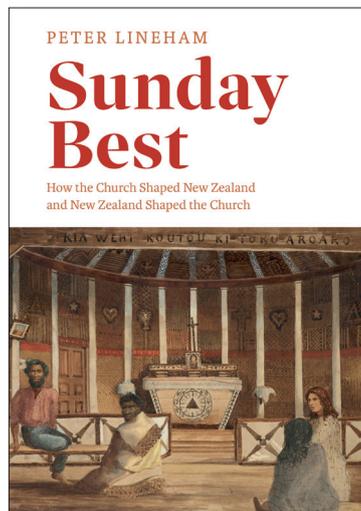




Sunday Best

How the church shaped New Zealand and New Zealand shaped the church

PETER LINEHAM



\$55.00

CATEGORY: History

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HOW THE IMPRINT OF THE CHURCH DOMINATES NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY EVEN IN THIS SECULAR AGE

The early missionaries had their work cut out for them when trying to establish a new 'moral colony' in New Zealand. The laissez-faire attitude of the pioneers often played havoc with their attempts to get them into church pews on Sundays, and keep society on what the ministers thought was the 'straight and narrow'. In short, the results were mixed: we have never been a highly religious society.

That said, well-known religious historian Peter Lineham argues in his lively new book *Sunday Best* that to understand New Zealand society and culture today we must reflect on the religious culture that helped to shape it — from the redoubtable temperance movement to the push for social justice and gender equality. The past influence of the church explains so many of our present-day prohibitions, inhibitions, enthusiasms, civic ceremonies and rituals.

Lineham examines the dominance of Anglicanism, the strict Presbyterianism of the south, the enclaves of Catholicism and Methodism, the work of women's church committees, the role of the debutante ball and the Sunday school picnic, the critical role of women despite their lack of agency within church hierarchies, the place of music and architecture, the eternal business of fundraising, and the impact of the loss of social 'glue' now the communities surrounding churches have faded.

The book is generously illustrated with over 90 evocative and little-known images from church archives, Alexander Turnbull Library and personal collections.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Professor Peter Lineham has for many years written and lectured extensively on the religious history of New Zealand, although his earliest work, still continuing, was on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history of British Protestant sects. His recent work has focused on broader trends in contemporary religion, but he has not lost his fascination with the nineteenth-century adjustment of religion within New Zealand. His most recent book is *Destiny: the Life and Times of a Self-made Apostle* (Penguin, 2013). He is currently engaged in various projects on new religious movements in New Zealand, and on Brethren, Protestant, Evangelical and Anglican history.

SALES POINTS

- A novel and fresh look at our history, through an unexpected perspective
- Engagingly written, with an energetic and vivid approach
- Heavily illustrated with wonderful early photographs
- Gets to the origins of so many of our present-day prohibitions, inhibitions, enthusiasms and civic events and routines
- Widespread media coverage planned

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‘The argument of this book is that understanding religious culture is highly desirable for our understanding of New Zealand society and culture as a whole.’

— PETER LINEHAM

