



Masculinities in Victorian Painting (The Nineteenth Century Series)

Joseph A. Kestner

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This fully illustrated study examines the construction of masculinity in culture based on an analysis of pictorial representations of the male in a wide range of contexts: social, historical, legal, literary, institutional, anthropological, educational, marital, imperial and aesthetic. Powerful images from the work of dozens of Victorian artists - from Leighton, Waterhouse, Burne-Jones and Alma-Tadema to Dicksee, Pettie, Watts, Woodville and Tuke to name a few - are used to illustrate the 5 key paradigms of masculinity: the classical hero, the gallant knight, the challenged paterfamilias, the valiant soldier and the male nude. Aspects of 20th-century theory such as rescue compulsion, male sexuality, the male gaze and racial ideas are also considered. The author concludes that maleness was, and is, learned and 19th-century ideas still influence the construction of manhood today; that social institutions are influenced by, and themselves use, artistic representation; that artistic images strongly influence ideas of gender; and that multi-disciplinary cultural study is the best way to examine the formation of gender ideologies.

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