

the lives of ordinary people in transnational contexts and the roles they played in establishing settler colonialism in the British settler colonies. What I recommend reading and assigning this book for, however, is Bradbury's masterful inclusion of her historical methodology throughout the book. She details what the sources tell her and cannot tell her about the family and demonstrates how small details in the record allow her to construct her narrative. *Caroline's Dilemma* is a masterclass in integrating analysis, narrative, and critical methodology to produce a sprawling account of the ordinary people who were fundamental to the expansion of settler colonialism in British colonies, and the continuing connections to kin and country at home that supported the work of empire abroad.

Erin Millions   
University of Winnipeg  
[e.millions@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:e.millions@uwinnipeg.ca)

PAUL R. DESLANDES. *The Culture of Male Beauty in Britain: From the First Photographs to David Beckham*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021. Pp. 432. \$45.00 (cloth).  
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In 1898, the *Illustrated Police News* adorned the front cover of one of its editions with a drawing, “A Lady Artist and Her Handsome Model.” In *The Culture of Male Beauty in Britain: From the First Photographs to David Beckham*, Paul R. Deslandes elegantly draws out the problematic implications of viewing the “exposed male body. . . as both a site of pleasure and peril” (122). Leaving aside the question of whether being “handsome” was essentially the same as being beautiful, Deslandes's key revelation is that this was not just an issue that concerned a scandalous minority, but an integral element of mainstream culture. Why is it then that academic study has focused on female beauty but relegated its male equivalent to the margins when this was not the case in much of popular and commercial culture? Perhaps homophobia—fear of *seeming* queer—has played a role in this, and Deslandes offers us a very welcome corrective.

His book, with a few exceptions, such as Henry Scott Tuke (who was an Edwardian painter of nude male youth), focuses not on elite practices such as art and modernist design, but on the visual culture of the mass media, particularly photographs and magazines. His argument is that the mass media was in service to capitalist enterprise. This meant that modern beauty was not just about aesthetic appreciation but also about improvement of the self. The reader is introduced to a wealth of fascinating material and some particularly wonderful illustrations. The journey is chronological and picaresque. On the way, the reader encounters Victorian physiognomists, racists and pseudo-scientists, hairdressers, advertisers, photographers, and pornographers and learns about the fascination with exemplary role models in imperial and postimperial Britain, such as athletes and celebrities. The disfiguring experience of World War One is powerfully documented, although it remains unclear why World War Two was less significant in British cultures of male beauty and ugliness. The second half of the book leads the reader through the postwar rise of the teenager, the cult of bodybuilding, the appearance of countercultures, and finally to contemporary gender fluidity and male insecurity.

Periodization remains a slight problem. Why start with the “first photographs” when satirical prints parodied a commercialized practice of male beauty in the Georgian period (from Restoration fops to Regency dandies)? And why conclude with David Beckham when his status as the beauty of his age does not come through nearly so clearly as that of Rupert Brooke a century earlier? More could be said about social snobbery and resistance to commercial culture as vulgar, trashy, and really not quite beautiful at all. The discussion of glamour

could be extended to explore the paradox that the beauty of the celebrities drew its fascination from the very fact that the fans could not truly emulate it. There was also something of a melancholy quality about the cult of beauty in that even its greatest idols would grow old. Unless, that is, like Rupert Brooke, they died young. It is, therefore, hardly surprising to find that the culture of masculine beauty consistently focused on ideals of strength, youth, and affluence.

Those continuities notwithstanding, Deslandes usefully highlights more diverse standards of beauty on offer, as when he talks about different attitudes to hair (long versus short, or Euro versus Afro). Diversity in sexuality led to episodes of stylistic complexity, as in the 1970s when straight men dabbled with androgyny and gay men attempted to reclaim butch masculinity. Deslandes might have done a bit more work to problematize the boundaries of male beauty, youth, and sexiness along the lines of Germaine Greer's *The Beautiful Boy* (2003). Perhaps he was wary of getting sidetracked by debates on pederastic desire. But, as he remarks at the end of the book, there is indeed more to be said about youth and age (324). The power of the patriarchy (be it ever so balding) might partly reside in its resistance to self-scrutiny and the projection of its gaze onto the bodies of youths of both sexes.

This book is about discourses and practices, but it is haunted by classical and romantic images of male beauty as an ideal. A variety of feminists have long pointed out the burdens of such idealization on women and it would be interesting to read a study on the oppressive culture of male beauty. Deslandes has some interesting things to say about discourses of ugliness, most powerfully in relation to World War One disfigurement and AIDS, but his work could also have interrogated that most common enemy of beauty, which is, arguably, not horror but mediocrity. And then there is the question of Britishness. Many countries witnessed the rise of the capitalist mass media at the same time as the United Kingdom. Were Brooke, Beckham, and their ilk exemplary of modern male beauty or only of a distinctly British variant of it? It is, perhaps, the sign of a really worthwhile book that it raises even more questions than it answers.

Dominic Janes   
Keele University  
[d.janes@keele.ac.uk](mailto:d.janes@keele.ac.uk)

JEANNE DUBINO, PAULINA PAJĄK, CATHERINE W. HOLLIS, CELIESE LYPKA, and VARA NEVEROW, eds. *The Edinburgh Companion to Virginia Woolf and Contemporary Global Literature*. Edinburgh Companions to Literature and the Humanities. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021. Pp. 464. \$195.00 (cloth).  
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*The Edinburgh Companion to Virginia Woolf and Contemporary Global Literature* contributes to the ongoing and urgent project to situate Woolf in conversation with both contemporary and global contexts. Expanding on Brenda Silver's *Virginia Woolf Icon* (1999), the editors and contributors to this collection explore the complexities of Woolf's status as a global, transnational icon, in terms of both her reception and her influence. This volume of twenty-three essays is shaped by the convergence of two paradigms of planetarity and globality, an ecocritical model that encompasses the nonhuman, inspired by Susan Stanford Friedman's *Planetary Modernisms: Provocations on Modernity across Time* (2015), and a sociopolitical gesture that challenges the domination of the Global North, inspired by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's *Death of a Discipline* (2003). The editors of this volume, Jeanne Dubino, Paulina Pajåk, Catherine W. Hollis, Celiese Lypka, and Vara Neverow, display an impressive understanding of the intellectual and political stakes of studies in global literature and the institutionally marginalized discipline of