



## Australian Patriography

How Sons Write Fathers in Contemporary Life Writing

Stephen Mansfield

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**A study of modern Australian life writing by sons who focus on their fathers that offers compelling readings of Raimond Gaita's 'Romulus, My Father', Peter Rose's 'Rose Boys' and many others.**

*'This book is about autobiographical writing in Australia, but Stephen Mansfield's work has profound implications for patrimonial life narratives and father-son relationships everywhere. Employing scholarship from psychology, sociology and humanistic literary study, he exposes both the fault lines of Australian father-son relationships, with their emphasis on silence, privacy and repression, but also honours the way the life writers strive to understand and repair the damage arising from those affiliations. Mansfield renders the voices in those memoirs with a powerful, reverberative voice of his own.'* —Roger Porter, author of *'Bureau of Missing Persons: Writing the Secret Lives of Fathers'*

*'This thoroughly insightful study of patriography fills an important gap in life writing scholarship. Mansfield makes a crucial contribution to Australian literary studies in his analysis of autobiography, masculinity and the paternal inheritance. "Australian Patriography" offers an original and significant review of contemporary literatures which will resonate broadly.'* —Kate Douglas, author of *'Contesting Childhood: Autobiography, Trauma and Memory'*

The Son's Book of the Father, as Richard Freadman termed it, is a rich field of relational autobiography, offering a unique set of tensions and insights into modes of masculinity, notions of identity and the ethics of representing another's life in writing one's own.

This study of modern Australian life writing by sons who focus on fathers places an emerging sub-genre within its literary ancestry and its contemporary milieu. Providing compelling readings of Raimond Gaita's 'Romulus, My Father', Peter Rose's 'Rose Boys' and many others, this is the first study of its kind within Australian literature.

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Stephen Mansfield is an independent scholar as well as a casual research assistant and tutor in the Department of English at Sydney University, Australia.

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