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Parading Order:
**The Invention and Success of Competitive
Marching for Women and Girls, 1940s-1960s**

Competitive marching as a sport for girls and young women was developed and codified in the years immediately following World War Two, reaching a peak of popularity in the 1950s and 1960s. Regimental in its style of movement and music it was also, in its short skirts and showy costumes, a subversion of militarist traditions. Display was integral to the sport and constituted its judging criteria. The paper explores the popularity and political endorsement of marching as a sport in New Zealand in the Cold War era, examining the ways in which it offered both a powerful form of public performance of participants and a highly controlled and idealized form of impervious femininity.