

Leisure and Pleasure: Reshaping and Revealing the New Zealand Body 1900–1960. By Caroline Daley. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2003. 308 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-86940-291-X.

LEISURE AND PLEASURE is an intensively researched and engagingly written book that will be of interest to academic and non-academic audiences alike. Consisting of seven chapters, this book contains research on a diverse range of physical pursuits popular in New Zealand in the first half of the twentieth century, from tanning and swimming to nudism. In doing so, *Leisure and Pleasure* reveals the delicate balance between institutional and governmental attempts to control populations as a whole, and the diverse and often unexpected uses to which individuals put these endeavours to regulate their activities.

Daley's analysis of early twentieth-century concerns and investments in the 'modern' human body is refracted through the fascinating figure of 'strongman' Eugen Sandow. Sandow began his career as a kind of carnival strongman. Through clever marketing, and by tapping into concerns of modernity, morality and racial health and purity, he gained a following in many countries including New Zealand. Daley's examination of Sandow reveals trends that are still evident almost a century after Sandow's acclaimed tour of New Zealand: the body as spectacle, the body as commodity, and the body as a symbol of both individual and collective social and spiritual well-being. Sandow is also extremely useful as a demonstration of the blurred boundaries between the concepts of leisure and pleasure. Leisure and pleasure, as Daley explains, 'are not synonymous. Leisure has been defined as 'what is *licensed* . . . as legitimate pleasure' [p.9]. There have been constant attempts to control and regulate the pursuits undertaken when the body is not at work, and ideologies of physical fitness were not exempt from this. Sandow's honed physical body was very much an example of control. However, as spectacle, his body also lent visual pleasure to his audiences of both sexes, who were able, with impunity, to gaze on a practically nude male body that under different circumstances was a completely proscribed activity.

Daley describes her work as possibly 'idiosyncratic' in that it 'is about the body at leisure but ignores sport; it is about New Zealand, but does not purport to tell a national story It is about bodies but . . . gender and sexuality are not a focus' [p.10]. While theories of gender and the body inform the approach of this work they are not foregrounded, paving the way for future theoretical analysis of the body with the specificities of New Zealand history in mind. For example, it would be extremely interesting to apply Richard Dyer's theories of white masculinity to the figure of Sandow. Of particular interest would be analysis of the ways in which bodily control and tanning or 'bronzing' the body played themselves out in an early twentieth-century New Zealand preoccupied with racial superiority.¹ In considering the concepts of leisure and pleasure in tandem, and the tension between control and subversion, Daley provides a fascinating extension of Foucault's theories of the 'docile body'² and further illuminates both the need, and the means, to take resistance into account when interrogating attempts to regulate populations. In ignoring sport, Daley opens up the space to examine those often absent from histories of leisure that are team-sport oriented — women. She also takes the reader on a journey through New Zealand that avoids the pitfalls of many histories linking sport and national identity, which focus purely on public expressions of white masculinity.

Just after finishing my reading of *Leisure and Pleasure*, it seemed apt that I should find myself at Auckland's Tepid Baths. As I swam what felt like interminable laps, I thought about what the baths had been like when they first opened in 1914. Gone is the gender segregation, with its ubiquitous red flag denoting the brief time the baths were open to women. There was certainly much more female flesh on display with the decidedly less

than neck-to-knee swimming costumes of the early twenty-first century. Gone too is the racial exclusivity that forbade the usage of the baths by non-white New Zealanders during the 1920s. However, what remains is the blurred relationship between leisure and pleasure. My laps, and those of other swimmers, were dutifully performed with regard to health and physical well-being in a culture that continues to equate fitness with virtue in a way Eugen Sandow would have appreciated. Also very much in evidence was the pleasure physical activity can provide both of itself, and in the social interaction it provides. Similarly, the pleasures of looking at other bodies are also evident in 2003, and overlap with the leisure pursuits of maintaining the fit body. The bodies described in Daley's book as sites of control and resistance, leisure and pleasure, have changed in shape and form throughout the twentieth century. What remains are the contemporary cults of physicality and surveillance that are simultaneously upheld, and resisted by, individuals enjoying their own, and other people's, corporeality.

SARA BUTTSWORTH

University of Western Australia

1 See Richard Dyer, *White*, London & New York, 1997.

2 For a description of the 'docile body' see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, Harmondsworth, 1991 [first published 1975]. For reflections on the failure of Foucault to take into account the politics of resistance, see I. Diamond & L. Quinby (eds), *Feminism & Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*, Boston, 1988.

While You're Away: New Zealand Nurses at War 1899–1948. By Anna Rogers. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2003. 352 pp. NZ price: \$39.99. ISBN 1-86940-301-0.

'WHEN NEW ZEALAND'S SONS were serving the Empire in the field it was only right that her daughters, who were able and willing, should be allowed to do so too.' Or so argued Dr Marshall Macdonald the President of the Dunedin branch of the New Zealand Trained Nurses' Association in 1914. Anna Rogers' book ably details the struggle of New Zealand nurses to establish a military nursing service. In the Anglo-Boer war 30 New Zealand women sidestepped the New Zealand government's refusal to send nurses to accompany the troops by paying their own way, appealing to the British government for financial assistance, or funding their work by public donation. At the beginning of the Great War nurses and their supporters criticized the government for its foot-dragging over the implementation of pre-war proposals for an Army Nursing Service. The first 50 nurses eventually left New Zealand in April 1915, and although they and the nurses who followed them did much to improve the standard of care for injured soldiers their status remained ambiguous. Despite prior agreements that the nurses were to have officer rank, it was widely believed that the law allowed only men to be members of the armed services. Nurses were paid less than orderlies and, particularly on hospital ships, could often find themselves in dispute with senior officers about their relative duties and entitlements. Nor were post-war arrangements smooth. After returning home the Boer war nurses found themselves fighting for the gratuities they were entitled to; returned World War I nurses discovered they had been omitted from the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act and the Repatriation Act. By World War II, the status of nurses was clearer; the newly formed New Zealand Nursing Council assisted government and the military authorities in recruiting for the NZANS and by May 1940 more than 1200 nurses had volunteered. Six hundred would eventually serve overseas. Discrimination against women who married while in service was less pronounced and returned nurses were eligible for rehabilitation loans and study grants. The domestic imperative was still in place however,