



Kylie Minogue performing at the Christmas Tour of Duty concert, Dili, East Timor, 1999.

flannel suit conformity of the 1950s and men, like women, want to express their individuality. The truth about metrosexuality, says Dr Darryl Higgins, of the School of Psychology at Victoria's Deakin University, is that more and more men are displaying peacock-like traits, such as forking out \$50 to get their hair styled, without being full-blown metro narcissists. And don't blame gay men for the trend – *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* aside – the pressure on men to look better is being driven by a much more powerful force: women. GC

[Don't call them shampoos or conditioners] and keeping his body as buffed as possible. Marketers and trend trackers who describe the metrosexual phenomenon inevitably point to gyms on every other corner, soaring sales for men's cosmetics and the boom in upmarket male clothing outlets. Mega metro-sexuals include David Beckham, Ricky Martin and Ian Thorpe (pictured); minor metrosexuals might include TV celebrity Jamie Durie and footballers Luke Ricketson and Shane Crawford.

Critics of the metrosexual trend say it is yet another example of masculinity in crisis; they argue that our cossetting, consumerist culture is stripping men of their dignity and turning them into sissies. But is the metrosexual a real phenomenon? Over the past 15 years we've heard labels such as SNAG and New Man, referring to a "new breed" of bloke in touch with his feminine side. The difference now is that the metrosexual is supposed to get blond tips with his blow wave and pass up the quiche for *pâte de foie gras*.

It's all marketing gobbledegook, harrumphs

