationship alive by proclaiming that she wishes to come with him. This comment is met by sarcastic laughter by Foreskin. It is then followed by an equally demeaning and pejorative remark adopting the old perceptions towards female
subjectivity: "You come. You wouldn't like it. You wouldn't fit in" (Skin and Bone).

Apart from completing the breakdown of the once healthy heterosexual relationship, it serves to reunite Foreskin with Tupper's "by your actions you shall be judged" form of masculinity. Despite Foreskin's attempts to demonstrate a strong traditional masculine character in front of Moira, her interrogation of Foreskin shows us that he is a far weaker character than we may have previously believed. This is shown in the break-down of communication between them: [Moira] "Please talk to me [about your pain]" [Foreskin] "Why? You wouldn't understand" (Skin and Bone).

Moira unveils the weakness in Foreskin by demonstrating how susceptible he still is to being pressured into taking up traditional practices associated with being a real man in New Zealand. In reviewing the original Foreskin, Wells argued in 1981 that:

The weakest character, ironically is the denunciating Foreskin. The most tortured, he is the least rounded. To him is given existential anguish, articulated in a language which stands in glaring contrast to that of his peers. I don't doubt there is a great deal of All Black trialist in Foreskin/Seymour. The schizoid naming seems to reflect uncertainty about which world he belongs to. (33)

The McGee/Foreskin that Wells talks about in 1981 may be no different to the one that appears in 2003. Both Foreskin, and to a lesser extent Greg McGee himself, share a certain insecurity about their place in the world. Wells makes an invaluable observation in noting the existence of a two linguistic codes competing against each other in the film. As Howard McNaughton argues, "the essential action consists of Foreskin isolating himself, articulating his individuality, and then being taken back into the collective context" (369). Indeed, the break-up with Moira also serves as a symbolic rejection of his new perception of masculinity. This change can be observed in the
traditionally vulgar and often sexist language of the coach and the team-mates which Foreskin embraces upon his return to Ngapukurau. The nickname Foreskin, foisted upon Seymour by his team-mates, refers to the team's traditional perception of a manly man as a sexual conqueror of women. Likewise, nicknames such as Mean and Tank refer to the traditional expectations of men to be strong and aggressive (Skin and Bone). McGee's strategy behind Foreskin's return back to Ngapukurau is in the comparison it enables the viewer to draw on Foreskin's emotional state. Prior to the tragedies that entered in his life, Foreskin's life in Auckland was generally a healthy and happy one. In contrast, when Foreskin arrives in Ngapukurau he appears unwell and even his mother draws the viewer's attention to the fact: "Seymour ... are you feeling all right?" (Skin and Bone). His friends also highlight the unease which has begun to appear in Foreskin's life when Tank comments on the physical state of Foreskin:

"Foreskin...You're skin and bones mate!" (Skin and Bone). This concern for Foreskin also appears in even the staunchly traditionalistic Tupper's concern towards how Foreskin is feeling emotionally. While Foreskin employs the nicknames and language of the old patriarchal system of masculinity to cover these fears, the fact that other characters can see his emotional strain reveals Foreskin's distance from the other characters who inhabit Ngapukurau. It could then be argued that McGee's superimposition of Foreskin in Ngapukurau is an attempt to demonstrate the unhealthiness of attempting to sustain this traditional perception of masculinity in the present. While Foreskin can speak the language of his coach and his team mates, McNaughton would argue that Foreskin fails to see the socially restrictive nature of this language in regulating the performativity of men (369). One area where this it observable is through the language's demeaning view of women (Skin and Bone).
Foreskin's comments reinforce a traditional male perception in New Zealand of women as weak and unable to fend for themselves. It also suggests that New Zealand is still a man's world and, therefore, women's survival still depends on the protection of men (Ferguson, 33). Above all, Foreskin's comments reinforce the ideal image of New Zealand as a male paradise and part of the reason for this paradise is because of the removal of women, a symbol for control and domesticity through marriage, mortgage and mating. The second part of the film is an attempt by McGee to fight back at this tradition of masculinity by reuniting the split couple.

*Skin and Bone* seeks to dismantle the traditional masculine hostility towards the heterosexual relationship over mateship. When Moira follows Foreskin to Ngapukurau, instead of greeting her, Foreskin's response is emotionally cold and is an attempt to distance himself from the perceived traditional male fear of emasculation: "You're always following me!" (*Skin and Bone*). Later, as the film progresses, Foreskin attempts to further dislocate himself from the clutches of his girlfriend. Moira again is presented as searching for Foreskin. This is clear when she tracks him down to an old barn on the outskirts of the town. Despite Foreskin's attempts to hide himself in the dark barn from Moira, she is able to draw from him the dark past which is hidden behind the building. Moira soon discovers that the barn was once a slaughter-house whose profits the town of Ngapukurau was built around. But there are more serious metaphorical symbols connected with the history of the barn. The fact that the barn was operated predominantly by men and was a place where blood constantly flowed reflects an era when the promotion of traditionally perceived violent masculine values was strong. This in particular refers to the idea of masculinity being associated with repression of feelings and violence [through the toleration of killing]. This masculinity
is later subjected to a final reevaluation when Foreskin confesses that this was a place where not even men were safe (Skin and Bone).

Foreskin eventually confesses to Moira why the place really has significance for him. It is not because of its cultural significance so much as in a personal sense. This is because it was the place where his father met a brutal end in order to live up to expectations of being a real man. Foreskin's informing Moira about how his father died provides him with an opportunity to move away from the dark history of the barn back into the space and time of the present. Mervyn Thompson argues that Foreskin succeeds in removing himself from the metaphorical "Stagland" and the male violence which encompasses the concept to embrace a far more natural and refined form of masculinity (460). Foreskin has thus signified a desire to leave the place associated with the tribe (Thompson, 461). While it initially appears in the episode that what Foreskin is lamenting is a return to a traditional perception of New Zealand culture and masculinity, what Foreskin is instead ruing is how this tradition fails to address his perception of himself as both a New Zealander and a male. His embracing of Moira and their holding hands between the arches of a doorway open to the sunlight shows that Foreskin is already beginning to turn his back on this cultural tradition and face a brighter and more promising future (Skin and Bone). The embracing of Moira, and the absorbing of the natural landscape in front of him is a sign that Foreskin is beginning to move away from the traditional male myth which promoted the repression of feelings and staunch cold conduct. The barn, therefore, becomes nothing but a reminder of how cold, lonely, inhuman and unforgiving this old perception of masculinity could be. Foreskin has taken the first step to reclaiming his humanity and signifies that he no longer wishes to belong to a tribe which savagely constrain masculinity.
Though in the earlier versions of Foreskin's Lament McNaughton is possibly correct in asserting that Foreskin could be treated as a "Promethean rebel" or a "martyr to his social preconscious", there can be no doubt in this play that Foreskin satisfies his own personal desire to answer the question "whaddarya?" (369). While in the previous plays Foreskin merely served as a commentator on the events he seemingly had no power over, the Foreskin in Skin and Bone seems much more confident about where he stands as a man at the end of the film. Instead, of lamenting the traditional perception of masculinity for its faults, he attempts to take control of the situation by leading it into a new era. Foreskin's taking over the captaincy of Ken symbolically suggests McGee's desire for a brighter future for men in New Zealand. It is interesting to observe that prior to Foreskin's taking over Ken's position the game plan was primarily a forwards-focussed one. That Foreskin elects to play an expansive game using backs and forwards suggests not only the coming together of the team but also the potential for the uniting of a nation divided in its understanding of masculinity. It could be argued that the rapturous response to this exciting expansive style of game suggests that the crowd, even more than the team, is a metaphor for a New Zealand society which has long desired a shift in attitudes towards outdated perceptions [styles of play].

After experiencing discontent in Ngapukura, Foreskin knows that there is no content to be found as a man by adhering to this perception of masculinity.

The reclamation of Foreskin's ability to feel is later shaped not by Moira searching to rescue him but his seeking to protect her. This scene takes place at Larry's house at the post-match party. Left alone at the party with the other players, while Foreskin takes Ken to the doctors after sustaining a concussion, Moira, unlike at the party in the first two plays, is transformed into a vulnerable character by McGee.
This inability to defend herself is caused by her participation in a drinking game which renders her unconscious for a considerable time. This is followed by the players led by Clean carrying her up to Larry's bedroom and undressing her (Skin and Bone). By isolating Moira and by taking away her ability to defend herself, McGee has ultimately turned Moira back into the traditional perception of the female as a sexualised object for the pleasurable consumption of men. Arriving home, after leaving the hospital, Larry enters the house probably just before the gang raping of Moira eventuates. In an attempt to humiliate him, they strip him of all his clothes and dare him to be the first to engage in raping her (Skin and Bone). The stripping of Larry is an attempt to test Larry's masculinity.

Nevertheless, Larry's rejection of Moira because she is a woman should not merely be interpreted because it is based on Larry's preference for men as a homosexual. Instead, the rejection can be viewed as a triumphant stand by a man against the immorality of continuing to view women as objects. This is demonstrated not only by his attempts to turn his head away and by closing his eyes to Moira's body, but through his ability to weep in front of the other men (Skin and Bone). Larry is prepared to challenge the traditional status quo as to what entails true masculine conduct as a New Zealander and this is reflected in his dismissal of this tradition when Clean constantly attempts to make him answer: "Don't you want her?" to which he constantly states "No" several times (Skin and Bone). However, Larry is not the only man who condemns this incident.
That Clean refrains from attempting to rape Moira suggests a deeper issue pertaining to masculinity which McGee wishes to investigate and challenge through the film. Through not participating in the act of raping Moira, Clean destabilises the image of the black rapist beast. The fact that other white individuals in the text are willing to sexually assault her suggests that it is not the Maori culture which has tainted the white attitude to masculinity in New Zealand but that it is a solidly white concept. While a number of the characters address Clean's answer, stating that "I will [rape her]", this comment only verifies the perversity of a white constructed perception of masculinity which continues to objectify women (*Skin and Bone*). Clean succeeds in proving that it is the white tradition of masculinity which is perverse and not, as the system claims, himself or his race.

Shortly after Larry arrives, Foreskin is prepared to fight against his own team because of how they have degraded his girlfriend. This retaliation by Foreskin and the rejection of this perception of masculinity is an attempt by McGee to emphasise that the once universally embraced myths of masculinity are gradually coming under threat. Foreskin's carrying of his girlfriend in his arms while weeping is almost a reversal of the soldiering myth of a mate coming to another one's rescue. Foreskin's sensitivity towards his girlfriend after the incident shows that he is no longer prepared to tolerate a masculinity which is so self-righteous and self-serving. This is reaffirmed in the last scene of the film which shows the two locked in an embrace overlooking a bay.

The softening of Moira in the play is also a distinctive feature of the film. In the previous two versions of *Foreskin's Lament* McGee had failed to impress feminist writers and critics with his depiction of a female protagonist who was generally not
liked by the greater male cast. It was argued that earlier depiction of Moira instead of reinforcing McGee's attack on masculinity merely served to ideologically reinforce patriarchal rule (Horrocks, 2). The way in which Moira is presented as a sexualised object may be an attempt by McGee to appease his female and feminist audience who see themselves as one of the greatest victims of this legacy of masculinity. However, I believe McGee is attempting to go deeper with this. That the role of masculine identity in reinforcing patriarchal rule has long been identified by feminists as the source of male domination over men McGee has no doubts over. What McGee does contest is the assertion made by feminists that there are no consequences for men who strictly follow this perception of masculinity. The traditional view suggests that men benefit from this imbalance. However, recently some authors have identified the dual nature of the 'masculine privilege' under the patriarchal system. Keen argues that men may receive economic, political and social privileges, but in return they must also make sacrifices in terms of occupation, identity, and, ultimately, their selves (1). This sacrifice can ultimately be seen in the pressure men experience in having to live up to a societal expectation of what it means to be manly. While McGee wants the audience to feel empathy towards Moira and the suffering of women, McGee does not want the audience to ignore the reality in the play that many of the men in the play are merely wearing masks to reflect the expectations of their society. When McGee shows the pain of characters such as Foreskin and later Clean, he wants the audience to feel uncomfortable with themselves for forcing these characters to take up roles which neither in reality wish to play. Fortunately, Foreskin has the power to remove the mask and reject this traditional social expectation of men in New Zealand.
Foreskin is no longer the man alone, as in early scenes, but a man who now has the ability to look and discover his own perception of masculinity. Foreskin's remark "You're always following me" is now expressed to Moira in a softer and tenderer fashion (Skin and Bone). The completed reunification of the pair signals the new hope for a more universally embracing definition of masculinity. The repetition of the statement by Moira places her in a position of being the conscience for the nation. The reason that she is always following Foreskin, in turn, may be an attempt to prevent him from returning to the legacy of his past in Ngapukura (Skin and Bone). McNaughton has commented that McGee realised that one of the faults which had been noted in his early stage plays had been that while they had attacked traditional male values they had failed to suggest a suitable alternative (370). What is unique about Skin and Bone, then, is how McGee attempts to redress this earlier problem in his works. McGee does not fall into the trap of defining the ideal man according to his own beliefs. The reason for this is because McGee does not want to replace one value system with another. Instead, the key concept which McGee emphasises is individuality. McGee believes that individuals should have the right to define their own perceptions of masculine identity. McGee clearly wants the new New Zealand to be a place where men, such as Larry and Foreskin, do not feel that they need to hide behind an emotional cloak of repression in order to exist. Influenced by the works of several feminist playwrights, McGee believed that just as women were encouraged to understand each other better, men likewise needed to open up emotionally and learn to express their hopes and fears (McNaughton, 371). McGee believed that this was the key to the attainment of a truly ideal perception of masculinity in New Zealand.
While focusing on the issue of reevaluating masculine attitudes to women, *Skin and Bone* also attempts to revisit the issue of how racially incorporating the myths of masculinity are towards minorities. A feature of *Skin and Bone*, which is not present in the second *Foreskin's Lament*, is that the film now not only focuses on a male mythology based on pakeha values which have often excluded Maoris, but also on a myth which has often prevented many non-Caucasian men from believing that they are true New Zealand men. *Skin and Bone* moves on from the 1980s versions by suggesting New Zealand should no longer be regarded as a bicultural society but a multicultural society. The reality of McGee acknowledging this cultural change in New Zealand society in the space of twenty years brings consequences and challenges to previously held conceptions of traditional masculinity.

Immigration has meant that with more people moving to New Zealand, ideas relating to masculine conduct have also filtered in from these immigrants' homelands (Denoon and Mein Smith, 441). Ken's casting as a Polynesian is a testament to this. In analysing the character of Ken in order to dissect these perceptions towards masculinity, the contrasts reveal some startling differences. For instance, at the training session, Ken attempts to please Tupper and is openly apologetic to him, even in front of his team mates, when he fails to do this: "I'm sorry Tupper, boys" (*Skin and Bone*). While subtle, this comment challenges the traditional perception of the New Zealand man as a man who attempts to repress his pain by just getting on with the task ahead. However, shortly after this apology, Tupper adds an interesting possibility to reinterpreting the statement when he states: "whaddarya Ken?" (*Skin and Bone*).
The disappointment which follows this response by Tupper, shown in Ken's drooping head and body, represents the feeling of many immigrants to New Zealand who struggle to fit in with the New Zealand attitude toward traditional masculine stereotypes (Skin and Bone). These traditional masculine values are later tested again on Ken when he is dealt a severe tackle from Clean. Reacting in pain, Tupper is insensitive to his display of emotion: "Get up, you all right, you'll survive" [sic] (Skin and Bone). This is later supported when Tupper states that this is rugby and "accidents do happen" (Skin and Bone). While Foreskin and Larry later in the film attempt to discourage Ken from playing in the match, Ken attempts to aspire to Tupper's early admonishment to be a real New Zealand man by stating, "I'll be fine" (Skin and Bone).

However, throughout the text, despite his desire to fit in with his new social environment, Ken can never truly break away from his own cultural perceptions of masculine conduct. Unlike a number of the other characters in the film, Ken is one of the few characters to demonstrate a courteous and respectful nature towards women instead of treating them like bits of "edjimicated fluff". This is clear in his treatment and adoration of his wife. Shortly after sustaining his first concussion, Ken informs Seymour that all that he is looking forward to is "[g]oing home to see Catherine [his wife]" (Skin and Bone). Ken also tells Seymour about how he hopes he recovers quickly so that he will be able to help his wife out around the home as soon as possible (Skin and Bone). The arrival of the attractive Moira in Ngapukura does not distort Ken's respect towards women either. On meeting Moira, Ken is the first person to shake Moira's hand and greet her politely without viewing her as a sexual object: "Pleased to meet you Miss" (Skin and Bone). Despite Moira's disdain for the uncouth nature of the other players, one of the few men who Moira informs Foreskin that she
respects is Ken. This is evident after Ken sustains his primary concussion when she exclaims, "poor Ken!", and later when she weeps over the news of his passing away (Skin and Bone).

It is also interesting to note that in Skin and Bone the people Ken relates best with are marginalised male figures themselves. Like Moira and Foreskin, Ken is one of the few characters who treats the homosexual Larry with any degree of seriousness and credibility (Skin and Bone). Consequently, Ken's death becomes an unpleasant reminder of how destructive these myths can be towards marginalised masculinities. However, the death of Ken is all the more ironic because he seems to be the player who symbolises the positive elements of the amateur ethos which had long accompanied the male stance towards rugby.

Before the team takes the field, this ethos of rugby as a unifier of men is emphasised when Ken, as captain, tells his men: "we play this game because we love it. They [the opposition] can take everything away from us but not that" (Skin and Bone). As a player, Ken is unconcerned about attracting the interests of the Hunter Super Twelve franchise but merely wants to play the game because he believes that the myths behind the game mean that rugby truly is a game where differences between men are put aside. This childlike innocence unfortunately is destroyed with Clean's fatal kick which symbolically shatters the reality of this myth forever. In Skin and Bone, Clean's kick serves to brutally remind the audience where rugby is situated for many participants in the present. In an era which now recognises rugby as a professional sport, the hunger to succeed is even stronger than before. Ken's death at the hands of Clean signifies the end of the amateur era of camaraderie in sport and the
transformation of rugby into an individualistic and professional one. This tainting of the
golden image of rugby and masculinity is emphasised when Tupper is informed about
Clean's motives behind kicking Ken: "You low scum ... you, you betrayed everything"
(Skin and Bone). To this response Clean hits Tupper, then laughs and states: "Your era
is over, now it's every man for himself" (Skin and Bone). But McGee suggests that
Clean's concept of masculinity may not be as distant from his coach's as he imagines it
to be for the hunger to win has always been evident in Tupper's opinion from the
beginning of the film. Clean merely brings it into brutal focus. Ken again serves as a
Jesus-like figure in the hope that men will redeem themselves.

However, if Ken can be viewed symbolically as Jesus, there is often an
inclination to view Clean as a Judas Iscariot. His actions and his passion for fame and
wealth are testaments to his desire to detach himself from the traditions of male
camaraderie associated with rugby in New Zealand. McGee illustrates that this is far
too simplistic a conclusion to reach which does not sufficiently take into consideration
the complexity of Clean as a character. As has been shown, Clean, operates in a totally
different manner around his wife and child. While he is ambitious, he still says to
Tupper that it is because of his family that he keeps going" (Skin and Bone). Even after
he has kicked Ken, his facial expressions demonstrate a form of remorse for the act
which he has committed (Skin and Bone). Indeed, the regret for his actions is solidified
when he asks Tupper, and Foreskin, in an apologetic tone to be able to play in the
second half "to amend the fuck up of the first" (Skin and Bone). That is, while Clean
feels guilty for the death of Ken, he is also ashamed of the masculinity he has presented
in front of his own son (Skin and Bone). It seems that what McGee is attempting to
present here is the consequences of a racialised minority who has been too successfully
absorbed in practising the myths founded by a predominantly white society while losing touch with their own [Maori] cultural practices.

Clean is aware of how Tupper appreciates the projection of this traditional hard man New Zealand male image: "That's the spirit Clean" (Skin and Bone). Tim Bickerstaff notes how one of the satisfactions he attained from playing the game of rugby was the satisfaction he received when he performed a task to the approval of the on-looking male adults (122). Bickerstaff observes, for instance, the applause that would proceed when he had performed a good tackle or committed to a ruck not so much because of the skill involved but because of the courage and aggression he had displayed in proving that he was on the right path to being a real man (123). Clean displays similar symptoms to Bickerstaff for he plays the game in the belief that playing it produces an authentic New Zealand male. At the same time, Clean shares the belief like Bickerstaff and Lope in Whitemen, that after attaining this status, a whole world of potential prosperity opens up to them. Nevertheless, Clean's attachment to a traditionally pakeha-promoted masculinity later becomes questionable in the guilt he feels over the harm he has delivered to a man who is prepared to shed the mask and unveil his true manhood. It is here that McGee wants to remind the viewer that Clean is just as much the victim of these myths as the perpetrator of its legacies.

Clean represents an individual who feels that the only way to succeed in life is by adhering to pakeha value systems. However, as the story unfolds, Clean's quest for acceptance as a male in New Zealand ends just as fatefully, yet less gruesomely, than Ken's. In his pursuit of fame and wealth, a sign of success in European societies, Clean gets so caught up in attempting to mirror European social standards and objectives,
that he loses touch with his own moral and cultural perception of masculinity. Unfortunately, his performativity fails to deliver to him the glory which he desires. At the end of the film, Clean is a fragmented character. His attack on Ken, apart from the punching of Ray [a selector for the Hunter Super Twelve franchise] destroys any chance of his being selected by selectors into a professional team (Skin and Bone). Clean also loses the respect of Tupper and the rest of the team for what he has done to Ken (Skin and Bone). His guilt in realising what this culture has made him become is displayed in his weeping in the dressing room (Skin and Bone). While McNaughton has argued that McGee seems unconvinced that these characters with violent pasts deserve a future, Clean's permission to play the last few minutes in the match and the contribution he makes to the win suggests a change of view from McGee (21). In Skin and Bone McGee comes to the realisation that it is society and the myths they generate which continues to shape the violent legacy of masculinity often embedded in New Zealand.

In a number of ways, Skin and Bone's strategy for dispelling the violent traditional perception of masculinity eerily echoes Shadbolt's strategy in his play Once on Chunuk Bar. As in Shadbolt's play, Skin and Bone presents the disastrous events of one day without settling into complacent anti-war/rugby rhetoric (Black, 13). Bruce Mason once remarked that "by choosing Rugby football as our national drama, we were unconsciously asserting our claim to figure on the map of ignorance and indifference; to take heroic and Homeric stances, and bestride the world imagination like splendid colossi" (39). McGee, through the team's inability to get along, shows the falseness of Mason's assertion. As in Once on Chunuk Bar, McGee argues that though the players playing/fighting is heroic, the cause behind such valiancy is absurd (Black,
13). As in Shadbolt's play where the men are fighting not to establish a national identity but to continue to pay homage to a distant King, whose land New Zealanders still turned to and called home, McGee argues that the men in his play fight for an outdated tradition (Black, 13). Just as in Shadbolt's work, McGee draws a comparison between the old and young generation of men in the team and the difference in ideology between the two. Though McGee does not demonise Tupper, the distance between the players and Tupper through language and ideology suggests that most of the players do not share Tupper's ideologies regarding masculinity (Skin and Bone). In the view of McGee, these young men need to find their own voice and not take up the cold traditional one which Tupper demands of them. Still, Tupper cannot be expected to take full responsibility for the way Clean has turned out in Skin and Bone unlike in the two previous versions of Foreskin's Lament.

While Tupper is never really presented as a truly detestable figure in the original two productions, Foreskin shares a closer bond and holds a deeper respect for Tupper in Skin and Bone than with any other man in the team. While the two were frequently at odds over ideologies in the first two Foreskin's Laments, Tupper and Foreskin get on surprisingly well in Skin and Bone. This is again most likely to be attributed to Foreskin's view of Tupper as a father-like figure in his life. Tupper serves to provide Foreskin with a metaphorical link to understanding where he has come from. For instance, when Foreskin tries to come to grips with his life while in Ngapukura, Tupper takes him to his father's grave. There he tells Foreskin what kind of man Matthew Collins was: "He was a strong man. He's there in you son ... waiting to rise to the occasion" (Skin and Bone). While this could be taken to mean being a man in the traditional sense and the occasion could be a reference to the match, the vagueness of it
could ultimately suggest otherwise. Earlier, Tupper also comments "whys and
wherefores don't matter to history" and later before the final shield game kicks off he
states: "when that whistle for full time blows a lot of things end, a lot of things change
forever" (Skin and Bone). Social change is certainly one of them.

The feature worth noting when comparing this Tupper with the previous two is
that McGee finally succeeds in reversing Tupper's perception of the game as being
greater than life. The history which Tupper now appears to be referring to is not so
much the history of the game as that of the individuals engaging in it. The grave scene
may not necessarily be interpreted as an attempt to infuse Foreskin with the traditional
values of masculinity but how he has the "strength" inside himself to be the man that he
wishes to be. Tupper does not try to tell Foreskin what type of man he should be.

The grave scene is merely an attempt to reflect upon the earlier barn scene
which perpetuates the eventual decay of a once vehemently promoted social philosophy
(Skin and Bone). It means that, though Tupper is an invaluable link for Foreskin to
discovering where he came from, Tupper cannot tell him where his future will lead him.
This is because the power to shape the future as a man now lies in Foreskin himself.
The grave scene represents the transition of time and the succession of one generation
by the next. The grave scene is a powerful reminder of the cycle not only of human life
but the process of historical change where ideas that were once current, can quickly
disappear along with the people who invented them. Nevertheless, McGee does not
want the grave scene to be portrayed as an episode which ultimately disregards history.
It promotes the passing of time and ideas, yet it still reminds individuals (such as
Foreskin) to remember where the nation has come from and the people who have helped to shape us.

While Tupper shares a passion for the past it would be wrong to say on the other hand that he is totally trapped within it. The Tupper in Skin and Bone is very alert to the world he is now operating in. Tupper is not oblivious to professionalism and though he may still cherish the values of camaraderie which formed an intrinsic core base of values during the times when the game was amateur, Tupper's objective is to see members of his team excel. This is evident when he tells medical personnel and Larry that Ken needs to keep on playing if he is to make a name for himself in rugby: "see those guys up there [pointing] they're from a Super Twelve franchise. Kenny's in line for a contract. Now. You tell him he can't play" (Skin and Bone).

The silencing of Tupper at the end of the film, by Clean, and later by the often silenced Larry who confronts Tupper over Clean's assault on Ken is an attempt to allow these marginalised male characters the space to enter into the narrative and let their stories be told without the dominating discourse preventing them from doing so (Skin and Bone). The absence of Foreskin's lament at the end of the play suggests hope in many ways. Though it could have been placed in the film by McGee, Carnegie suggests that its absence does not make the film any less powerful. While the question once led the audience to ask "what kind of a society are we?" Carnegie suggests that McGee considered the question more ahistorical now (185). Twenty-five years after the production of Foreskin's Lament McGee was sure that New Zealanders now were far more familiar with their pasts and he was confident that society had moved on since those times (Carnegie, 184-5). To repeat the question would serve nothing more as an
illusion into New Zealand as it was in the past instead of how it was in the present. Instead, McGee rejects the lament and the question in a bold attempt to lead New Zealanders, in much the same way as Foreskin leads out the team at the end of the film, into a new era where masculinity can blossom into something more vibrant than it has previously been allowed to be. While critics have suggested that the film ended in a Hollywood manner, in an endeavour to market the film to a potentially lucrative overseas market, McGee rejects claims that this was the prime reason behind his decision to end the film in this manner. The ending of the film suggests McGee's belief that New Zealand society was moving towards a positive resolution in attempting to address the faults in their past attitudes surrounding masculinity. Regardless of this, the final scene which focuses on the stadium and the crowd serves as a continual reminder of how people continue subscribing to these powerful invented traditions. Perhaps the critics are right and the question of "whaddarya?" is still needed today in spite of McGee's belief that the issue of masculinity has progressed considerably since the question was first raised over twenty years ago.
Conclusion
"Whaddarya Man?" Twenty Odd Years From the Beginning

Shaped by the myths surrounding the triumphant All Black tour to Britain in 1905, the process of literary canonisation with the national/masculine literary movement in the 1930s and his own experiences as a child, it is hardly surprising that the issue of masculinity would come to influence the thinking of McGee. By the 1970s, McGee began to question the relevancy of these myths in an ever changing New Zealand social and political context.

The period between the 1980s and into the new millennium, when the two versions of Foreskin's Lament, Whitemen, Old Scores and Skin and Bone were produced, marked a time of crisis in New Zealand's social history. In particular, the focus of these plays on the national game and masculinity specifically means that the theme of major significance in these productions was the shifting nature of masculinity in New Zealand. The overwhelming public support these productions received indicates New Zealanders' interest in questioning traditional ways of defining themselves. As the dominant iconic figure in New Zealand history has been the rugby playing male, it is this figure who has been at the centre of McGee's investigation.

The original production of Foreskin's Lament is predominantly concerned with examining our past and above all our mythological perceptions of ourselves. The play focuses on destabilising gendered identities and the violence and macho culture which accompanied the desired traditional expectations of a true New Zealand male character. While Foreskin's Lament involves a return to the past, McGee's intention is not to recreate the past. As a contemporary text, the play is more interested in is returning to
the past to reinterpret it in order to come to an understanding of those values, times, and situations in the present. In this first work, it seems that what McGee is most interested in understanding is the reason behind New Zealand society's acceptance of clearly an outdated, repressive and brutal form of masculinity.

In particular, the ability to give voices to men in the play who were formerly marginalised by the traditional patriarchal definition of masculinity, permits the audience to witness a masculinity which is not shallow and singular but, diverse, vibrant, and emotionally alive. This point is extended out even further in the adaptation of the play.

In the rewritten version of Foreskin's Lament in 1985, McGee makes a direct move away from understanding the past to exploring the present. While the original text was firmly set in the past, the adaptation is more clearly set in the present climate of turmoil taking place in New Zealand with upheaval caused by the recent Springbok tour. The text thus no longer becomes a nostalgic view on what masculinity once was but what McGee believes it now is. While the signs of a fragmented masculinity were present in the original work they are much more vividly presented in the newer version. Men such as Foreskin and Clean who were once afraid to contest the traditional perception of masculinity now do so openly. These are early indications that McGee is beginning to see the multiplicity of masculine identities which now existed in New Zealand society. At the same time, Larry's adherence to the traditional macho image of masculinity illustrates that heterosexual masculinity can no longer be defined in this style. However, the fact that Larry retains a number of values associated with the nostalgic image of the Kiwi male suggests that McGee does not totally want to eradicate this traditional figure altogether.
Whitemen, produced in 1986 to mark the controversial Cavalier rugby tour to South Africa, illustrates that the crisis surrounding the grip of masculinity even had McGee perplexed. Though many critics have argued that the philosophical values have been lost in the play, as a result of McGee's use of slapstick humour, I would be inclined to disagree with this position. The significance of Whitemen is that it offers a compromising position which is not present in either of the previous Foreskin's Laments'. Whitemen's success lies in the way that while it discourages society as to the dangers in reproducing and reliving the past, the play suggests that without an understanding of it we are equally in peril. This emphasises the view that McGee believes that in order for a society to know where it is going in the future it needs to remember where it has been in its past. At the same time, the past in Whitemen is not as lamentable a thing as the one which is presented in the previous versions of Foreskin's Lament. What McGee urges his audience to extract from Whitemen is that New Zealanders need to take the best from their past, their mythologies, and rearrange them so that they can embrace a greater male audience.

On the other hand, Old Scores illustrates even more than Whitemen that theatrical productions not only serve to investigate society, but are also influenced by that culture. The film was commissioned in 1991 not only to herald in the second rugby world cup but also to celebrate one hundred years of New Zealand playing test match rugby. Above all, the commission was to commemorate a tradition and that in particular was the traditional image of masculinity which emerged from this rugby culture. Yet, despite McGee's desires to please his commissioners, the play still presents subtle critiques towards the tradition of masculinity being preserved and
revered. In particular, Old Score's preoccupation with the male fear of castration both physically and metaphorically, is evident in the film. At the beginning of the film, the desire to be "one of the boys" is a universal desire among the men. To be anything less is considered being less of a man. Nevertheless, over time the men in the team realise that it is within the boundaries of the team that they are regulated the most and it is the need to break free from this environment which forms the eventual basis for the male characters' desires to liberate themselves. The 'coming out' of characters in the film from their previously repressed state and the new vibrancy of their released personalities reveal the multiplicity of masculinities which exist in New Zealand today. However, while Old Scores contests outdated masculine stereotypes, the film still conveys the sexual, emotional and physical violence associated with the traditional definition of masculinity.

Finally, Skin and Bone seeks to do what the other two versions of Foreskin's Lament and the other works could not do, and that is to present the possibility of a harmonious relationship between men with differing values. That Foreskin chooses Moira over his mates and the tradition of masculinity at the end of the film signifies the end of an era of male chauvinism. The Foreskin in this production becomes a far more likeable character from a female perspective because of the fact that Foreskin is prepared to place a woman in a position of equality instead of accepting a tradition which has historically relegated women to a secondary position in New Zealand society. At the same time, the reconstruction of Foreskin's masculinity by McGee negates the traditional concept of masculinity which also marginalised men who did not conform such as Larry. As a consequence, this negation of the traditional image of the
emotionally cold rugby playing New Zealand male provides a space where all masculine individuals can find acceptance in New Zealand.

McGee's two versions of *Foreskin's Lament*, *Whitemen*, *Old Scores* and *Skin and Bone* are a testimony to the notion that it is no longer possible for one play or one character to represent the voice and image of the New Zealand male. I believe that the multiplicity of agendas, audiences and New Zealand characters in the works of McGee reflect the multiplicity which is present in our own society. The success of all of these works above all emphasises that society's interest in the issue of masculinity is strong. A reason why this may be the case is because in addition to a preoccupation with trying to come to terms with our past, it seems more likely that the fundamental factor which attracts people to these works is the uncertainty of what constitutes a New Zealand man. The resonance of Foreskin's "Whaddarya?" then is still very relevant today as it was in the 1980s when McGee first presented it to New Zealand. While the question has led to a few answers and undoubtedly a passionate defensive stance by some men towards their faith in the old perception of masculinity, there is little doubt that the question will continue to provoke new questions in the future as to where masculinity stands in New Zealand.
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