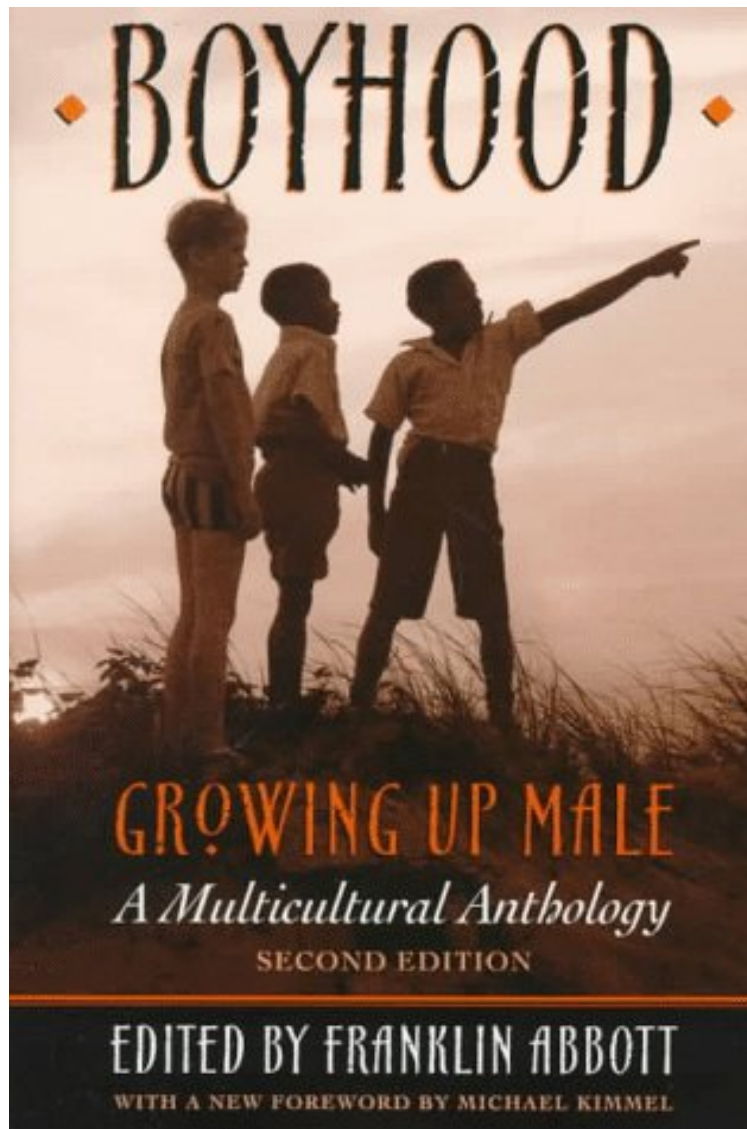


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Boyhood, Growing Up Male: A Multicultural Anthology

Jack Franklin Jr. Abbott

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#1526567 in Books 1998-03-15Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .70 x 6.00l, .88 #File Name:
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Jack Franklin Jr. Abbott : Boyhood, Growing Up Male: A Multicultural Anthology before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Boyhood, Growing Up Male: A Multicultural Anthology:

By turns touching, funny, poignant, and painful, Boyhood chronicles the road to manhood through the personal

narratives and poems of accomplished writers from around the world. Contributors include Shepherd Bliss, Robert Bly, Edward Field, John Gilgun, Fred Wei-han Ho, Terry A. Kupers, Rakesh Ratti, John Silva, Malidoma P. Som, Sy Safransky, Bhante Wimala, and many others.

From Publishers Weekly Though some of these more than 40 personal accounts of boyhood convey the exquisite angst spawned by the contemporary men's movement, the broad range of experiences should strike many chords. A first section groups stories of emerging boyhood: Gordon Murray links childhood bullying to the macho bluster of the Gulf War, while Shepherd Bliss, the son of a career soldier, laments his circumcision and his family's warrior culture. In a second section, on family life, Oka Martin recalls the masculine dominance of traditional Nigerian society, while the Maltese-born John Mifsud learns of the WW II heroism of a father whose Alzheimer's disease had rendered him lost to his young son. The third section, on boyhood and the world, includes one devastating essay: Jerrold Ladd's potent account of surviving in the Dallas ghetto as the child of a junkie mother who enlisted his aid in shooting up and sent him begging to neighbors for food. A final section, on boyhood and the soul, includes Thomas Moore's evocation of how his grandfather died saving his life. The book presents not only international voices, but gay ones as well. Some of the essays and poems originally appeared in magazines like *The Sun* and *Changing Men*. Abbott edited *Men and Intimacy*. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Booklist It was inevitable that a volume of prose and poetry about growing up male would emerge from the men's movement. Most men's movement books are filled with psychoanalysis and case studies, but here each man is asked to reminisce thoughtfully on his formative years. For the most part, the entries come from dysfunctional-family situations (the one fascinating exception is Terry Kupers' "Schoolyard Fights," in which he muses on how he's big enough to be the playground bully, but chooses to act as pacifist instead). Entries come from all over the globe (of particular interest are the pieces by Nigerian Obi Zikora and Filipino John Silva) and explore all sorts of subjects (dads with guns, growing up gay, living with elderly people, and experiencing war as a child). The lighter touch of the verse helps counter some of the angst-ridden prose pieces. Finally, Abbott rightly suggests that the book be used in men's therapy groups as a jumping-off point for verbalizing feelings about boyhood.

About the Author Franklin Abbott is a poet, psychotherapist, activist, and editor living in Atlanta, Georgia. He is the editor of two anthologies: *New Men, New Minds* (1987) and *Men Intimacy* (1990). The contributors are from the U.S., Europe, Latin America, Africa, and China.