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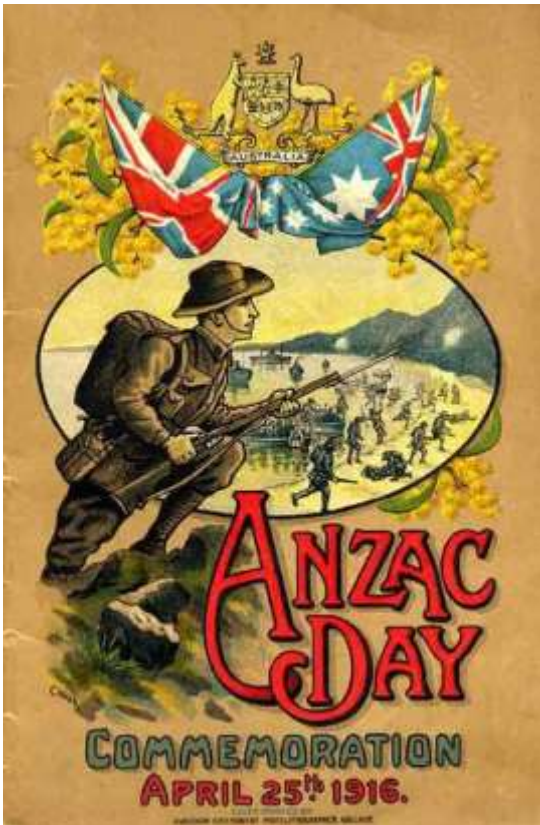


**The Anzac Day Legend:
Its Origins, Meaning, Power and Impact
on Shaping Australia's Identity**

Master's of Peace and Conflict Studies Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

The Anzac legend lies at the centre of Australian identity and in recent years has become a sacred, untouchable element of national pride. In fact, some claim it is beginning to crowd out other significant events and accomplishments of Australia's past and is distorting our understanding of our history. This dissertation sets out to scrutinise the legend to find out if there is any truth to this claim, what has been overlooked or forgotten and ask whether nations are truly made in war.

Sonja Bates

Master's Degree in Peace and Conflict Studies

'For god's sake, don't glorify Gallipoli - it was a terrible fiasco, a total failure and best forgotten'.

- Alec Campbell, Australia's last World War One veteran on his deathbed.

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PREAMBLE

In 2010, I returned to teaching and ironically my very first day back on the job was at my old primary school in the northwest region of Sydney. It was all rather surreal as the playground looked tiny and the hall and its stage appeared more like one from a doll's house and nowhere near as imposing as it was to me back in the '70s. The blackboard had been replaced by a Smartboard and it seemed the world of the classroom had been revolutionised in my absence. I felt like an immigrant to the brave new world of technology which was also rather ironic as I had been a real live migrant in the very same classroom, all those years ago.

I worked there during the 2010 April Anzac Day preparations. While I was experiencing my own private state of déjà vu, some of the rhetoric seemed terribly familiar:

'How dare you laugh!' yelled one of the teachers at the group of boys giggling at something completely irrelevant, 'These men died for your country, they died so that you can enjoy the life of freedom that you take for granted. These men died for you and you had better take this seriously!' The boys looked completely bewildered and had no idea what Anzac Day had to do with their lives. I shared their confusion; what exactly was the nexus between Anzac Day, our freedom, and our current way of life?

The class was learning the words to the song they were to sing at the upcoming Anzac Day Ceremony: "Can You Hear the Soldiers Marching?" by Peter Barnes. My mouth gaped open as I listened to the lyrics¹:

*Can you hear Australia's heroes marching?
Can you hear them marching into eternity?
There will never be a greater love
There just couldn't be a greater sacrifice
There just couldn't be.....*

It was pure Orwellian propaganda, jingoistic brainwashing and I was shocked that students as young as five and six were being taught such a song. This experience

¹ Peter Barnes, *Can You Hear Australia's Heroes Marching?*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rL8u00l0CnE>, last viewed 9/11/13. See Appendix 1 for complete lyrics.

unlocked an uncomfortable suspicion within me that there was something wrong with the Anzac Day inculcation; a suspicion I had had since being accused of being a Nazi at seven years of age due to my German heritage and my revealing last name of Bartsch, (Yes, that's right sch not sh). If being a Nazi was the epitome of ultimate evil, then how different was this kind of indoctrination to the one that Nazi Youth had been fed; and if it led to those young people into the dangerous world of obsessive nationalism, then why was Australia bathing in it as if it were a sweet smelling soap made up of glory, heroism and pride? Did Australians believe they were pure and righteous, immune to committing violent acts of racism or genocide?

At a recent dinner party I was politely asked what my dissertation was focusing on, and when I shared that I would be questioning the Anzac legend, the evening and atmosphere quickly went sour and I was accused of rewriting history, that I clearly didn't understand Anzac Day because I was German and how dare I.

Pardon? I was only questioning its function and place within Australian culture and if merely questioning it would evoke such strong emotions I knew I was onto something. With the bitter taste of pugnacious patriotism offered up as an after-dinner mint, I silently became more determined than ever to research the facts and myths behind the Anzac legend.

INTRODUCTION

The following dissertation sets out to examine the myths and underlying dynamics that have placed the Anzac legend and its Anzac Day celebration at the very heart of our national identity. In order to unpack, examine and deliberate on the social and cultural stents that have been strategically placed within the arteries of our Australian identity, the dissertation will set Anzac Day into historical context so as to best determine whether or not our nation was truly born on the battlefields of Gallipoli.

To be clear, the dissertation will not evaluate whether it was right or wrong for Australia to go to any of the various wars or whether the lives lost was worth the sacrifice. The analysis of the Anzac Day legend will be primarily viewed through a Peace and Conflict lens to understand how it became our creation story. Issues and concerns surrounding Anzac resurgence, in particular with the pending centenary where the nation is predicted to exult in jubilation in a coming-of-age celebration will be opened up to scrutiny. Rituals and symbolism that cloak the annual event will be removed so as to see what lies underneath it all, to see if there are indeed any covert and carcinogenic elements such as racism, sexism or dextrous manipulation that have gone undetected.

Some of the questions that will be explored include: Is there any merit to the claim that Australian history is becoming distorted by over sentimentalised versions of our involvement in war? Are significant aspects of our history, that have directly contributed to the life our peace and prosperity, being overshadowed by the continuing militarisation of our history? What exactly is the nexus between our freedom and the Anzacs? Have the Australian people been hoodwinked into allowing the military's history to become one so embedded within our cultural identity that we dare not question it? How can Australians find the humility and reflection that is missing in the Anzac Day celebrations to remember that we did not only die but we also killed?

During the twentieth century, Australia evolved from a self-governing British colony made of seven states into a modern multicultural nation that is envied by many for its quality of life and equal opportunity. To quote Paul Hogan in the 1984 ad campaign

for Australia: 'It's the land of wonder, the land down under'.² Australians like all other nations, have lived through many defining moments. Professor Helen Irving points out in her article *Tragic Choice for a National Myth*, the Australian population mix continues to change with each decade and the variety of ways of being Australian has altered with it.³ The compliant historiography to perpetually distil the Australian identity in one historical moment denies the richness and complexity of contemporary Australian life, not to mention downplaying its own bloody past.

The dissertation will look at how the meaning of Anzac Day has changed over the last 10 decades and explain how the day reflects our ever evolving attitudes and understanding of who we are as Australians. Why do we look to our involvement in wars to understand and coalesce our national identity? If it is true that our nation was born on the battlefields of Gallipoli then what role does Federation play? Federation Day hardly holds a special place in the psyche of Australians; most see the 1st of January as New Year's Day and wouldn't know it is our official day of nationhood.⁴ Why is that? Would the average Australian know who Henry Parkes is or the name of our first Prime Minister?⁵ What exactly is missing that these significant nation-forming events do not make an emotional and seminal national story?

The dissertation will set out to find out the nexus between other illuminating absences in our annual events calendar and our need to adopt Anzac Day as the *real* national day rather than alternatives such as Empire Day, Foundation Day or Australia Day itself. Critics of a resurgence in fevered nationalism that Anzac Day enflames are concerned that it has become what Don Watson coined the 'opium of a nation':

² Paul Hogan television advertisement, 1984: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xn_CPrCS8gs> last viewed 29/9/2013.

³ Irving, H., 'Tragic Choice for a National Myth', *The Australian* [Canberra, A.C.T] 27 Apr 2001: 13.

⁴ The Federation of Australia was the process by which the six separate self-governing states of Australia formed one nation. They kept the systems of government that they had developed as separate colonies but also would have a federal government that was responsible for matters concerning the whole nation. When the Constitution of Australia came into force, on 1 January 1901, the colonies collectively became states of the Commonwealth of Australia.

⁵ Henry Parkes is considered the founding father of our Federation even though he was a British national. Our first Prime Minister was Sir Edmund Barton (1901-1903).

[Anzac Day has become] a new organic national day to the inexhaustible advantage of politics, commerce and persuaders of all kinds. We appear to be in the presence of a default state religion.⁶

Is there any truth to Watson's claim? Is nationalism our new religion, one that claims to speak for the dead and give meaning to their sacrifice?

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A variety of historians have looked at the different aspects of Anzac Day such as war and gender and the militarisation of our history by Marilyn Lake, Mark McKenna, Joy Damousi, Susanna De Vries, Miriam Dixon and Henry Reynolds, who also researches the exclusion of the Frontier Wars in our Anzac Day commemorations.⁷ Tracing the development of the Anzac cult reflected in the ubiquitous war memorials that scatter the Australian landscape by K.S. Inglis, who also looked at the movements that rejected the Anzac legend.⁸ The impact and power Anzac Day has on our national identity examined by Alistair Thomson and Bill Gammage.⁹ Peter Stanley who looks at the darker side of who the Anzacs were.¹⁰ Robin Gerster and Robin Prior scrutinise the heroic theme in Australian war writing.¹¹ As well as the outspoken, conservative historians Keith Windshuttle and Geoffrey Blainey who claim that there is an excessive focus on negative aspects of Australian history and the contribution of European settlers downplayed.¹²

⁶ Watson, D., 'A New Opium', in *The Nation Reviewed*, The Monthly – June 2012.

⁷ Marilyn Lake & Henry Reynolds, *What's Wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2010); Mark McKenna, 'Anzac Day: How Did it Become Australia's National Day?', in Marilyn Lake & Henry Reynolds, eds., *What's Wrong With Anzac Day* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2010); Joy Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Susanne De Vries, *The Complete Book of Heroic Australian Women: Twenty-one Extraordinary Australian Women Whose Stories Changed History* (Pymble: Harper Collins, 2010), Miriam Dixon, *The Real Matilda: Women and Identity in Australia 1788 to Present* (Ringwood: Penguin Books Australia, 1984), Henry Reynolds, *Forgotten War* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2013).

⁸ K.S. Inglis, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001); K.S. Inglis, *Anzac Remembered: Selected Writings by K.S. Inglis* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 1998).

⁹ Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994); Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2010).

¹⁰ Peter Stanley, *Bad Characters: Sex, Crime, Mutiny, Murder and the Australian Imperial Force* (Sydney: Murdoch Books, 2010).

¹¹ Robin Gerster, *Big-Noting: The Heroic Theme in Australian War Writing* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1987); Robin Prior, *Gallipoli: The End of the Myth* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2009).

¹² Keith Windshuttle, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History* (Sydney: Macleay Press, 2005); Geoffrey Blainey, *An Eye on Australia: Speeches and Essays of Geoffrey Blainey* (Melbourne: Schwartz & Wilkinson, 1991). Blainey is highly critical of Lake & Reynolds' book *What's Wrong with Anzac*. See Geoffrey Blainey, *We Weren't That Dumb*, *The Australian Literary Review*, April 7th 2010.

The research will make use of all of these historians and their extensive work, as well as other social commentary, newspaper articles, journals and internet sources in order to paint a picture of what is at stake in terms of creating a peaceful nation that claims to value fairness, integrity, respect, compassion, tolerance and inclusion; an arresting disjunct considering the Anzac creation story was founded on killing, war and bloodshed.

Russell Ward's legendary description of the Aussie bushman and its prevalent conceptions of masculinity will be studied and how this iconic avatar of the Australian manhood eventually morphed itself into the Anzac digger.¹³ According to Ward, author of the 1958 landmark book *The Australian Legend*, the typical Australian was 'a practical man, rough, hard-drinking and a loyal mate'; an image that Australians still to this day call upon when wanting to define who we are.¹⁴ The obvious omission is the part of the Australian woman; she is once again overlooked and the relevance of such omissions, stereotypical imagery of the Australian identity and the exemplified gulf between history and mythology is examined.

An enormous body of research and publications is available lauding the ephemeral 'Anzac Spirit', but what exactly is it? The Anzac Spirit tries to capture the national character, one that was apparently born on the distant shores of Gallipoli. The dissertation will address the critics' perspective if this is more myth than fact and if this phenomenon is driven by a gnawing sense of colonial inferiority.

A mixture of secondary and primary sources will be drawn upon such as speeches, media reports, direct observations in addition to the plethora of historical accounts and books to provide irrefutable evidence that the valorisation and aggrandisement of Anzac Day deserves examination. It will primarily be a sociological study and closely look at the symbolism of words and language surrounding the Anzac narrative such as glory, heroic, diggers, sacrifice, bravery, loyalty, honour and of course the vernacular term of mateship.

¹³ A.G. Butler historian of the Medical Corps 1914-18 wrote that the term "'digger' reflected the whole social history of Australia": Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, p.23.

¹⁴ Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1958). Russell Ward looks at the ideals, traits and behaviours that Australians have come to think of as the stereotypical Australian. His claims that the characteristically Australian traits were first founded in the frontier life of the pastoral workers of the outback, which eventually pervaded Australian literature and life in general. Ward drew his analysis on documents and statistics, journals and papers and perhaps most vividly of all, on Australian folk-songs and ballads for his account.

The evidence will be presented in five equally weighted chapters and broken down into chronological corner stones, from 1915 to 2015, upon which the dissertation will build its argument. The first chapter will provide a properly contextualised historical overview and ask who were the Anzacs and why did they fight? What are the origins of Australians' favourite acronym ANZAC? It will shine a light on the much forgotten anti-war and anti-conscription movements in Australia revealing that not all were eager to give up their lives and the lives of those they love. Aspects of how the Anzacs were honoured and remembered will be examined right up to the mid-eighties when the Anzac Day revival began its modern day reinvention.

Chapter 2 explicates how the Anzac legend has become the epicentre of Australian nationalism. What influence did the Keating and Howard years have on the morphing of our adopted National Day and why is it a problem? It will examine the sentimental investment in our current version of Anzac Day and attempt to shed light on why more accurate and verifiable historians' work has made little impact on the public consciousness.

Chapter 3 will expose the underbelly of the Anzac legend to reveal the darker side of this Australian ritual. Is there inherent and entrenched sexism and racism built into this cultural icon? What has been forgotten, such as the Frontier Wars? Why are these 'wars' are not included in our confused and conflated understanding of our military history? The chapter will ask about the impact the war had on these young men such as depression, drunkenness, PTSD and other social maladies.

Chapter Four will ask if we are indeed militarising our history. It will unpack the history wars of recent times and how Anzac Day is the knot in the tug-of-war rope with historians such as Geoff Blainey and Keith Windshuttle and the coalition politicians such as Brendan Nelson and Christopher Pyne on the one end and historians Henry Reynolds and Stuart Macintyre and the ACARA (Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority) on the other. Putting aside the customary encomiums that adorn the Anzac heroes, the chapter will see which other significant people who have been overshadowed and forgotten by the relentless focus on Anzac heroes and evaluate what constitutes a hero and what do the iconic heroes of Australia tell us about ourselves.

The final chapter calls attention to the resonance of contemporary discourses and views leading to the 2015 centenary of Gallipoli where it is expected that the nation

will celebrate its coming-of-age with much gusto and enthusiasm. It will ask if Anzac Day glorifies war and why there are so many war memorials that punctuate our urban and rural landscape. It will attempt to put the quietus on Brendan Nelson's canard that the Australian War Memorial is the soul of the nation. The dangers of nationalism will be discussed bringing the dissertation full circle back to the preamble where intuitive disdain for nationalism was the impetus for pursuing this subject.

In conclusion, the evidence gathered will be placed into scholarly context within the confines of Peace and Conflict theories which emphasise peace with justice, equality for all, inclusiveness, non-violence and tolerance. It will examine how structural violence is embedded into the rituals, language and symbolism of Anzac Day and how these factors potentially desensitise Australians to any current or past war involvement and subdues dissent. The conclusion will argue that the Anzac legend perpetuates the male institutions of violence and diminishes the development of peaceful qualities such as diplomacy and compassion. It will put forward ideas on how Anzac Day might be rethought so as to make it more a day of reflection and to renew our commitment to peaceful solutions to global conflicts.

It is acknowledged in advance that themes the dissertation will touch on are massive and impossible to cover in full detail within the confines of the dissertation's word limit. Supplementary quotes, material and evidence will be provided in the Appendix to provide the reader with additional insight into the topic.

The key premise of the Anzac legend is that nations are made in war. The dissertation's conclusion will challenge this premise and beseech that it is time for Australia to look for alternative national traditions that truly reflect our aspiring values of fairness, tolerance and inclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE ANZAC LEGEND

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Mum: I bin talkin' to Wacka about it just tonight.

Hughie: Oh, Wacka, what would he know about it?

Alf: Don't you insult my mate, don't you insult him. He was there, wasn't he?

Hughie: What does the man who was there ever know about anything? All he knows is what he saw, one man's view from a trench. It's the people who come after, who can study it all, see the whole thing for what it was.¹⁵



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In the spirit of Alan Seymour's irreverent character Hughie, who is utterly disillusioned with the beery haze of the Anzac Day celebrations, this opening chapter will sift through the plethora of Anzac liturgy to place the legend into much needed historical context. Who were these eponymous 'diggers' and what motivated them are the central questions that will preoccupy this chapter.¹⁷ Light will be thrown on

¹⁵ Alan Seymour, *One Day of the Year* (Sydney: Harper Collins, 1962), p.82.

¹⁶ Roger Garwood, www.rogergarwood.org, Anzac Day in Freemantle 2011. Note the loving way in which the granddaughter (?) smiles at him. What does it say? Yep, that's my pop and he sure does deserve a drink after all he's been through.

¹⁷ Before World War I, the term 'digger' was widely used in Australia to mean a miner from the Gold Rush period in Australia (1951-1906). The term has egalitarian connotations from the Victorian Eureka Stockade Rebellion of 1854.

the forgotten anti-conscription and anti-war movements of the time so as to design a broad and deeper insight into the many facets of this era and to remind ourselves that not all Australians were eager to give up their lives or the lives of those they loved.

Chapter 1 will also find out the origins of the much loved acronym ANZAC and follow its development into the contemporary legendary status it enjoys today. Why does the acronym evoke such emotions and how can it claim to be suffused with Australian identity when it only includes a very narrow band of masculine values?

World War 1 (WW1), The Great War as it was to be known, began with the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife on June 28th 1914.¹⁸ It was the first domino to fall, triggering four years of bloodshed eventually soaking the complex tapestry of allegiances that went back centuries and tore Europe apart. It was expected to be the war to end all wars.

Once Belgium was drawn into the war, Great Britain declared war against Germany.¹⁹ With the British Empire now officially involved, through proxy so too was the recently federated antipodean colony of Australia.²⁰

At the turn of twentieth century Australia felt terribly vulnerable with its vast coastline and small population and was driven by paranoia of a pending Japanese invasion.²¹ As historian John Mordike points out in his book *We Should Do This Thing Quietly*, the imperial dimension of Australia's involvement has been overstated and the government of the time were far more motivated to secure the protection of its

¹⁸ The act was an attempt to fight for independence for Serbia, a proud people who had been ruled by the Austrian-Hungarian Empire since 1878.

¹⁹ Historian Greg Lockhardt points to evidence that shows that Great Britain had actually been preparing for war with Germany since 1909 and had also been in negotiation with Australia's Prime Minister Andrew Fisher and defence minister George Pearce to ensure Australia's commitment to provide the Mother Country with additional troops. Source: Greg Lockhardt, 'The Secret Centenary', *The Drum*, 17/6/11: <<http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/2761502.html>>, last viewed 29/9/2013.

²⁰ See Appendix 2 for an example of the headlines of the day. 'THE CALL TO THE COLORS'. (1915, August 6). *The Advertiser* (Adelaide, SA: 1889 - 1931), p. 9. Retrieved August 29, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5476735>.

²¹ Lockhardt also claims, through the work of historian John Mordike that in 1911 there was a clandestine meeting ensuring that the British got the extra man power and so Australia felt less vulnerable in their imagined Asian invasion. This covert meeting held between the British chief of the imperial general Sir William Nicholson, Australia's defence minister George Pearce and Australia's Prime Minister Andrew Fisher was held secret until in 1988 when the papers were found by defence historian John Mordike. Greg Lockhardt, 'The Secret Centenary', *The Drum*, June 2011, <<http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/2761502.html>>, last viewed 2/11/2013; See also Gammage, B., *The Broken Years*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2010), p2.

borders through British allegiance.²² An extract from a 1912 Australian paper *Barrier Miner* clearly highlights our paranoia and fear of the ‘yellow peril.’

Australia’s Danger

Our Great Empty Spaces Watched by Japan

Mr E. J. Brady, has been discussing the question of the security of Australia as a white nation. [...] there is grave and imminent danger from Eastern races desiring expansion. [...] we are a mere white outpost of Europeans, a scattered patrol along an enormous fringe which is open to any probable army of invasion.²³

With this state of mind, and despite violating the Australian Defence Act of 1903 which denied the Australian government authority to send troops out of the country, 330 770 Australian volunteers were sent to serve and support the British Imperial Army. Australia believed this would ensure future allied protection if such an Asian invasion were to ever occur; a decision which ultimately cost 60 000 Australian men their lives.

The imperial dimension was nonetheless a compelling driving factor. Historian Marilyn Lake, a prolific critic of the Anzac tradition, underscores the perspective that the Anzacs’ only role was to assist the ‘Motherland’. The diggers did not invade the Ottoman Empire to defend democracy but rather to support Britain.²⁴ As Ken Inglis, author of several books on the memorialisation of Anzac concurs, any close inspection of the plethora of war memorials found in any country town will remind contemporary Australians that these men fought for the Empire, her King and to secure allegiances with the Mother Country.

²² John Mordike, *We Should Do This Thing Quietly* (Canberra: Aerospace Centre RAAF base, 2002), p.95. See also David Walker, *An Anxious Nation, Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland, 1999), pp.98-112.

²³ ‘AUSTRALIA’S DANGER’. (1912, November 20). *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill, NSW: 1888 - 1954), p. 1. Retrieved September 25, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article45205513>. See Appendix 3 for full version. See also Walker, *An Anxious Nation*, pp.113-126. See also Gwenda Tavan, *The Long Slow Death of White Australia* (North Carlton: Scribe Publications, 2005), p.36

²⁴ Lake & Reynolds, *What’s Wrong With Anzac?*, pp.xii – xiii.

Putting aside the political motivation that underlay Australia's involvement in the war, who were the Anzac men and what motivated them?

Great reliance is placed on the idea that the Anzacs were superb fighters, instinctively egalitarian, distrustful of authority, endlessly resourceful, with a dry sardonic humour and above all loyal to their mates. Poet Scot Will Ogilvie exalted that they were 'The Bravest Thing God Ever Made!'²⁷ It's an enduring national stereotype deeply entrenched within the Australian psyche but what was its genesis and is there any merit to the many hyperbolic poetic descriptions that have become the avatar for Australian values and identity?

The imagery was first linked to the bushman, an image enshrined by Russell Ward's book *The Australian Legend*. Studies of Ward's influence on our perception of the true Aussie male, shows how this doctrine of mateship was fashioned from the experience of rural workers in the Australian Bush.²⁸ Robin Gerster, author of *Big-Noting*, concurs that before the digger made his dramatic entrance the national hero was the rural worker or the bushrangers. The Anzacs were portrayed as the sons of these Australian bushman who had 'grown strong from years of combat with the bush'.²⁹ C.E.W. Bean, Australia's official war correspondent, eagerly adopted this doctrine to give unity to his account of the WW1 diggers.³⁰ Graham Seal, author of *Inventing Anzac* writes:

The essentially civilian nature of the members of the AIF, their air of nonchalance, and their prodigious feats of bravery were all, according to Bean, essential indicators of 'Australian character'. His continued lauding of the digger as a typical Australian bushman indicates that Bean's belief in this creed had not diminished since the war.³¹

²⁷ Henry Ogilvie, 'The Australian', 1916. See Appendix 4 for full poem.

²⁸ Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, pp.15-24. Miriam Dixson is critical of Ward's depiction of the Aussie bushman and points out that Ward's 'configuration of values in our national identity are misogynist and reek of womanlessness.' Miriam Dixson, *The Real Matilda: Woman and Identity in Australia 1788 to the Present* (Ringwood, Penguin Books Australia, 1984), p.24. Also worth noting is that the bush values of the Australian diggers included pride in being white men.

²⁹ Robin Gerster, *Big-Noting: The Heroic Theme in Australian War Writing* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1987), p.16.

³⁰ Roberts, D., 'The Legend Turns Fifty', Inside Stories Online, November 2008. <http://inside.org.au/the-legend-turns-fifty/>, last viewed 29/9/2013. Worth noting is that C.E.W. Bean in his 12 volumes of WW1 history only made generic mention of the role of women. Source: Connie Levett, *Time To Salute Our Unsung Heroines*, Sydney Morning Herald, April 12, 2004: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/04/11/1081621835179.html>.

³¹ Graham Seal, *Inventing Anzac: The Digger and National Mythology* (St Lucia: University of Queensland, 2004), p.117. For more details on C.E.W. Bean see Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, pp.116-117.

There has been plenty of prose to sustain and enshrine these men into the heroic status alongside Odysseus, these men 'who walked like kings in old poems' yet, only 17% of the AIF (Australian Imperial Force) were men from the bush. According to Seal's research most were urban tradesmen who did not know which end of the rifle was dangerous.³²

While the thread of exuberant rhapsody runs through the enduring image Australians hold of the Anzacs, there have been slightly different versions throughout the decades. Lake points out in her book co-written with other historians and critics, *What's Wrong With Anzac Day?*:

'in 1915 the Anzacs were furious killers, in 1940 they were cool and confident and by the 1990s they were brave boys loyal to their mates, whose virtues the nation might now emulate'.³³

All transitions and hyperbolic versions aside, there is a wealth of evidence that the AIF had a reputation for being hard-fighting, hard-drinking and wild-living but whether this justifies their status as the heroes who galvanised our national character while 'bayoneting the Turks with ferocious glee' is yet to be examined.^{34 35}

What motivated these men? Research points to various motivating forces. One salient motivator was that Gallipoli was the first war that Australians fought under a flag of their own, having just formed a federation in 1901, so it is no surprise that the new-born nationalism was a significant driving factor in the men's fervour.³⁶ While in British and European history the eight month battle was considered an embarrassing

³² John Masefield, 'The Song of Roland', ca 1140; 'Challenging the Anzac Myth' (2012, Apr.28). *The New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from:

<http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1009877889?accountid=14757>; 20% of the AIF were industrial workers, 12% worked in commerce, 9% in transport, 5% were clerks and 5% professionals. The remaining 10% unknown. Source: Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, p.172.

³³ Lake & Reynolds, *What's Wrong with Anzac Day?*, p.116; See also Jane Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, p.12.

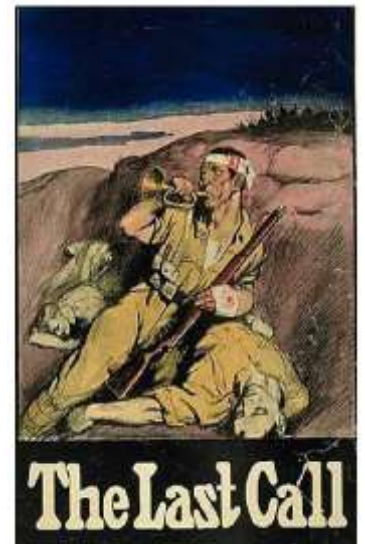
³⁴ Jane Ross, *The Myth of the Digger* (1985) quoted in Joan Beaumont, *Australia's War* (St. Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1985), p.142. It is worth noting that all WW1 soldiers used the bayonet, not just the Anzacs. See Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing* (London: Granta Book, 1999), pp.89-93.

³⁵ In order to know who these men truly were, it is of value to place them within the social framework of the time. Several historians have noted most were white supremacists and according to Henry Reynolds and Marilyn Lake they were proud representatives of the White Australia Policy which promoted racial purity at home and abroad. 'Indeed much of their self-confidence and élan came from their belief in their inherent superiority'. Source: Lake, & Reynolds, 'Moving on?', in Lake & Reynolds, ed., *What's Wrong With Anzac*, p.166. Bill Gammage also mentions this uncomfortable element that challenges our image of the Anzac soldier: 'They refused to embrace those who were not of their race; they had a determined attachment to a white Australia.' Source: Gammage, *The Broken Years*, p.1. This attitude was also reflected in Prime Minister Billy Hughes' words as he returned from the 1919 Paris Peace talks and gloated: 'White Australia is yours. Do with it what you please.' Australia believed the threat of the Asian invasion was now subsided.

³⁶ Gammage, *The Broken Years*, p.103.

failure, Australia saw the battlefield of Gallipoli as the place where its national identity would be forged and their soldiers proved their worth in the international arena.

Alongside the newly created nationalism, was the fact that the AIF was made up of volunteers. The war correspondents, in particular the laureate of the Anzac digger myth C.E.W. Bean, were writing more to act as publicity agents and the legend of the digger had the agenda of enlisting more volunteers.³⁷ Historian Robin Gerster's research showed that Bean's primary purpose was to enshrine the warlike warriors, bravery and fierceness of the AIF to essentially 'proselytise the Australian people into the heroic cultural identity'.³⁸ What started out as a successful art of propaganda has developed into the perennial legend of national mythology and it's become our creation story.



Furthermore, Peter Stanley author of *Bad Characters*, reminds us that the Anzacs saw themselves as citizens and not as drafted soldiers.⁴⁰ This probably influenced their irreverent attitude toward their superiors.

³⁷ Gerster, *Big Noting*, p.2.

³⁸ *Ibid*; See also Beaumont, *Australia's War*, pp.151-152 in which she points out that Bean was responsible for the publication of *The Anzac Book*, a compilation of poems, anecdotes and writings by soldiers at Gallipoli which propagated an image of the Australian as tough, ironic, stoical, sardonically humorous, the archetypal bushman and committed to his mates. It was this book that decisively established the image of the Anzac in the popular imagination'. See also Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, pp.6-7.

³⁹ Examples of Australian WW1 posters using the image of Australian masculinity to enlist volunteers. Source: First World War, A Multimedia History of World War One: <http://www.firstworldwar.com/posters/australia.htm>, last viewed 21/10/13. Note the muscular, strong imagery of the men.

⁴⁰ Peter Stanley, *Bad Characters: Sex, Crime, Mutiny, Murder and the Australian Imperial Force* (Sydney, Australia: Murdoch Books, 2010), p.240. See also Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, p.47.

What else motivated these men to enlist voluntarily to fight with vigour for the British Empire? Drawing on Gerster's intensive research, prestige inspired them greatly and there are reports of General Monash handing out press reports to the men who eagerly read about their bravery and splendour which he used to boost morale amongst the troops. The soldiers drew great strength as they read the descriptions of their glorious and superhuman efforts and the apotheosis of their manhood was confirmed.⁴¹

As historian Graham Wilson's points out in his book *Bully Beef and Balderdash*, ironically most Anzacs were originally Englishmen, men who had recently migrated to Australia and felt a strong tie to the motherland which they deemed needed their help. He writes:

Official war historian Charles Bean says that the Australians at Gallipoli showed leadership, bravery, initiative and mateship. However, the men Bean gives as examples of these supposedly Australian traits were often British migrants.⁴²

Enlisting also offered the men a free ticket home which they otherwise may not have afforded. After all, 18% of the first AIF were British-born.⁴³



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⁴¹ Gerster, *Big-Noting*, pp160-161.

⁴² Graham Wilson, *Bully Beef and Balderdash Some Myths of the AIF Examined and Debunked* (Newport: Big Sky Publishing: 2012), Kindle locations 2398-2399. This included the inventor of the periscope rifle, the men who led grenade throwers in the 4th Battalion's attack on Lone Pine, and Private John Simpson Kirkpatrick, the well-loved folk hero of 'the man with the donkey' who were all British.

⁴³ Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, p.173.

⁴⁴ Image sourced from *Letters in the Trenches*: <http://boscogeorgiac.blogspot.com.au/>, last viewed 21/10/13.

Directing the Kodak Pocket lens onto the home soil, serious tensions were mounting between the anti-conscription movement and those who supported the war.⁴⁵ Lake and others lament that the history of the anti-war movement has been virtually lost to public memory and yet a genuine peace movement well and truly existed on the home front as it did in other parts of the world.⁴⁶ Women in particular were active in the anti-conscription and anti-war movement and this maybe explains why it is a neglected area of the Australian war narrative. The Women's Peace Army had the motto 'We War against War' and members like Vida Goldstein and peace activist Margaret Thorp rallied against the militarism of the times.⁴⁷

Historian Joy Damousi believes the anti-war and anti-conscription campaigns openly challenged male power in the public sphere.⁴⁸ As peace historian Hilary Summy points out in her biography about Margaret Thorp, not only were notions of masculinity being challenged, but the whole basis of their existence as defenders of the Empire was brought into question. Not surprisingly, these women were judged to be unpatriotic and traitors because they did not blame the Germans for the war, but rather blamed the system.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ The WW1 Camera was marketed as the Popular Vest Pocket Kodak. The camera was donated by Driver David Moody No.16308, 3rd Australian Motor Transport Company, Australian Army and was used by C.E.W. Bean to capture the drama of combat. Images from the camera were sent home to Australian readers who were eager to know what was happening to their loved ones. Source: *Now and Then*, http://mallala.nowandthen.net.au/index.php?title=Camera,_WW1, last viewed 21/10/13.

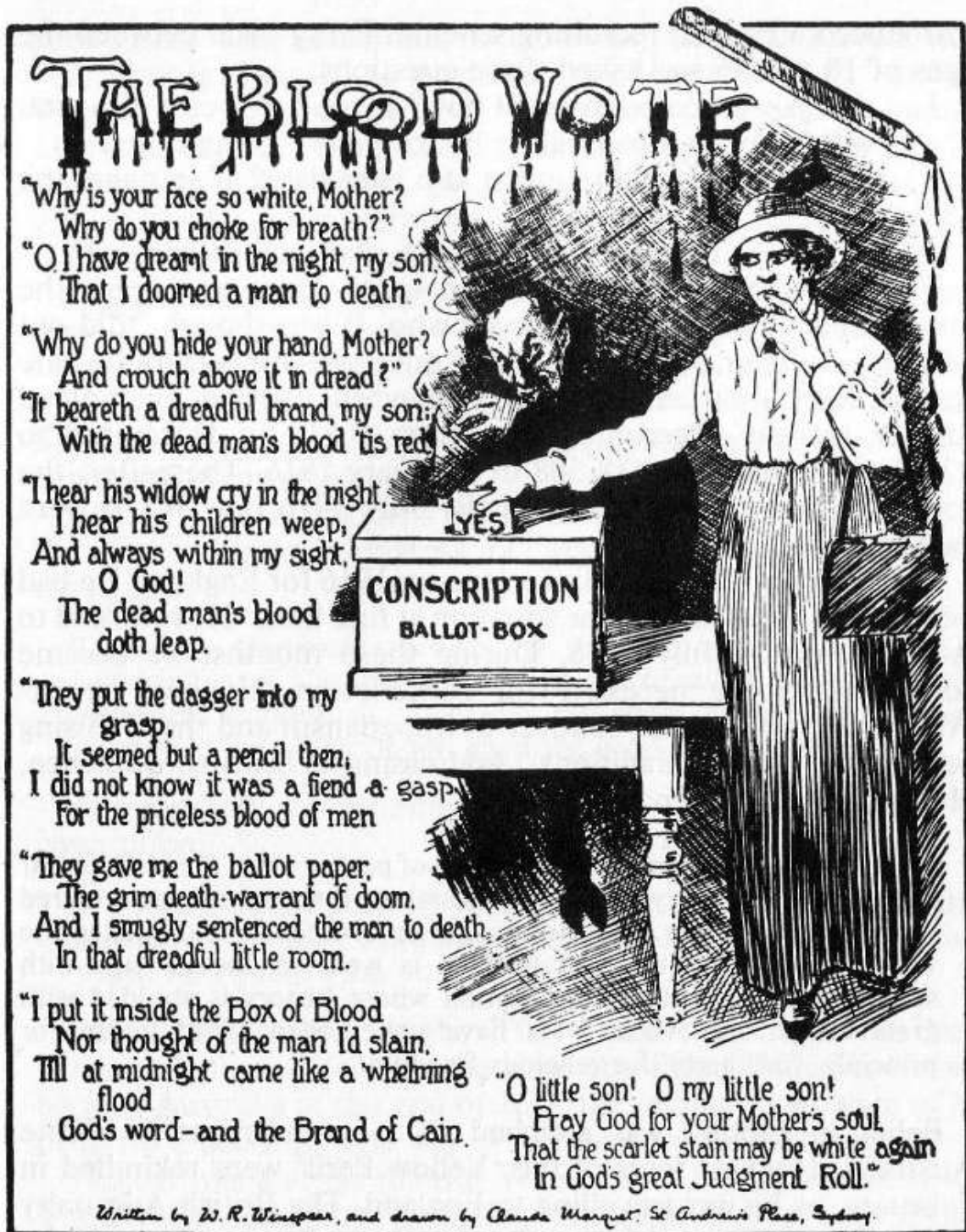
⁴⁶ Marilyn Lake, 'Women and the Peace Movements', in *The Guardian* 10/8/2011, <<http://www.cpa.org.au/guardian/2011/1513/11-pax-international.html>>.

⁴⁷ State Library of Victoria: *Arguments Over Conscription*, <<http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/explore-history/australia-wwi/home-wwi/arguments-over-conscription>>; Goldstein was a speaker, writer and campaigner. Throughout the war she was an ardent pacifist, became chairman of the Peace Alliance and formed the Women's Peace Army. She advocated disarmament and the pursuit of better living standards. Although she often proposed simple solutions to complex problems, she was recognised as a born reformer and as a devoted and courageous woman. Sourced at the AWM website: *Forging the Nation – Federation, the First 20 Years*. <<http://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/forging/australians/goldstein.asp>> last viewed 2/11/2013.

Margaret Thorp (nee Watts) was a Quaker pacifist. During World War I she helped Cecilia John and Adela Pankhurst to found (1916) a branch of the Women's Peace Army in Queensland, becoming its honorary. She held open-air meetings against conscriptions from Rockhampton to Mount Morgan. She showed 'much courage in the fight against conscription'. At one rally she was knocked down, kicked and thrown out, before returning by another door. Source: Australian Dictionary of Biography: *Martha Rutledge*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/watts-margaret-sturge-11984>, last viewed 2/11/13; See also Hilary Summy, *Peace Angel of World War 1: Dissent of Margaret Thorp* (Queensland: Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, 2006), pp. 98-99.

⁴⁸ Joy Damousi, 'Socialist Women and Gendered Space: Anti-conscription and Anti-War Campaigns', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake, eds., *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.262 -3.

⁴⁹ Summy, *Peace Angel of World War 1*, p.42. Interestingly the trade unionists like the Industrial Workers of the World, believed the war was being fought because of capitalist interests.



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In a referendum held on 28 October 1916, Australians were asked:

⁵⁰ This poster is from an anti-conscription campaign depicting an image of a deeply worried woman casting a 'Yes' vote while Billy Hughes, Australia's Labor Prime Minister and supporter of conscription, looks on gleefully. Source: <http://www.takver.com/history/myunion/myunion22.htm>, last viewed 21/1013.

Are you in favour of the Government having, in this grave emergency, the same compulsory powers over citizens in regard to requiring their military service, for the term of this War, outside the Commonwealth, as it now has in regard to military service within the Commonwealth?

By a very narrow margin (51% against, 49 % for), the people of Australia rejected the referendum.^{51 52}

It was not just women who were against conscription or the war. During the first decade of Federation the reality of conscription was very real and it disturbed the Australians who saw it as undemocratic and militaristic.⁵³ Throughout Australia, between January 1912 and June 1914, 28,000 boys or their parents were prosecuted for avoiding the call-up and 5732 boys were imprisoned.⁵⁴ By August 1914, the Australian Freedom League (AFL) had 55000 members; clearly indicating widespread opposition to compulsory military training and a deeply polarised Australian society.⁵⁵

What about our most cherish acronym? What is its genesis? ‘ANZAC – has an acronym ever lived such a life?’ asked George Turner when writing *The English Language in Australia and New Zealand*.⁵⁶ Australians are notorious for their love of acronyms and slang and *The Australian National Dictionary: Australian Words and Their Origins* gives a complete page – three full columns- to our favourite acronym Anzac. The main definition is as an acronym from the initials Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. According to historian Michael McKernan’s research the acronym was:

first dreamed up by the clerks in the General Staff office in Cairo in early 1915 when a short word was needed as code for the recently formed Corps. “How about ANZAC?” and the word was born.⁵⁷

Here an extract from *The Land* in 1929 that shows how much emotional investment is made into these 5 letters:

⁵¹ After this failure, Hughes was expelled from the Labor Party. He promptly crossed the floor, along with about half of the parliamentary party and became Prime Minister of a conservative Nationalist government.

⁵² According to Leslie Jauncey there was no separate poll indicating the way the two sexes voted. Leslie Jauncey, *The History of Conscription in Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1968), p. 221

⁵³ Summy, *Peace Angel of World War 1*, p.19.

⁵⁴ Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2010), p.3.

⁵⁵ Summy, *Peace Angel of World War 1*, p.33.

⁵⁶ George W. Turner, *The English Language in Australia and New Zealand* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1966), p.22.

⁵⁷ Michael McKernan, *Gallipoli: A Short History* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2010), p.vi.

Anzac.

Hallowed Name of Undying Memory

[...] ANZAC seems burnt into the heavens in letters of fire, dazzling in its brilliance, a national emblem, a sacred name to be cherished and guarded; our spirits dwell for the moment in the infinite, who blazed the trail for Australian nationhood, and blazoned the glory of the word ANZAC on the history of the world.⁵⁸

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Indeed a powerful rhapsody; it is the stuff of legends and esoteric folklore. The language connotes the qualities of ecclesiastical glory and reverence, language that could have been extracted straight out of a J.R.R Tolkien novel.⁵⁹

At the time of the Great War it was left to the poets and the intellectuals to critique the bloody war; and lamentably it has been quite some time since such open dissent was aired. And so, with thoughts towards the terrible loss of life and an acknowledgment of those who dared to criticise the war, the final comments are best extracted from a 1917 anti-war poem by Frank Wilmot:

Our heroes lost in trenches or the sea
Are dust or rag but no more clay than we,
For we once set ourselves the frightful task
Of healing delicate wounds with blazing brands.
Oh God, look not upon our souls nor ask
That we display the colour of these hands,
But help us that we consecrate to Thee
The remnant of our poor humanity.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Anzac*. (1929, April 26). *The Land* (Sydney, NSW : 1911 - 1954), p. 4. Retrieved September 25, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article117240623>.

⁵⁹ J.R.R Tolkien was the author of *Lord of the Rings* and was deeply affected by what he experienced first-hand in the trenches during WW1. See John Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle Earth* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003), *passim*.

⁶⁰ Furnley Maurice (aka Frank Wilmot), 'To God – From the Weary Nations' - 1917.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORY OF ANZAC DAY

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**He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present
controls the past.**

- George Orwell, 1984



Nothing is static and no nation and its values are locked into suspended animation. As people's perspective and relationship to the world around them changes, so too has the way in which Australians relate to the Anzac legend. Continuing within the currency of a sociological and historiographical methodology, Chapter 2 will examine how the Anzac legend and Anzac Day have changed over the course of the century; from the days of offering our honourable duty to the crown to the brief volte face in the 1960s and 70s, during which Australians witnessed a resistance towards war

⁶¹ Word Press: <<http://miniville123.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/1984now1.jpg>>, last viewed 9/11/13.

and juxtapose this to the changing winds of the late '80s and '90s when Australians experienced a subliminal revival of their love of Anzac and its military history.

The question of how did Anzac Day has become our surrogate National Day will be unpacked so as to gain an understanding of why Australia Day must share the limelight with its military cousin. How did the Howard Years make good use of the progenitorial foundation of the Keating Years which had attempted to form a nexus between Anzac Day and Republicanism? As a final point, Chapter 2 will conclude by providing the reader with a snapshot of how Anzac Day is celebrated in the twenty-first century and where it is placed within our psyche today.

Throughout the decades there have been deep divisions over the meaning of Anzac Day accompanying its many transitions and evolutions. Alistair Thomson, author of *Anzac Memories*, explains that with the immense number of casualties in the Great War and the difficulty of attending personal graves and funerals with the battlefield so far from home, there was a strong need for public commemoration and honouring of the dead in Australia.⁶² Grief needed to be assuaged and sacrifice to be made meaningful. Anzac Day officially became a national holiday in the 1920s and the ubiquitous war memorial was erected in almost every country town.

The Australian War Memorial (AWM), the ultimate commemoration to the Great War, was first conceived by C.E.W. Bean in 1918 and completed in 1941. The memorial sits on the axis of Parliament House and Old Parliament House in the nation's capital; a deliberate architectural reminder that the nation was born on the battlefield. C.E.W. Bean's vision of the memorial was to provide Australians with such a grand monument housing the memories of war, 'a sacred reminder throughout all ages of the men who really created the Australian nation.'⁶³

Drawing on the works of several historians and critics such as Mark McKenna, Robin Gerster and Alistair Thomson for the decades following 1915, the imperial context of Anzac Day had been fundamental to the rituals and meaning of 25 April; newspapers, for example, commonly placed the King's or Queen's message on the

⁶² Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.128.

⁶³ C.E.W. Bean quoted in K.S. Inglis' book: *Anzac Remembered: Selected Writings by K.S. Inglis* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 1998), p.41. The origin and purpose of the memorial are described by C.E.W. Bean as 'Conceived at Anzac on Gallipoli, born amid the thunder of the guns at Bullecourt in France, the memorial has been raised by the living members of the Australian forces to their fallen mates.' The AWM used to be called the Australian War Museum. Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, p.102.

front page and the day was inextricably linked with Australia's military contribution to the British Empire.⁶⁴

"Sacrifice Will Inspire All Of Us" CANBERRA.- 1952

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Queen Elizabeth II: On this Anzac Day, the first in my reign, I join with my peoples in the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand in their remembrance of those Australians and New Zealanders who died in the two World Wars. I know that their sacrifice will continue to inspire all of us in our efforts to advance the happiness and prosperity of mankind.

Mr Menzies: On behalf of your loyal subjects in the Commonwealth of Australia, with humble duty I wish to express our keen appreciation of your inspiring message on the occasion of Anzac Day, 1952.

This message was boldly printed across all major Australian newspapers. Interesting is the language used: *sacrifice, my peoples, humble duty, inspire and loyal subjects*; it leaves the reader in no doubt that Australia's contribution to the war efforts was not about Australia but was seen as a gesture of loyalty to the Empire; an honoured duty to serve.^{65 66}

Since then, one would be hard pressed to find a copy of the Queen's Anzac message in any of the newspapers; yet despite contemporary Anzac commemorations assuaging the imperial heritage of the day, it is not unusual to experience remnants of regal flavouring in contemporary Anzac Day ceremonies. For example, in 2012 at a Sydney Anzac Dawn Service the British national anthem *God Save the Queen* is sung with great pride in front of the cenotaph.⁶⁷ In the

⁶⁴ Mark McKenna, 'Anzac Day: How Did it become Australia's National Day?', in Marilyn Lake, & Henry Reynolds, *What's Wrong with Anzac Day?* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2010), p.111; 'THE QUEEN'S ANZAC DAY MESSAGE'. (1952, April 25).*Examiner* (Launceston, Tas.: 1900 - 1954), p.1. Retrieved August 29, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article52876048>; See also 'The Queen and I Are Especially Proud'. (1935, May 2). *The Queenslander* (Brisbane, Qld.: 1866 - 1939), p. 18. Retrieved October 27, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article27507673>. See Appendix 5 for full newspaper versions.

⁶⁵ From 1956 onwards, Australians could also tune in on Anzac morning on their black and white TV sets to watch the Queen's address to the Nation.

⁶⁶ A significant break in this maternal bond happened in 1942 when Singapore fell and Australia perceived that the British were indifferent to our security. An additional blow to our confidence in Britain's loyalty was felt when Britain joined the EEC in 1973. See James Curran & Stuart Ward, *The Unknown Nation: Australia After Empire* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press: 2010), p.60 and pp32-33. See also 'No Fanfares as Britain Joins the EEC'. (1973, January 1). *The Canberra Times* (ACT : 1926 - 1995), p. 1. Retrieved October 21, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article110700403>. See also De Vries, *The Complete Book of Heroic Australian Women*, Kindle Location 4536. See Appendix 6.

⁶⁷ 'God Save The Queen' - Sung in Australia - ANZAC Day Dawn Service 2012: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09zekPdr5kQ>>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

program it is euphemistically referred to as a hymn; it isn't a hymn, it is the British national anthem.⁶⁸

WW2 gave Anzac Day a boost which was reflected in improved Anzac Day attendance figures and a growth in RSL (Retired Serviceman's League) membership.^{69 70} However, as Alistair Thompson points out in his book *Anzac Memories*, in the subsequent years interest in our swashbuckling hero began to decline.⁷¹ By the 60s, Anzac Day had gained a reputation as a veteran's 'piss up'; a drunken soldiers' reunion that had little relevance for other Australians.⁷²

Anzac Day was accused of jingoism, cant and glorifying the war – and the image of bawdy, boozy authoritarian camaraderie was seen by some to pass unworthily for patriotism, and the Anzac myth came under fire.⁷³

The 60s disdain for Anzac Day was clearly reflected in Ric Throssell's play *For Valour*, first performed in Canberra in 1960, which contrasted Anzac rhetoric with veteran's confusion and pain and suggested the legend was a cause of suffering as well as pride.⁷⁴ The contempt for the drunken rituals of Anzac Day and the glorification of the soldiers and war was also the main theme of another 60s play by Alan Seymour, *The One Day of the Year*. Michael Bromley, author of *War Reporting and the Formation of National Identity in Australia*, agrees that during the 1950s there was a strong backlash against Anzac Day, which he claims began in student

⁶⁸ Some would argue that is perfectly appropriate as, whatever we may think of it, Queen Elizabeth is still our Head of State. In 2003, the Queen acknowledged the huge debt owed to Australian servicemen and women in two world wars by opening the Australian War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner in London: cited on the official website of the British Monarchy:

<http://www.royal.gov.uk/LatestNewsandDiary/Speechesandarticles/2003/TheQueenopenstheAustralianWarMemorialinLondon11Nov.aspx>, last viewed 2/11/2013. Also interesting to note still today the military give their direct allegiance to the Head of State and to the country. Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, p.11.

⁶⁹ 'Anzac Flowers', (1952, April 29). *The Mercury* (Hobart, Tas.: 1860 - 1954), p. 4. Retrieved September 30, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article27085788>; See also: 'R.S.L. MEMBERS OVER 203,191', (1945, April 10). *The Courier-Mail* (Brisbane, Qld: 1933 - 1954), p.3. Retrieved September 30, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article48950446>. See also Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, p.149. See Appendix 7.

⁷⁰ The RSL is considered the custodian of the Anzac brand. Interesting to note is that they used to be called The Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) until 1965 when it was changed to Returned Serviceman's League – RSL, and the Imperial component was removed.

⁷¹ Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.189; See also 'RSL Seeks Young Marchers'. (1979, March 16). *The Canberra Times* (ACT: 1926 - 1995), p. 9. Retrieved September 30, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article110935234>. See Appendix 8.

⁷² Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.189. See also Curran, J., & Ward, S., *The Unknown Nation*, pp.196-197.

⁷³ Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.190; See also 'RSL Seeks Young Marchers'. (1979, March 16). *The Canberra Times* (ACT: 1926 - 1995), p. 9. Retrieved September 30, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article110935234>.

See Appendix 9.

⁷⁴ Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.189.

newspapers and ‘demonstrated the essential hollowness of the Anzac Day maunderings.’⁷⁵

During the late ‘60s and early ‘70s while the Vietnam War raged, the issue of conscription returned and reports of moratorium marches against conscription and war hit the front pages.⁷⁶ With the ever present threat of your birth date being pulled out of the conscription barrel many Australians were put off by the nation’s military tradition, as well as its relevance in a changing world.⁷⁷ Historian Joy Damousi writes that during the ‘70s:

Australian engagement in the war in Vietnam became the rallying point of opposition against all forces that conspired to send men to die.⁷⁸

This included the inviolate Anzac Day. Damousi’s co-author of *Gender and War* Marilyn Lake, reminds us that during this time, anti-Vietnam activists used Anzac Day to proclaim that the Vietnam War dispelled the Anzac myth once and for all.⁷⁹ A little over optimistic it seems, in hindsight.

By the ‘80s, the Queen’s message had well and truly been pushed to the back pages of the newspapers. Working off the analysis of many historians and academics such as McKenna, Thomson, Bromley and Damousi, this shift away from the imperial honouring is partly attributed to the popularity of the Peter Weir’s 1981 film *Gallipoli*, in which the Anzacs came to be seen as the victims of British imperialism rather than willing and loyal subjects. Historian Mark McKenna summarises the shift:

By the 1980s, the British had become the bad guys, reduced to the stereotype of the pompous Pom – hedgehog-moustached officers who spoke in plummy accents and held nothing but contempt for uncouth Australians- the perfect antidote to the problem of Anzac’s Imperial past.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Michael Bromley, ‘The Battlefield is the Media: War Reporting and the Formation of National Identity in Australia – from Belmont to Baghdad’, in Stuart Allen and Barbie Zelizer, eds., *Reporting War Journalism in Wartime* (Oxon: Routledge, 2004), p.237.

⁷⁶ ‘MORATORIUM DAY’. (1971, July 1). *The Canberra Times* (ACT: 1926 - 1995), p. 9. Retrieved August 29, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article110665484>. See Appendix 10.

⁷⁷ Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.190.

⁷⁸ Joy Damousi, ‘Why Do We Get So Emotional About Anzac Day?’, in Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, eds., *What’s Wrong with Anzac?* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2010), p.87. See also Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, p. 153.

⁷⁹ Lake, M., ‘We Must Fight Free of Anzac, Lest We Forget our other Stories’, *The Age*, 24 April, 2009. <http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/we-must-fight-free-of-anzac-lest-we-forget-our-other-stories-20090422-afb7.html>

⁸⁰ McKenna, ‘Anzac Day: How Did It Become Australia’s National Day?’ , p.112.

Curran & Ward affirm that the 1980s key to the Anzac revival lies in the way it managed to shake off the overtones of 'Empire' and 'Britishness'. This also coincided with the passing of all of the WW1 original Anzacs 'whose outdated notions of duty, patriotism and imperial loyalty had become a liability for the new version of Anzac Legend.'⁸¹ By rejecting the imperial component of the two world wars, Australians were happily enthused by a fresh new take on the wars and there was a resurgence and burgeoning interest in Australian history and national identity.⁸²

Thomson underscores these observations and adds that leading up to the making of *Gallipoli* there was a bubbling of Australian nationalism trickling through the waters of Australia. We wanted to know more. Who were we? What makes us special and unique?⁸³ This rebirth in our nationalism to free itself of the imperial umbilical cord first began with Whitlam, who in 1973 on Australia Day announced that *God Save the Queen* needed to be replaced by an anthem that was truly Australian. Whitlam announced that it was long overdue and that a new national anthem would be a symbolic expression of our national pride and dignity;⁸⁴ and so *Advance Australia Fair* enjoyed its first official unveiling on Anzac Day 1974 in Canberra.^{85 86}

Despite the loyalists resistance the wave of nationalism was unstoppable and directed intellectual and financial stimulus into an Australian film industry which produced influential representations of national identity; films such as *Gallipoli* (1981), *Breaker Marrant* (1980) and *The Lighthorsemen* (1987).⁸⁷ Though these films

⁸¹ Curran, & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, p.247.

⁸² 'GALLIPOLI... Anzacs Charge Again'. (1981, January 14). *The Australian Women's Weekly* (1933 - 1982), p. 102 Supplement: TV WORLD. Retrieved August 31, 2013, from <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article55458937>>. See Appendix 11.

⁸³ The Whitlam Government was one spur in the wheel of this new nationalism and Thomson claims the resurgence was fuelled by the economic and political insecurity of the mid '70s: Thompson, *Anzac Memories*, p.192.

⁸⁴ Curran, & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, p.166. Some of the choices included 'Waltzing Matilda'.

⁸⁵ However, as soon as the Governor General left, *God Save the Queen* was played. An obvious tension between the loyalists and those who wanted to embrace the new nationalism. 'Bright Sunlight for Anzac Day Ceremony'. (1974, April 26). *The Canberra Times* (ACT: 1926 - 1995), p. 3. Retrieved October 19, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article110775205>. See Appendix 12.

⁸⁶ Debates continued well into the 1980s, over when to play the British national anthem or Advance Australia Fair. The debate was finally put to bed under Hawke, who insisted that Advance Australia Fair would be played at the receiving of a gold medal. Up until then, Australian gold medallists would receive their medal to the strains of God Save the Queen. Interesting to note, is that it was only in 1984 that references in the second and fourth verses of Advance Australia Fair to Australia's British soul were removed. Source: Curran & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, pp.188-189. See Appendix 13 for the original lyrics to 'Advance Australia Fair'.

⁸⁷ Channel Nine Australia also added to the mix with their production of *Anzacs* starring Paul Hogan as the quintessential Aussie larrikin. See also Curran, & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, p.248.

offered Australians an appealing representation of our involvement in the war, it was built on a narrow and distorted view.⁸⁸

The success of *Gallipoli* in 1981 drove the resurgence in all things military. The army reserve boosted its numbers by about 8000 to just under 30000 by the end of 1981 and the AWM recorded in September 1981 that it had a 50% increase in visitors in the same month in the previous year and had become Canberra's most popular tourist attraction.⁸⁹ Anzac Day benefited enormously from this revival which was perfect timing with the ever decreasing number of WW1 veterans. Anzac crowds were able to once again swell up to the previous days of relevance, only this time the tone became much more one of national pride and celebration.⁹⁰

The revitalisation of the Anzac legend and our fascination with Australia's military history began in earnest in the late '80s, early '90s. K.S. Inglis, author of *Sacred Places* points to a surge in attendances at Anzac Day when Bob Hawke was the first Prime Minister to preside over the 75th Dawn Service at Anzac Cove in 1990.⁹¹ He noted that while previously it had been a day of personal mourning it had begun to be seen as a day of national pride. Damousi claims that sentimentality and nostalgia are nowadays the prevailing modes of relating to Anzac Day and that most contemporary Australian historians have become complicit in the sentimentalising of war and fail to meet their ethical responsibility to provide analysis and explanation. Damousi argues that:

With the increased emotionally charged and sentimental tone of Anzac Day any critical examination of the costs and consequences of war, its horror and waste, the mistakes and massacres is resisted and repressed.⁹²

⁸⁸ Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.197. For example, in Weir's film *Gallipoli*, the killing of the Turks is completely absent from the film.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p.193.

⁹⁰ 'War Story Still Fresh.' (1989, April 22). *The Canberra Times* (ACT: 1926 - 1995), p. 22. Retrieved September 30, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article122256400>. See Appendix 14.

⁹¹ McKenna, 'Anzac Day: How Did it Become Australia's National Day?', p.105.

⁹² Damousi, 'Why Do We Get So Emotional About Anzac Day?', pp.85-86. Anzac Day is much more parochial compared to the internationally recognised Remembrance Day (also known as Armistice Day) which marks the end of WW1. At 11am each 11th of November all those who died in WW1 are called upon to be remembered. Yet in 2013 it was noted that the need to put a nationalistic stamp on Remembrance Day was stronger than ever. In doing so, we risk losing a sense of international fraternity through understanding and honouring that millions lost their lives not just Australian diggers. For example, one reads: 'The sacrifice of diggers in past and present conflicts has been commemorated at hundreds of Remembrance Day ceremonies across Australia.' Source: 'Remembrance Day Ceremonies Mark 95 Years Since End of World War I', *ABC News*, 11th November 2013, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-11-11/diggers-sacrifices-honoured-on-remembrance-day/5082058>.

Merit to her claim is easily found in the plethora of Australian war stories published each year, in particular children's books lauding the adventures and heroism of the diggers.⁹³ Most of the books available to children do not critically examine the cost or consequences of war. Anti-war points of view are ignored, women's memories rarely included and the mythology of sacrifice, heroism and glory are successfully inculcated into the young minds of children.⁹⁴



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Historian David Walker claims that the AWM has arguably played a significant role in shaping popular memories of the war and enshrining the Anzac legend in public life.⁹⁶ With each passing year the AWM grows in significance within the political and cultural landscape of the Australian psyche. The AWM's revenue has doubled in the last ten years, from \$18million to \$40million, of which \$34million comes directly from the federal government's coffers.⁹⁷

Nowadays, the memorial is visited each year by thousands of school children and older Australians curious about their own past. The pantheon is an impressive building, huge and imposing with a strong focus on the personal stories and individuals who lost their lives.⁹⁸ There is little real context provided explaining Australia's involvement in the various wars, just a recount of what happened at

⁹³ For example: Michael McKernan, *Gallipoli: A Short History* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2010), p.61. See Appendix 15 for more examples of some recent children's books on the topic of Anzac.

⁹⁴ An Amazon search for Australian war history brings up over 2000 books.

⁹⁵ Photo taken in the souvenir shop at the AWM. The photo shows just one shelf of many of war stories for children.

⁹⁶ David Walker, *The Writer's War*, quoted in Joan Beaumont, *Australia's War* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 1996), p.152. The AWM's huge archive of primary source material became available and a research bursary scheme was set up to assist researchers who were focused on the history of Australians at war.

⁹⁷ K.S. Inglis, *Sacred Places* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1999), p.496.

⁹⁸ Each evening at 5pm, visiting tourists can take part in the 'Last Post Ceremony' which is a daily reflection on one of the 103,000 Australian soldiers who have died. His photo is on display and the emphasis on the individual is striking.

various military attacks with a strong emphasis on personal stories. The atmosphere of the AWM is a blurring of adventure, excitement and memorial. Many of the thousands of young person visiting the AWM each year would be influenced to join the army after their visit.⁹⁹ The atrocities of war are left well occluded from public view.

By the late '80s and with the looming bicentenary, Australia was looking for a day of national pride that was free of all the cognitive dissonance that accompanied Australia Day.¹⁰⁰ Avowed critic of Anzac Day and historian Mark McKenna argues that the resurgence in the '80s, Anzac Day 'resounded from the displacement of the fierce divisions over Australia Day'.¹⁰¹ ¹⁰² Australians were becoming ever increasingly aware that Australia Day was not a pure day of celebration; it had a darker side and it was subsequently nicknamed 'Invasion Day'.¹⁰³ With much relief, the 25th of April provided Australians with the much needed quasi National Day that could be both a source of pride and one completely free from guilt or shame.¹⁰⁴ Mark McKenna writes in *The Australian*:

At the 75th anniversary, Hawke used Anzac Day as a celebration, a national day of pride, one that could turn its back on the blood spilt on the Frontier Wars, the taking of Aboriginal land without consent or compensation, the physical and cultural decline of Aboriginal communities, and the political demands of Aboriginal activists; Anzac Cove and not Sydney Cove was where the *right* kind of blood had been spilt.¹⁰⁵

With polarising divisions on how we felt about Australia Day, 25th of April was much simpler and did not expose the racist underbelly of Australia's past. McKenna adds:

⁹⁹ This is especially true in the Anzac Hall where children are dazzled by a light and sound show stunningly recreated dramatic moments of warfare. It works like a 3D movie experience.

¹⁰⁰ One initiative to promote Australia Day was to move the Australian of the Year Award to Canberra (2004) to provide a national focus for Australia Day.

¹⁰¹ McKenna, 'Anzac Day: How Did it Become our National Day?', p.114. See also Curran & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, pp.78-81.

¹⁰² It was not until 1935 that all states acknowledged the day and called it Australia Day. It used to be known as Foundation Day and Anniversary Day. John Hirst, *Australia Day in Question*, <http://www.theage.com.au/news/opinion/australia-day-in-question/2008/01/25/1201157665401.html?page=2>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

¹⁰³ This dissonance is still keenly felt today. See Perri Campbell, 'What is There to Celebrate on Australia Day?', *Geelong Advertiser* [Geelong, Vic] 26 Jan 2013: 39. See Appendix 16 for full article.

¹⁰⁴ Lake & Reynolds, *What's Wrong with Anzac?*, p.120.

¹⁰⁵ McKenna, M., 'Patriot Act', *The Australian*, 6/6/2007. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/patriot-act/story-e6frg8px-1111113633984>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

After a decade of cultural and political division over 26 January, here at last, was a day that could be shaped into a true source of national communion.’¹⁰⁶

With all of the varied driving forces breathing in a new fresh air of nationalistic pride, it was evitable that politicians would fan it towards their own political advantage. Addressing the parliament in 1990 upon his return from Gallipoli, Hawke singled out the ‘sense of mateship – in a word, the sheer Australianness’ of the diggers. Members of the House of Representatives subsequently passed a motion affirming that ‘from the deeds and sacrifices of the Anzacs at Gallipoli there emerged a powerful sense of Australian national identity’.¹⁰⁷

With Australians now using Anzac Day to form our identity and to work out how we could be proud of our history, Keating used this to bring Australia into a more independent nation, one that looked to its geographical neighbours in Asia rather than the anachronistic tie to Britain. Keating used the Anzac legend to mean that Australia comes first.¹⁰⁸ He focused on the Anzacs who fought in New Guinea and that they had died in defence not of the old world but of the new world.¹⁰⁹ His passion for Australia to totally break free from its British heritage clearly evident in his words during his 1992 visit to Kokoda:

I'm sure in this part of the world people wonder about Australians representing themselves with a British flag in the corner of our flag. That must change and should change.¹¹⁰

During the late ‘90s, Howard seized the opportunity to once again highlight the Anzac legend, the role of free enterprise, the contribution made by farmers and

¹⁰⁶ McKenna, ‘Anzac Day: How Did it Become our National Day?’, p.114. See also Curran & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, p.117.

¹⁰⁷ James Curran, *The Power of Speech, Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2004), p.180. Furthermore, during this time Australia was experiencing a new confidence in who we were and what we could achieve. We had won the America’s Cup in 1982 which gave us a great boost in our national pride and what we could accomplish.

¹⁰⁸ Curran & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, p.249.

¹⁰⁹ This ‘new world’ nationalism evoked not the Australia that fought to remain a white British nation, but the multicultural Australia of the 1990s seeking greater engagement with Asia: Curran, *The Power of Speech*, p.220.

¹¹⁰ Watson, D. (2002, May 06). *A Kiss is not just a Kiss Insight*. *Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/363817300?accountid=14757>; last viewed 31/8/13. Curran argues that Keating had connected the ‘nation’ and its ‘way of life’ to the defence of the Australian mainland and so differentiated this battle from more distant conflicts in Europe: Curran, *The Power of Speech*, p.220. See Appendix 21 for Keating’s 2013 Remembrance Day speech in which he renounces Australia’s involvement in World War 1.

mateship.¹¹¹ Some also argue that Howard successfully used Anzac Day to deflect any criticism in Australia's involvement in the Iraq war. During this time there were once again direct calls to officially make Anzac Day our national day; an idea that has been bandied around since the early days after WW1 and backed by the RSL and politicians from both sides of the political fence.¹¹² *The Canberra Times* wrote in 1994:

Australia Day had developed the characteristics of a giant party whereas, on Anzac Day, people came together to think about Australia and what it meant to be Australian. Anzac Day is far more easy for the average Australian to relate to than Australia Day.¹¹³

On Anzac Day 1993, thousands also turned out in Canberra to witness the state funeral of the Unknown Soldier, whose brittle body had been exhumed from Villers – Bretonneux, France. K.S. Inglis interpreted this as a 'ritual of national valediction to the old AIF.'¹¹⁴ Curran and Ward agree stating that: 'these bones were to be a 'substitution of a spiritual for a physical symbol of Australian soldiery and to represent emergence from empire.'¹¹⁵

After the Bali bombing, Howard reworked the idea of Australian virtue as part of his appeal to nationalism, what Benedict Anderson coined 'the imagined community.'¹¹⁶ The focus is purely on the love and pride Australians have for the military men and women who have in the past created the so-called Anzac spirit, the Gallipoli legend and more than anything else, framed our national identity.¹¹⁷ Speaking at Australia House during his visit to London in November 2003 for the dedication of an Australian War Memorial on Hyde Park corner, he tried to capture the relationship

¹¹¹ Curran, *The Power of Speech*, p.251. Howard tried to bring in the word *mateship* into the constitution preamble.

¹¹² Hirst, John (26 January 2008), *Australia Day in Question*, The Age (Melbourne). Archived from the original on 13 January 2009. Retrieved 20 December 2008; Ballantyne, Derek (5 December 2009), 'DUMP IT! – Australia Day Boss Says Date Divides the Nation', *The Sunday Mail* (Brisbane, Australia), p. 1; Day, Mark (9 December 1999), 'Time for a Birthday with Real Meaning', *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, Australia), p. 11.

¹¹³ 'Moves for Anzac Day to Become National Day Grow' (1994, April 25), *The Canberra Times* (ACT: 1926 - 1995), p. 6. Retrieved August 31, 2013, from <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article118115494>>.

¹¹⁴ Inglis, *Sacred Places*, p.429.

¹¹⁵ Curran & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, p.3.

¹¹⁶ Paul Kelly, 'How the PM Stole the Anzac Legend', *Weekend Australian*, 9th August, 2003. Anderson writes that 'nationalism is imagined as a *community*, because regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings.' Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso Publishing, 2006), p.7.

¹¹⁷ Dodson, L., 'Uniting Australia, the PMs Greatest Challenge', *The Age*, March 21, 2003.

between the experience of war and its implications for Australian nationhood.¹¹⁸ For Howard, the Anzac experience of Gallipoli and Northern France had forever carved in stone the virtues and values of Australian self-image, one he called the 'old Australia'.¹¹⁹

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Much is revealed about our country through the study of our Anzac Day ceremonies. There is an unquestioning acceptance of a national war story that is rather exclusive and based on a very narrow representation of Australian achievement. Embracing the Anzac legend as our creation story and transforming Anzac Day into a quasi-sacred myth, has meant we run the risk of forgetting our rich and diverse history of nation making and brushing aside the atrocities of war. What has been forgotten and ignored will be the subject of Chapter 3.

¹¹⁸ Curran, *The Power of Speech*, p.242.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* Curran & Ward draw the conclusion that the older Australians 'find solace in the verities of Anzac in the face of the chill winds of multiculturalism and globalisation. Curran, & Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, p.249.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DARKER SIDE OF THE ANZAC LEGEND

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On the first hill I bayoneted a Turk who was feigning death, with a few extra thrusts. He as an oldish man and on the first thrust which did not go right home he tried to get his revolver out at me, but failed.. coming up the third hill, a gigantic Turk.... grabbed me round the chest....he was a veritable Samson.... and slowly began to crush the life out of me, I was almost gone when a mate of mine called Tippen came up and bayoneted him.... We made sure of him and then continued up the hill. Poor Tippen got shot just in front of their trench in the stomach with two bullets, he died groaning horribly. I killed his assailant however by giving him five rounds in the head. I let him have it full in the face. It was unrecognisable.¹²⁰

Sgt. B. Baly,



To analyse anything fairly and well, it is essential that the evidence be succinctly examined, that reliable and credible quotes and references be used, as well as sound primary and secondary sources gathered to underpin the argument. Notwithstanding the use of such resources, this chapter will be looking for the empty spaces between the rhetorical excess and analyse the silences, what has been forgotten and what is blatantly ignored.¹²² These empty spaces can provide the researcher with an even clearer picture of what is at play and what is the unspoken undertone of the creation of any myth or legend, especially those founded in battle.

¹²⁰ Gammage, *The Broken Years*, p.109. Sgt Baly shares a small sliver of the reality of WW1. Australian Anzacs were there to kill; a fact eschewed in most Australian depictions of the war.

¹²¹ Death and destruction in WW1. Source unknown.

¹²² See Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), *passim* for a detailed theory on the power of the unsaid.

Hyperbole is intrinsic in the retelling and memorialisation of most, if not all national war stories and Australia is no exception. Chapter 3 will assess if these Anzac legends and myths are so deeply entrenched into the national psyche do they automatically suppress critical assessment of the cost of war, its dreadfulness and the fact that our soldiers did not only die and sacrifice their lives, but also killed? How do Anzac Day traditions and rituals lend themselves to manipulation? Furthermore, while the eponymous war heroes are well known, what do we know of the broken men who returned to face the darker side of their experience and realities of soldiering, including the mentally ill, those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other social maladies such as depression?

The events surrounding the Frontier Wars of the nineteenth century in Australia will be brought out of the dusty history pages to examine their relevance and placement within contemporary Anzac Day commemorations. Not least of all, the players most often forgotten in the history books, the women of these times who also served in the war, the mothers of the soldiers who were lost, what about them? Is it possible that there is sexism built within the Anzac Legend; a legend that celebrates Australian military manhood as the apotheosis of nationhood?¹²³ Have half of the Australian population been ignored and if so, what does that mean to the analysis of our most beloved Australian public holiday; the day that Russel Ward, the Australian historian best known as the author of *The Australian Legend*, describes as 'the Australian national day above all others.'¹²⁴

The cause of the WW1 remains nebulous to most laypersons, the purpose of the Gallipoli battle largely forgotten and its imperial dimension understated. There is a plethora of stories depicting the Anzacs' heroism and great courage, yet Noel McLachlan, historian, author and activist argues that the Anzac tradition has not always been a unifying force in Australian history. In his 1968 article, *Nationalism and the Divisive Digger*, he wrote that:

..... the 'Digger legend' was in fact 'profoundly divisive. Volunteers of 1914-18 were encouraged to think of themselves, from the start, as an elite with the aura

¹²³ Miriam Dixon reveals that the single-most striking feature of our national identity is a womanlessness...'
Dixon, *The Real Matilda*, p.58.

¹²⁴ Russell Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1958), p.216. Anzac Day was made a public holiday in 1927 and in doing so, Seal claims that this signalled the success of the digger culture: Seal, *Inventing Anzac*, p.93.

of heroes...and in the RSL they erected an institution aimed at keeping them that way during the halcyon days of peace'.¹²⁵

This attitude of idolising the Anzacs distorts history and limits the understandings of what was actually going on. Peter Stanley, underpins McLachlan's perspective and writes in his book *Bad Characters* that some returned soldiers were actually embarrassed about their euphemistically dubbed 'larrikin behaviour' during the war.¹²⁶ The Anzacs were known for their drunken disorderly behaviour and to try and manage the AIF's disorderly behaviour there were suggestions to introduce 'wet canteens' where their drinking might be better kept away from the local civilians. Here a clipping from a 1918 copy of an Australian newspaper painting a rather unflattering picture:

...since May 16 [1917], 133 cases of absence without leave, 700 cases of drunkenness, 260 cases of disorderly conduct, 29 cases of resisting arrest, 283 cases of desertion, 183 cases of civilian offences, 153 arrests during raids and 60 failures to embark had been reported, a total of 3758 offences. Nearly 90 per cent of the total cases would be due to drink.¹²⁷

War is ugly and more often than not the rules of a peaceful society are put on hold. What is often not told are the stories of rape, war crimes and men taking the law into their own hands. One example is the mostly unknown 1918 Surafend Massacre which was a premeditated revenge of the killing of an Anzac soldier. The Anzacs raided the village of Surafend (now the area of Tzrifin in Palestine) and ruthlessly killed 40-120 men from the village.¹²⁸ Ted O'Brien, an AIF soldier describes in graphic detail how his digger mates had:

... had a good issue of rum and done their blocks in Surafend, and they went through the village with a bayonet. You'd shoot them on sight. It was a real bad thing ... It was ungodly.¹²⁹

A most sinister aspect of mateship indeed.

¹²⁵ McLachlan, N.D., 'Nationalism and the Divisive Digger', *Meanjin* 27(3), 1968, pp.306-307.

¹²⁶ Peter Stanley, *Bad Characters* (Millers Point: Murdoch Books Australian, 2010), p.214. This so-called larrikinism is tolerated each year when men are seen drunk, swearing or playing the illegal game of two-up.

¹²⁷ Putting this newspaper quote into context, it is likely the men had already fought on the front and were reluctant to go back or were using drink to cope with the atrocities of war: 'DRINK AND THE SOLDIER'. (1918, March 26). *Western Argus* (Kalgoorlie, WA: 1916 - 1938), p. 30. Retrieved September 7, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34183383>. See also Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, p.48. See Appendix 17.

¹²⁸ Elliott, T., 'Massacre that Stained the Light Horse', *The Age*, 24 July 2009, <http://www.theage.com.au/national/massacre-that-stained-the-light-horse-20090724-dv3o.html>, last viewed 7/9/13.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

Another issue was the sexual health of these young men. The soldiers were deeply ashamed of contracting VD and kept it under wraps for as long as possible to avoid public shame.¹³⁰ Records show that at least 55000 Australian soldiers had contracted VD during the war and were promptly discharged.¹³¹ Some newspaper headings would read: *A Serious Social Peril, 55000 Soldiers Suffering, Causes of the Evil, The Enemy in our Midst, Hidden Scourge*.¹³² The shame was clearly felt.

Stanley's research reveals that many of the returned soldiers simply went missing and did not return to their wives and family. They had re-partnered with other women, or just couldn't face up to their responsibilities.¹³³ Lake writes in *The Limits of Hope* that the discharged soldiers were 'highly visible in Australia's cities and if unemployed, destitute or in other ways seemingly ill-used, became a hindrance to recruiting'.¹³⁴ ¹³⁵ It was quite common to see them begging in the streets and they began to be seen as idle and that the law was too lenient on them. Many soldiers were at a loose end, suffering from terrible wounds and injuries from the war and they were frequently involved in drunken riots. Sadly, the men who had just months ago been feted as heroes were now being treated as a threat to the fabric of society.¹³⁶ Bill Gammage, author of *The Broken Years* offers an explanation to men's behaviour:

¹³⁰ Stanley, *Bad Characters*, p.228.

¹³¹ The soldiers got VD, gonorrhoea and syphilis in Egypt. The French government were alarmed that the soldiers would be bringing back the sexually transmitted diseases to their French women so they handed out condoms. Condoms were previously reserved for the rich.

¹³² 'A SERIOUS SOCIAL PERIL', (1919, August 10). *Sunday Times* (Sydney, NSW : 1895 - 1930), p. 5. Retrieved September 7, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article123222123>; 'THE ENEMY IN OUR MIDST'. (1916, November 23). *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW: 1842 - 1954), p. 6. Retrieved October 19, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article15700619>; 'HIDDEN SCOURGE'. (1914, July 18). *The Register* (Adelaide, SA: 1901 - 1929), p. 18. Retrieved October 19, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article56702403>. See Appendix 18 for full newspaper articles.

¹³³ Stanley, *Bad Characters*, p.231.

¹³⁴ Marilyn Lake, *The Limits of Hope: Soldier Settlement in Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.25.

¹³⁵ *The Daily News*, Perth, January 28th 1918: 'Returned Soldiers Problem': — 'Once again the Victorian State War Council is having difficulty in finding employment for returned soldiers. When the last industrial upheaval threw the community into a state of chaos, over 600 soldiers were seeking work through the council's employment bureau. When the strike was over the situation eased back to normal, but for some reason the number of soldiers seeking work is almost as great now. There were 539 unemployed men on the War Council's books, despite the fact that during the week 120 were sent to jobs in town and country. A fair number of the men waiting are physically incapable, and could only take the very- lightest jobs; but there are many fit to do any class of work. The War Council appeals to employers to communicate their needs to the employment bureau.' 'ANNIVERSARY DAY'. (1918, January 28). *The Daily News* (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950), p. 4 Edition: THIRD EDITION. Retrieved September 24, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article81783990>.

¹³⁶ Lake, *The Limit of Hope*, pp.28-34.

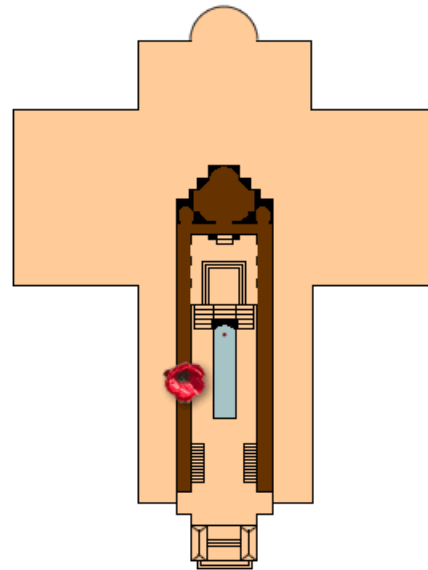
Many were able to put their wartime ordeal behind them; others could not. Some succumbed to drink; many more suffered the nightmares, flashbacks and nerves that dogged them for the rest of their lives. A few found that the trauma of war pushed them into dark deeds, of violence, rape and murder.¹³⁷

In the mid 1950s, the AWM Board of Trustees had to decide who would or would not be remembered on the bronze panels of its Roll of Honour. They deliberated over the many bad characters, men who had brawled, killed and committed crimes. They decided to include all of them reasoning that these men had all died during and arguably as a result of the war and deserved to be honoured. Even Peter Braun, who had come home to kill his wife and then himself, was admitted onto the Roll of Honour. So it is true that all is fair in war and even killing your wife does not deflect from your honour and heroic glory.



Location on the Roll of Honour

Peter Joseph Braun's name is located at **panel 84** in the [Commemorative Area](#) at the Australian War Memorial (as indicated by the poppy on the plan).



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At any Anzac commemoration this darker reality of the true impact of war is treated as a side dish with heroism, bravery and mateship being the prevalent focus; and we seem to swallow the sentimental version with much gusto and ignore the aftertaste of saccharin that had been used to sweeten the story. As many historians have

¹³⁷ Stanley, *Bad Characters*, p.231.

¹³⁸ Photo taken at the AWM. One can search on the AWM website for names and it will bring up where you can find them on the Roll of Honour. Note the architectural shape of the Christian cross. This nexus between how we honour the fallen and the well-understood rituals of religiosity gives merit the claim that our Anzac tradition functions as a state religion.

pointed out the men themselves, with their lives ruined, felt neither adequately compensated nor consoled and suspected they had been duped by the state.¹³⁹

What about the Australian women? What role did they play in shaping Australia? If one builds a picture of Australian life based on the history books, one could easily draw the conclusion that it is only men who make history and women are the mere footnote to the masculine enshrined institutions of war and battle.¹⁴⁰

Awareness of the intrinsic sexism embedded within the cult of Anzac rose during the 1970s and '80s and women began protesting against male violence and rape in war. They criticised Anzac Day and its reinforcement of militarism, male glorification of war and institutionalised mourning.¹⁴¹ Adrian Howe recalls in *Gender and War*, that in Canberra 1983, women were permitted to lay a wreath for sisters raped in war only an hour before the official march began; and in Melbourne women held up a banner that stated 'We recall all women raped and killed, now and in war – Lest we forget.'¹⁴²

Inglis cautions that while the position of women within Anzac Day has clearly shifted in recent years, Anzac Day is still pre-eminently an ex-service bloke's day. The Anzac legend sustains a particular, gendered construction of the Australian experience of war and of Australian national identity.¹⁴³

Women also forged an unspoken alliance with the state on the prevalent conceptions of masculinity. In *A Divided Society* Lake discusses the way the state used women as unpaid recruiting agents:

In a country which never managed to win conscription, the government had to rely on persuasion and the recruiting authorities were ever ready with advice for

¹³⁹ Lake, M., 'We Must Fight Free of Anzac, Lest We Forget Our Other Stories', *The Age*, 24 April, 2009. <http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/we-must-fight-free-of-anzac-lest-we-forget-our-other-stories-20090422-afb7.html>.

¹⁴⁰ One could forgive the bias towards men and their achievement if it were not still prevalent today. Howard proclaimed in 2003 that 'we enrich ourselves, and a nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces but by the men it honours, and the men it remembers.' McKenna, 'Anzac Day: How Did it Become our National Day?', p.123.

¹⁴¹ Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.200.

¹⁴² Adrian Howe, 'Anzac Mythology and the Feminist Challenge', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake, eds., *Gender and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.308.

¹⁴³ K.S. Inglis, *Anzac Remembered: Selected Writings of K.S. Inglis* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 1998), p.24.

women on how they might persuade their men to go. The doctrine of 'woman's influence' clearly had a strong hold.¹⁴⁴



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¹⁴⁴ Marilyn Lake, *A Divided Society: Tasmania During World War 1* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1975), p.68.

¹⁴⁵ *God Bless Dear Daddy*, (1918) Lindsay, Norman (Artist); Government of Australia (Publisher); W E Smith Ltd (Printer).

¹⁴⁶ Large World War I Australian recruitment poster, titled 'Were YOU There Then?'. The poster features a woman in white pointing to a shredded Australian flag on a pole, asking the viewer if they were 'there' - probably Gallipoli - when the flag was damaged. The flag is intended to appeal to the guilt of the viewer and their feelings of patriotism. The poster was printed by W.A. Gullick, Government Printer, Sydney. It may have been commissioned by either the government of New South Wales or the Federal Government.

¹⁴⁷ James, R H (Artist); Australian Commonwealth Military Forces (Publisher); Unknown (Printer).



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Absences can be illuminating. Inglis' research into the ubiquity of war memorials that scatter the Australian landscape noticed a missing element: where are the memorials that commemorate other significant aspects of Australian shaping; especially those that commemorate women's achievement? With the superabundance of memorials that monument men's lives lost at war, there are no monuments to mark our shared civic and political achievements.¹⁴⁹

The Anzac legend exposes a deep structure of patriarchy. Since the '90s, there have been improvements to acknowledge the women who have served in the armed forces and to make the narrative more inclusive.¹⁵⁰ These days we can observe that

¹⁴⁸ Poster sourced in Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, p.17.

¹⁴⁹ For example, there are no national sites to commemorate our federation or the drafting of our constitution; a rather telling absence.

¹⁵⁰ Nearly 3000 Australian nurses served in World War I.4 Twenty-one of them paid for their dedication with their lives. Source: De Vries, Susanna (2010-08-01). *The Complete Book of Heroic Australian Women: Twenty-one Pioneering Women Whose Stories Changed History* (Kindle Locations 4471-4472). HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition.

Anzac Day flags now include the iconic image of the female nurse, however, she is a modern day add on, an omission that was hardly noted in decades past.

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This is hardly a revelation to any historian aware of gender exclusion. Women entered areas of public life, and the history pages, strictly on men's terms and only when their contributions were made towards an institution deemed significant by men, for example, the ever-revered institution of war. Nonetheless, their contribution remains an afterthought; a magnanimous postscript; a rather obvious fact when visiting the AWM where the hegemony of male legacy is the main idea and women's concomitant involvement treated as an optional extra.



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Ken Inglis shares this perspective. He writes in his book *Sacred Places* that women had been complaining for some time that they had not been honoured and

¹⁵¹ Image of Sydney street banner flown on Anzac Day.

¹⁵² Photo taken of the sculpture by Anne Ferguson to honour the women who died in wars. Research by historian Caroline Viera Jones reveals that women's heroic role was played down by Australia's official historian of WW1, C.E.W. Bean. 'Acting on instructions from publisher George Robertson to up the mateship and increase the larrikinism, author C.E.W. Bean contrived to make the Great War seem a blokey, all-male affair.' Source: De Vries, Susanna (2010-08-01). *The Complete Book of Heroic Australian Women: Twenty-one Pioneering Women Whose Stories Changed History* (Kindle Locations 4410-4412). HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition.

acknowledged nor given any place on *the sacred way*, the sculpture garden at the AWM. Only in 1999, did the trustees of the memorial respond to the calls for recognition of the women who had served and they commissioned Anne Ferguson to create a sculpture dedicated to ‘all women who served, suffered and died in defence of Australia.’¹⁵³ It is a rather small and humble sculpture, especially when compared to the towering hyperbolic diggers that loom in size along Anzac Parade.

¹⁵³ Inglis, *Sacred Places*, pp.486-487. Historian Joanna Bourke claimed that during WW1 ‘the Australian Local Volunteers set out to train its members to become real rifle women and real soldiers and each state had its own legion of women preparing for a combatant role.’ Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing*, p.325.



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¹⁵⁴ Photograph taken on Anzac Parade, Canberra. The hyperbolic disproportion is rather breath-taking and leaves the viewer in no doubt as to the large space the diggers are to hold in our minds. Anyone standing next to these mythical diggers is scaled down to insignificance.

Carmel Shute, political activist and historian, has explored the way the Anzac mythology affirmed the dichotomy of the sexes in Australia by reinforcing the traditional stereotypes of men as warriors and creators of history and women as mothers. Similarly, Anne Summers, a leading Australian feminist, has argued that the war consolidated the notion that women's role was to bear children and to influence those around them into dutiful civic submission.¹⁵⁵ Summers states:

The continuously nurtured myth which symbolically equates the attainment of manhood at Gallipoli with the achievement of Australian nationhood strongly hints at an undertone of sexism and exclusion.¹⁵⁶

Margaret Thorpe, a young Quaker women who played a key role in the anti-war and anti-conscription campaigns during the First World War in Queensland, understood that wars thrive in environments that elevate masculine values over feminine and where injustices of all kinds remain unaddressed.¹⁵⁷ The following illustration was published on the cover of *The Worker* in 1916 underpinning the struggle for the anti-war movement:

¹⁵⁵ Adrian Howe, 'Anzac Mythology and the Feminist Challenge', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake, eds., *Gender and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.303.

¹⁵⁶ Carmel Shute, 'Heroines and Heroes: Sexual Mythology in Australia 1914-1918', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake, *Gender and War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 23-25; See also Howe, 'Anzac Mythology and the Feminist Challenge', pp.303-306. See also Susanna De Vries, *The Complete Book of Heroic Australian Women*, 2010. She points out that on Anzac Day we remember the men who fought in the wars, but few people remember for example, 'the forgotten Balkan campaign in which Australian nurses, doctors, ambulance drivers and engineers took part, some giving their lives.' Source: De Vries, Susanna (2010-08-01). *The Complete Book of Heroic Australian Women: Twenty-one Pioneering Women Whose Stories Changed History* (Kindle Locations 4437-4438). HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition.

¹⁵⁷ Margaret Thorpe played a prominent role in coordinating diverse groups on the issue of anti-conscription. Her influence leading up to the 1916 conscription referendum in Queensland was particularly significant and arguably extended into the other eastern states, especially among women voters. Summy, *Peace Angel*, pp.5-11.



MARS: Get off the Earth, you strumpet. How dare you show your face!
THE UNDESIRABLE FEMALE.

This graphic appeared on the cover of *The Worker* (Brisbane), 10 February 1916. Courtesy of Fryer Library, The University of Queensland. Picture's caption reads "MARS: Get off the Earth, you strumpet. How dare you show your face."

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The caption reads: 'Mars: Get off the Earth, you strumpet. How dare you show your face!' It clearly reflects that peace is seen to be a rather vulnerable and effeminate construct that the bully makes clear has no room on earth.

¹⁵⁸ Image sourced in Summy, *Peace Angel*, p.2. *The Worker* (Brisbane) was a newspaper published in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia between 1890 and 1974. The newspaper is affiliated with the Australian Labor Party.

Australia is pockmarked with a plethora of monuments commemorating battles that men have fought; supporting rituals, narratives, educational programs, groups such as the RSL keep the legend well and truly alive. The heroes, the untouchables, the ones we must honour it seems are those that die and kill in war. In the words of Margaret Thorp, who bravely fought against the tide of war, said it clearly when she pointed out:

History is presented from the standpoint of conquest and power, of kings and bloody wars, whereas the emphasis should be laid upon the great struggling movements of the people towards social justice and economic freedom.¹⁵⁹

Equally forgotten are the Frontier Wars, the battles that were fought between the Aboriginals and the British invaders during the nineteenth century. These men lost their lives trying to fight for their land and their right to live and are never honoured on Anzac Day.¹⁶⁰ Historian Henry Reynolds suggests that those who died in those battles were first true patriots of Australia and that the Frontier Wars were the most significant as 'it was a war that really was about Australia; it was about the sovereignty of a whole continent'.¹⁶¹ He adds:

As the bushman emerged as a heroic nationalist icon, no one wanted to notice his bloodied hand or the notches on his rifle butt.¹⁶²

During an interview Reynolds said that without honouring the men who died fighting back European invasion, we deny young Aboriginals of today to know about their warrior heroes who died defending their land. Young people of any culture of any background need heroes and people to look up to.¹⁶³ Reynolds asks why are there no official memorials or commemorations of the wars that were fought on Australian soil between Aborigines and white colonists. He claims that as we continue to celebrate and commemorate Anzac Day we can no longer ignore the Frontier Wars.

¹⁵⁹ Summy, *Peace Angel*, frontispiece.

¹⁶⁰ See John Connor, *The Australian Frontier Wars* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2002), *passim*.

¹⁶¹ Henry Reynolds being interviewed on Radio National by Philip Adams on 22nd July 2013: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/australia27s-forgotten-war/4835842>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

¹⁶² Reynolds, Henry (2013-06-10). *Forgotten War* (Kindle Locations 1023-1024). New South Publishing. Kindle Edition.

¹⁶³ Henry Reynolds being interviewed on Radio National by Philip Adams on 22nd July 2013: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/australia27s-forgotten-war/4835842>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

We cannot continue to talk about the importance of war without acknowledging the war that was fought within Australia.¹⁶⁴

John Connor author of *Zombie Myths* agrees with Reynolds' point of view which is particularly timely as we approach the centenary of WW1:

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While Australians are willing to recognise gallantry in defeat as it was in Gallipoli, and lauded for their so called mateship and endurance it is only fitting then that the defeat of the indigenous Australian warriors should not prevent us recognising their ingenuity and courage.¹⁶⁵

He makes a valid point. But as Orwell illustrated in his parody in *Animal Farm*, the truth is changed to suit the political advantage of the ruling power. This includes the way history is remembered. This leads the discussion into the next chapter when we look at how the subject of Anzac is taught in school and whether we are in fact, militarising our history.

¹⁶⁴ Henry Reynolds being interviewed on Radio National by Philip Adams on 22nd July 2013: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/australia27s-forgotten-war/4835842>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

¹⁶⁵ John Connor, 'The Frontier War that Never Was', in Craig Stockings, ed., *Zombie Myths* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2010), p.27.

CHAPTER FOUR

ARE WE MILITARISING OUR HISTORY?



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We used to say that the ranks of the original Anzacs were thinning with each passing year. They are all gone now. Now what swells with each Anzac season is a hunger for their stories. [...] the spirit of Anzac is greater than a debt to past deeds. It lives on in the valour and the sacrifice of young men and women that ennoble Australia in our time, in scrub in the Solomons, in the villages of Timor, in the deserts of Iraq and the coast of Nias.¹⁶⁷

This extract from John Howard's April 25th, 2005 address at the Anzac Day Dawn Service at Gallipoli sets the wheels in motion for the following chapter which will travel through various stations stopping to ask how Anzac Day is taught in schools. What exactly is the ephemeral 'Anzac Spirit'? What elements of our history are being

¹⁶⁶ Looking closely at the photo we can see the young men in the background are not veterans but are young professional soldiers of today. They represent the fresh young face of Anzac, an initiation into 'adulthood' as such. All of the antediluvian ribbons, battle flags and medals are highly symbolic and make war seem terribly glorious and adventurous. The atrocities of war are nowhere to be seen. What do we make of the digger pointing his walking stick up as a rifle? It all seems like a game. The whole scene is embedded with militant rituals and the hegemony of militant traditions are lauded as the crowd behind the barricade cheer them on. Image: Fred Bagshaw, 92 - Anzac Day march in Sydney 2013. Picture: Craig Greenhill Source: News Limited.

¹⁶⁷ Transcript of the Prime Minister The Hon John Howard MP Address at Anzac Day Dawn Service, Gallipoli. <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/10052/200505210000/www.pm.gov.au/news/speeches/speech1353.html>;

overshadowed? What is the symbolism behind the language and rituals embedded in Anzac Day? To finally arrive at the central station question of whether we are, as many claim, militarising our history.

Since the 1990s, there has been an extraordinary increase on the emphasis and the importance of war and what seems a continuous program to commemorate the men (and to be politically correct women are nowadays included), who have served in Australia's overseas wars from 1885 to the present. Lake calculates that the publication of books on Australians at war increased from less than 60 in the 1970s, to over 250 in the 1980s, to more than 360 in the 1990s to more than 400 in the past decade.¹⁶⁸ Political commentator Michelle Grattan makes the same observation when she wrote on the eve of Howard's speech at Gallipoli, 2005:

The importance of Anzac Day itself waned mid-20th century, especially among the Vietnam generation. But in the past two decades, interest in the Anzacs and Gallipoli has revived dramatically. Anzac Day has become a celebrity event, and the pilgrimage to the peninsula an obligatory part of many Australian backpackers' tours. Political leaders want to identify with it.¹⁶⁹

Many claim that there is a strong push to bring Australia's military history to the forefront of our education programs and into the minds of the public, which is overshadowing other perhaps more noteworthy heroic achievements. This rising swell of enthusiasm will most certainly continue and be swept up into what will be an overwhelming carnival of commemoration to mark in 2015 the centenary of the landing on Gallipoli.

This revival does not only raise the eyebrows of left-wing academics and critics of Anzac Day but it also is rather strange seen through the eyes of those who grew up under the shadow of war. For example, our last WW1 Anzac Alec Campbell pleaded on his death bed: 'For god's sake, don't glorify Gallipoli - it was a terrible fiasco, a total failure and best forgotten'.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Lake, M., 'Women and the Peace Movements', in *The Guardian* 10/8/2011, <<http://www.cpa.org.au/guardian/2011/1513/11-pax-international.html>>. Interestingly, it was anti-war books that boomed in the decades after the war, when people's memory was still intact as to the realities of the war.

¹⁶⁹ Grattan, M., 'Howard Must Defend the Indefensible at Anzac Cove', *The Age*, April 24, 2005, <<http://www.theage.com.au/news/Michelle-Grattan/Howard-must-defend-the-indefensible-at-Anzac-Cove/2005/04/23/1114152362090.html>>.

¹⁷⁰ King, J., 'It's Anzac Day - Not the Big Day Out', *Sydney Morning Herald*, <<http://www.smh.com.au/national/its-anzac-day--not-the-big-day-out-20130419-2i5a4.html#ixzz2gQZ7DbrX>>. See also Alice Kitchen Diaries which she wrote about the moral questions posed

Many historians and educators are concerned that this focus on the military history is pushing other significant historical events aside. Historian Henry Reynolds believes we are indeed militarising our history. He is worth quoting at length from his latest book *The Forgotten Years*:

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This extraordinary flowering of military history has taken many older Australians by surprise because it is unprecedented. Whether by design or chance, the campaigns inevitably elbow aside all other competing interpretations of our history. Bravery on the battlefield outshines all the achievements of civil society. The soldier, not the statesman, has become the paragon of national achievement. The most important people in our history appear to be the soldiers, service men and women. All the efforts of the civil service and building a nation of values of equality and the fair go are overshadowed by the soldiers' contribution to fighting wars overseas.¹⁷¹

If we are not militarising our history, then our general understanding of Australia's past would include our awareness and acknowledgement of our long anti-war and anti-conscription tradition which were also part of the WW1 tapestry; movements such as the Australian Union Movement which united around opposition to conscription during WW1 or the Women's Peace Army which set out to mobilise women from all political persuasions to destroy militarism.¹⁷²

What about the Women's Rights Movement which saw South Australia being the first parliament in the world to allow female candidates to sit for office; a ground-breaking achievement that deserves the status of heroism applauding the brave women who stood up for their civil rights.¹⁷³ In fact, by the end of the 19th Century, Australia was considered one of the most progressive societies in the world; something worthy of more than just a footnote.¹⁷⁴

Many of Australia's achievements such as social development and its maturation of politics, all pushed aside to the sound of marching boots. What about the progressive era of the 1970s that saw Australia successfully expand its political democracy with a focus on equality and the 'fair go', its private enterprise which

by war and the conduct of the war itself—moral questions that concern all Australians today. Source: De Vries, *The Complete Book of Heroic Australian Women*, Kindle location 4486.

¹⁷¹ Henry Reynolds, *Forgotten War* (Sydney: New South Publishing, 2013), Kindle locations 102-108.

¹⁷² Transcript of the Prime Minister The Hon John Howard MP Address at Anzac Day Dawn Service, Gallipoli.

<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/10052/200505210000/www.pm.gov.au/news/speeches/speech1353.html>;

¹⁷³ For example, on 12 March 1921, Edith Cowan became the first woman to be elected to an Australian parliament. She served in the Western Australian Legislative Assembly until 22 March 1924.

¹⁷⁴ Henry Reynolds being interviewed on Radio National by Philip Adams on 22nd July 2013: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/australia27s-forgotten-war/4835842>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

supported the explosion of successful small businesses across Australia; notwithstanding our unique cultural status of our multicultural society, one that has been criticised but also applauded. Where is the contribution of Aboriginal Australians in our history pages? What about our many artistic and cultural achievements?¹⁷⁵ It seems the only historical element that is on par with our military efforts are our sporting achievements which we gladly share the limelight with our soldiers, after all they exhibit the same perceived qualities that we believe embody the true Australian, namely courage, persistence, the underdog and the strong, bronzed man who overcomes hardship.

Does the Federation of our nation hold a special place in the average Australian consciousness? Some would argue it should, as this was Australia's true political beginning when it would as a nation determine which direction it would go in, what values it would pursue and what we would stand for. Yet during the 2001 anniversary of our Federation it was not unusual to hear the myth of Anzac Day repeated in the official addresses during the celebrations of the Federation centenary. An extract from the speech delivered by the Governor-General, Sir William Deane, shows how we just cannot help ourselves; it always comes back to the Anzac legend.

[We feel].. grateful pride in the commitment to democracy under the rule of law, which created our nation and which has deepened down the century. We have sealed it by sacrifice in war. All those who have been and are Australian. And what they were and are: their decency, their generosity, their sense of fair play and their spirit of ANZAC.¹⁷⁶

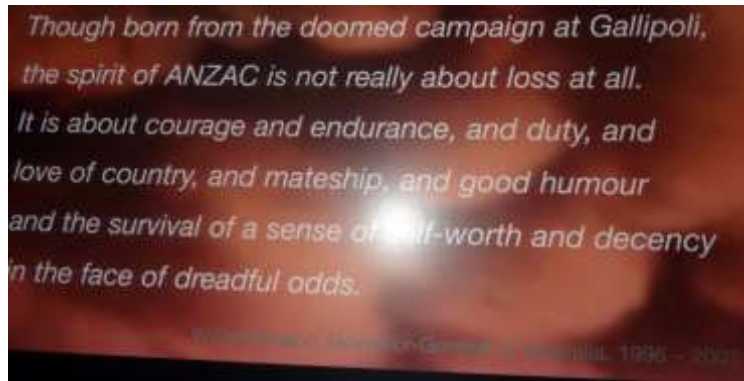
¹⁷⁵ These are the areas of symbolic national achievement that Fraser tried to instil in the 1988 Bicentenary programme: Curran, *The Power of Speech*, p.251.

¹⁷⁶ For full speech see Appendix 19: *Australian Politics*, <<http://australianpolitics.com/2001/01/01/sir-william-deane-centenary-of-federation-speech.html>>.

What exactly is this 'Anzac spirit'? The AWM website describes it as a concept which suggests the Anzacs possessed qualities that coalesce around several traits, 'including endurance, courage, ingenuity, good humour, larrikinism, and mateship.'¹⁷⁷

At the Australian War Memorial, Canberra a monument stands describing the Anzac

Page | 54 Spirit as:



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The Memorial asks its patrons: What does the Anzac Spirit mean to you? And in case you weren't sure it provides the answers: High spirits, comradeship, bravery, tenacity, audacity, endurance.

The Department of Veteran's Affairs on their website emotionally expresses the Anzac Spirit as:

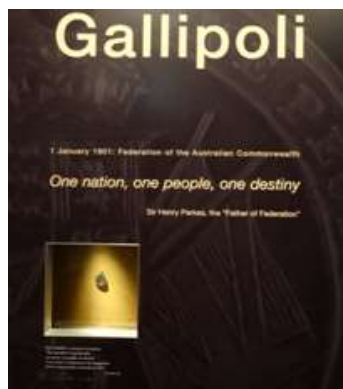
¹⁷⁷ Australian War Memorial website: <<http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/anzac/spirit.asp>>, last viewed 1/10/13. See also Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, p.27.

¹⁷⁸ Photos taken at the AWM.

ANZAC, a single word so powerful in the Australian vocabulary that it can bring a tear to the eye, a lump in the throat and a feeling of pride, just to be an Australian. The spirit of the ANZACs had touched the hearts and minds of all Australians. Win or lose, they wanted to be with their mates. The true spirit of the ANZACs - a willingness to sacrifice their lives for their country, their pride and their mates. The spirit of the ANZAC continues today in times of hardship such as cyclones, floods and bush fires.^{179 180}

C.E.W. Bean himself would have been surprised by such descriptions, as he did not suggest the spirit and character of Australians emerged at Gallipoli but that it was a tenacity and fortitude that was born in the bush and carried into battle; a spirit that came from pioneering the outback and settling the vast lands of Australia.¹⁸¹

When visiting the AWM, one can see the WW1 exhibition and the engines of apotheosis under the banner of 'The Anzac Spirit.' Curiously, there is a quote from Henry Parkes introducing the Gallipoli display:



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The display says: 1 January 1901: Federation of the Australian Commonwealth

¹⁷⁹ The Returned & Services League of Australia WA branch website:

<http://www.rslwahq.org.au/Commemoration/ANZAC-Day/ANZAC-Spirit.aspx>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

¹⁸⁰ Even memoirist, Albert Facey, author of *A Fortunate Life*, concluding after having lost both his brothers and sons at Gallipoli that 'there is no God, only myth.' For Facey, as no doubt for many others, God and their faith in humanity died while at the same time others, who had never been to the front nor bayoneted a fellow man, claimed that the Anzac Spirit was born: Watson, D., 'The New Opium', *The Nation Reviewed* - The Monthly, June 2012.

¹⁸¹ Russell Ward confirms this time and again in his book, *The Australian Legend*. It is also worth noting here, that these bush values were intrinsically racist and the men of these times took great pride in being white men and the settling of the land also meant the displacement of the indigenous Australians.

¹⁸² Photo taken at the AWM, 23rd of September 2013.

‘One Nation, one people, one destiny.’

Sir Henry Parkes the Father of the Federation.

Federation occurred 14 years before Gallipoli and Henry Parkes was thinking of Australia as it forged ahead to create a sovereign nation determining its own destiny separate from Britain. The AWM attempts to galvanise in our minds that Australia was founded at Gallipoli by high-jacking the civic and political elements of federation and making it their own.

As an advocacy of peace, the birth of the Australian Federation is a splendid example of how a nation might achieve autonomy and independence and still avoid bloodshed. Some would argue that it is much more worthy of national rhapsody than Gallipoli. According to Helen Irving, author of *To Constitute a Nation*, the founders of the Commonwealth took pains to ensure that Australia avoided bloodshed, through both the Federation process and the Constitution's words.¹⁸³

Historian John Hirst concurs that there was much to celebrate with the Federation:

it was a peaceful achievement of union by the vote of the people; the name Commonwealth that indicated the high aspirations for the Australian state.¹⁸⁴

It seems that a peaceful process as occurred with Federation does not provide the blood and guts that must be in the birth of a nation, no true heroes were born and in terms of nationhood it's all too effeminate. Yet the Anzac myth excludes so many Australians who look to identity and national pride outside of the battlefields of war and bloodshed; those who strive to see a nation built on the sound virtues of tolerance, diplomacy and peace. The birth of our Federation constitutes these qualities and yet it is rejected. Irving sums it up rather poignantly:

It is a myth that reinforces the regrettable view that law and democratic politics are not noble alternatives to war. Australia's founders should be role models, not historical rejects. They were as robust, strong-minded and stout-hearted as any could want. Some of the men were virile indeed. But they would turn over

¹⁸³ Irving, H., ‘Tragic Choice for a National Myth’, *The Australian*, 27th of April 2001; See also Henry Reynolds being interviewed on Radio National by Philip Adams on 22nd July 2013: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/australia27s-forgotten-war/4835842>. The founding fathers knew well the history of the American War of Independence and held living memories of the Civil War. They wanted to avoid the bloodshed.

¹⁸⁴ Hirst, J., ‘Australia Day in Question’, *The Age*, 26 January 2008, <http://www.theage.com.au/news/opinion/australia-day-in-question/2008/01/25/1201157665401.html>, last cited 1/10/13.

in their graves to learn that in 2001 we find our moment of nationhood in war rather than in their work.¹⁸⁵

How is history taught at school? Is there an imbalance in terms of the focus given to our military history? Historian Greg Lockhardt sees a compliant historiography accommodating many myths and deceptions to this day and these are embedded in most of the materials provided to teachers to continue the legend.¹⁸⁶ According to historian Marilyn Lake's research the histories of Australians at war continue to

... proliferate constituting a veritable flood of military history in comparison to other aspects of our history which remain in the shadows in particular the parallel peace movement.¹⁸⁷

There is indeed a plethora of books, statues, museums, TV documentaries, feature films, newspapers, text books, new editions of old books, school curricula, posters, web pages, study kits available.¹⁸⁸ An endless source of material to inculcate the story of Anzac from as young as pre-schoolers who are read stories such as an *Anzac Tale* by Ruth Starke and Greg Holfeld which:

represents the characters as kangaroos dressed in army gear. The emblematic kangaroo figures, with their proud postures, give strength to the notion of our brave boys who naively went to Gallipoli to be slaughtered.¹⁸⁹



In 2003, John Howard talked of the need for Australian children to be taught their national inheritance. What exactly did he mean when he said:

¹⁸⁵ Irving, H., 'Tragic Choice for a National Myth', *The Australian* [Canberra, A.C.T], 27 Apr 2001: 13.

¹⁸⁶ Lockhart, G., 'Race, Fear and Dangerous Denial', *Griffith Review*, Edition 32.

¹⁸⁷ Lake, M., 'Women and the Australian Peace Movements', *The Guardian*, 10th August, 2011. <http://www.cpa.org.au/guardian/2011/1513/11-pax-international.html>.

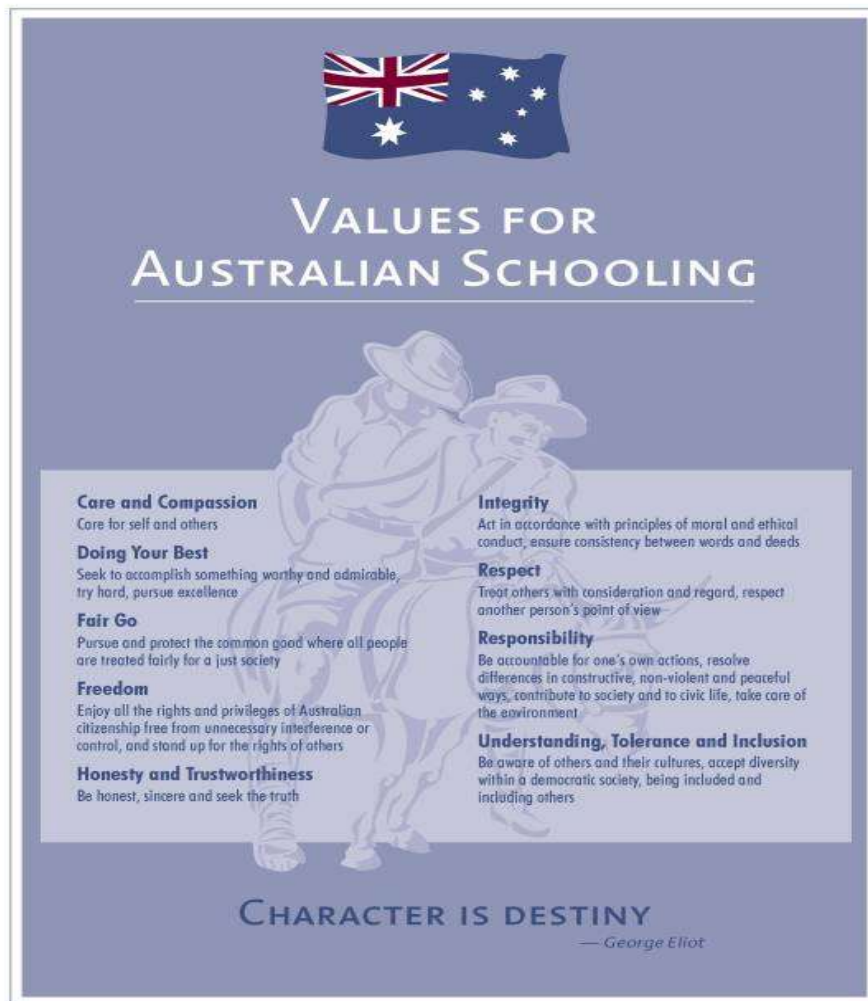
¹⁸⁸ Critiques of this assumption, for example Geoffrey Blainey say that this is not true and point to the money spent on the National Museum of Australia as an example that we also spend money on other aspects of our history. This argument is weak; Australia still has an *entire* museum dedicated to our participation in primarily foreign wars.

¹⁸⁹ Dempsey, D., Book Review, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2013

<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/an-anzac-tale-20130426-2ijs4.html>; last viewed 2/11/2013. Note the language, it may be loosely based on historical events and its bias remains overt but unquestioned.

Until recent times, it had become almost de rigeur in intellectual circles to regard Australian history as little more than a litany of sexism, racism and class warfare. *Quadrant* has been an outpost of lively non-conformity in its willingness to defend both Geoffrey Blainey and Keith Windschuttle against the posses of political correctness.¹⁹⁰

It becomes clearer when the words of MP Christopher Pyne, the incumbent Minister for Education, says the new national school curriculum over-emphasises indigenous culture and history and is a 'disaster'. He promised to overhaul the syllabus as soon



¹⁹⁰ Howard, J., 2006 speech at the 50 year anniversary of *Quadrant*:

<http://www.idu.org/contentdoc/PrimeMinisterHoward061003QuadrantMagazine.pdf>;

For full speech see Appendix 20. Blainey and Windshuttle believe that there is too much emphasis on our mistakes of the past and not enough honouring of the British contribution to Australian life. Blainey argued in the literary and political journal *Quadrant* in 1993 that the telling of Australian history had moved from a disproportionately positive interpretation of our history to an unduly negative view known as the 'Black Armband' view of history. Australian commentators and politicians continue to debate this subject. Geoffrey Blainey, 'Drawing Up a Balance Sheet of Our History'. -Sir John Latham Memorial Lecture (1992)-*Quadrant* (Sydney), v.37, nos 7-8, July-Aug 1993: 10-15.

as he is in office and to 'restore Anzac Day to its rightful place of respect.'¹⁹¹ We can also look to the values poster that Howard introduced to schools in the '90s. It is a poster depicting the so-called Australian values; as though these virtues were uniquely Australian.

It has a rather condescending and patronising tone. The nine values are presented as though they are the special preserve of the Australian people and that they are somehow culturally alien to others. Note that the values are set to the backdrop of Simpson and his donkey, a well-known iconic image of Gallipoli.¹⁹² It's clearly saying that these values were forged on the battlefield. It seems that the Howard Government have forgotten what actually happens at war and how 'understanding others cultures and respecting others' when bayoneting another human being is an arresting disjunct.

Once again it is interesting to look at how history is *not* taught in schools. Men continue to be considered as the main subjects of history in particular the military history and so the peace movements of which women were at the forefront is neglected.¹⁹³ The race fear that strangled Australia at that time is also ignored. And yet, it is what truly motivated the Australian government in aligning itself with Britain. A persuasive political theme is raised in David Walker's book, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939*, that Australia was fearful that a rampant Asia might 'aboriginalise' white Australians just as white Australians had 'aboriginalised' the Aborigines.¹⁹⁴ Yet there is little mention of this in the educational material provided to students.

Lake was on point when she expressed her concern that we are over sentimentalising history and by the way we celebrate Anzac Day the real danger is that history, as a the critical practice in understanding the past and to learn from our

¹⁹¹ Blake, S., National Education Writer, *Coalition Government to Review Unions and ALP Presence in History Curriculum* Sept. 3, 2013: <http://www.news.com.au/national-news/federal-election/coalition-government-to-review-unions-and-alp-presence-in-history-curriculum/story-fnho52ip-1226709301143#ixzz2gR6NyZ7L>.

¹⁹² There have been several historical accounts of Simpson proving his actions in WW1 are undeserving of his legendary status. This was confirmed when he was denied the posthumously VC. Mark Baker, 'Taken For a Ride', *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 7, 2013. See Graham Wilson, *Dust, Donkeys and Disillusions: The Myth of Simpson and his Donkey Exposed* (Newport: Big Sky Publishing, 2012), *passim*. For more details see Appendix 21.

¹⁹³ Lake, M., 'Women and the Australian Peace Movements', *The Guardian*, 10th August, 2011. <<http://www.cpa.org.au/guardian/2011/1513/11-pax-international.html>>.

¹⁹⁴ David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939* (St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1999), p.9.

past mistakes, is in danger of kowtowing to nationalist mythology and healthy dissent is suppressed. Lake states her concern:

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Australians' pioneering achievements in building a democratic society and a welfare state, in extending equal rights to women and to Indigenous Australians, in fostering multiculturalism and racial equality have been silenced by the resurgence of the dangerous nineteenth century idea that nations are made in war. It is time to reclaim our national values and commemorate the role of the Australians involve in campaigns for civil, social and political freedoms and who enshrined them in our national culture.¹⁹⁵

Lake is not alone in this concern; and with an incumbent Liberal Government determined to change the national history curriculum to highlight what white man has done for this country and to put Anzac back to its rightful place, the fear is very real.

¹⁹⁵ Lake and Reynolds, *What's Wrong with Anzac Day?*, pp158-159.

CHAPTER FIVE

2015 CENTENARY OF GALLIPOLI



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On the weekend of 4-5th October Sydney's harbour was filled with 40 warships from 17 different countries celebrating 100 years of the Royal Australian Navy. Fireworks were let off, the crowds amazed and the imposing warships' doors opened to the public. It was a gala reminiscent of NYE. This portentous celebration of Australia's military might sets the tone for Anzac Day 2015 that will no doubt become an even greater military extravaganza with millions earmarked so as to ensure this annual event is forever enshrined in Australian culture. Brendan Nelson is looking forward to

¹⁹⁶ Photo sourced: *Canberra Times*, 5th October, 2013.

<<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/photogallery/nsw/prince-harry-visits-the-australian-naval-fleet-review-20131005-2v050.html>>, last viewed 9/11/13.

seeing the 140 000 children who visit the AWM each year writing their name on a wooden cross which will then be placed on the graves of WW1 Australian soldiers throughout Europe.¹⁹⁷ Former defence chief and current chairman of the NSW Centenary of Anzac Advisory Council Peter Cosgrove, envisions people on Anzac Day 2015 staying in the CBD for the whole day and staying around near giant screens to watch the live broadcast of the Gallipoli dawn service.¹⁹⁸ What about the vociferous Christopher Pyne? Well, he certainly is looking forward to Anzac Day being put back in its rightful place.

Despite all the enthusiasm, there are murmurings of dissent amongst historians, educators and social critics that perhaps Anzac Day deserves an overhaul, a rethinking of what makes the day so laudable and whether we really want to align our national identity with a battle that had very little positive outcome on the lives of Australians. Questions being asked include: Do we continue to commemorate Australia in war or do we start to focus on our plurality? What about the divisive character of collective remembrance? Are nations really made in war? Chapter 5 will join the ranks of those proposing this line of questioning and set out to find out what are the possible answers, concerns and projections concerning the Anzac legend and the upcoming centenary. Evidence will be sought out to determine if Anzac Day is in fact a 'glamorial' with rituals and ceremonies so entrenched in symbolic hyperbole that we no longer know whether it was: Four legs good, two legs bad? Or was it: 'Four legs good, two legs better?'¹⁹⁹

Beginning in 2014, the Australian Government will spend \$108 million on a five-year program to commemorate the centenary of Anzac. A report commissioned by Kevin Rudd, made up of a panel including Bob Hawke and Malcolm Fraser, proposed 25 recommendations all of which have been accepted. This includes the restoration and refurbishment of local war memorials and honour rolls, grand functions, information

¹⁹⁷ AWM website, *Our Vision*: <https://www.awm.gov.au/1914-1918/our-vision/>, last viewed 25/10/13.

¹⁹⁸ Davies, L., 'Cosgrove Warns Centenary Must Be Planned Now', *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 26, 2013: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/cosgrove-warns-centenary-must-be-planned-now-20130425-2ihhu.html#ixzz2hTo11qOF>, last viewed 12/10/13.

¹⁹⁹ George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1945). 'The phrase instances one of the novel's many moments of propagandising, which Orwell portrays as one example of how the elite class abuses language to control the lower classes. It serves the purpose of drowning out dissenting opinion from the others. By the end of the novel, as the propagandistic needs of the leadership change, the pigs alter the chant to the similar-sounding but completely antithetical "Four legs good, two legs better."' Source: SparkNotes, <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/animalfarm/quotes.html>. The power of language is a feature frequently used in the perpetuating of the Anzac Legend and maintaining its hyperbolic place in our own very manipulative memories.

kits for school children (as if they needed even more), a mobile exhibition based on World War I memorabilia, and a restaging of the first convoy departure from Albany in Western Australia.²⁰⁰ It's going to be a four year party celebrating all the wars and conflicts Australia has ever been involved in.^{201 202}

Alongside the enthusiasm and cant jingoism, there are those who openly challenge the 2015 centenary, such as Ian Sysons, Ben Pobjie, Kim Johnston and historian Clare Wright, who said on *ABC Lateline* that:

ANZAC Day has become monolithic and has actually blocked out a lot of other events and interpretations of Australian history that also go towards understanding what the national character is, who we are and how we became that way.^{203f}

Or Paul Ham who decreed in his review of William Nagle's book *The Odd Angry Shot*:

Let this book again be a warning to all those newly minted warmongers, Anzac Day zealots, hero-hunting journalists and populist storytellers posing as historians, who seem to have forgotten what war is and does.²⁰⁴

Or Christopher Bantick who writes in his article, *Anti War Poems Can Counter Hero Worship*:

²⁰⁰ Paul Kelly, 'The Next Anzac Century', *The Australian*, April 23, 2011:

<<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/the-next-anzac-century/story-fn59niix-1226043226240>>, last viewed 12/10/13; See also: Stephens, A., 'Acts of Remembrance or Expressions of Nationalism?', *The Drum Online*, April 23, 2013, <<http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/4649598.html>>, last viewed 12/10/13.

²⁰¹ Anticipated enthusiasm to attend the Gallipoli Centenary in 2015 has seen the government introduce a ballot system; a system that will select the majority of 10,500 tickets that will be allowed for the dawn service - with 8000 Australians, 2000 New Zealanders and 500 special representatives set to attend. This is double the number that attended in 2013. Australia's ballot make up will include 400 double passes for direct descendants of Gallipoli veterans and 400 double passes for current veterans as well as 400 places will go to school children and their chaperones. For details to go: 'Gallipoli Ballot to Open in November', *Nine MSM*, <<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/national/2013/05/13/10/17/gallipoli-ballot-to-open-in-november>>, last viewed 12/10/2013.

²⁰² Some concerns have been raised that the centenary could polarise multicultural Australia, however, unsurprisingly these concerns have been dismissed by the RSL, the custodian and celebrant of the legend: FED: *Anzac Day Centenary Has Risks*: Review. (2012, Mar 26). *AAP General News Wire*. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/940646850?accountid=14757>.

²⁰³ Transcript of Lateline, 25/4/13: *Importance of Anzac Day*, <<http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2013/s3745544.htm>>; See also Syson, I., 'Anzac Sport Celebrates a Unity That Didn't Exist', *The Age*, <<http://www.theage.com.au/comment/anzac-sport-celebrates-a-unity-that-didnt-exist-20130424-2iezk.html#ixzz2gRddk8lY>>; See also Pobjie, B., 'What the Diggers Fought For', *New Matilda*, <<https://newmatilda.com/2013/04/26/what-diggers-fought>>; See also Johnston, K., *Warrior Making and Anzac Day*, <<http://overland.org.au/2013/05/warrior-making-and-anzac-day/>>.

²⁰⁴ Ham, P., 'Lest We Forget the Ghastly Face of War', *The Australian*, March 16, 2013:

<<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/review/lest-we-forget-the-ghastly-face-of-war/story-fn9n8gph-1226597939553>> .

Australia glories in war and needs it as an assurance of who we are: patriotic and pugnacious. Anzac Day is now the country's annual nationalistic fix. It's an easy conduit for establishing national traits, from suspicion of authority and images of manhood to the mateship ethos. But surely it is time to rethink the heroic war message and disarm Anzac Day.²⁰⁵

Page | 64 Nonetheless, when it comes to the arguments the anti-Anzac perspective is strong but is crowded out by the jingoistic commemoration, fuelled by a largely obsequious and compliant mainstream media.

In an article published in *The Guardian*, Marilyn Lake points out that in the exact same month that saw Australians join British and Allied Forces in advancing on Gallipoli, the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, the longest lasting women's peace organisation in the world, will also celebrate its centenary in 2015, but who would know it?²⁰⁶ In many ways these events complement each other and should be commemorated as such; one anniversary is nationalist, the other internationalist; one celebrates war, the other peace; one honours the achievements of men, the other highlights the role of women.

In every text, education kit, commemoration, museum, memorial, historical fiction books depicting Australia's involvement in war, RSL memorial plaques or any interview with the defence minister or the incumbent prime minister, the ubiquitous language is found: mateship, courage, bravery, sacrifice, uniting all Australians, baptism of fire, a nation was born, pride and legend. This interpretation that Anzac Day is sacred and is our *real* national day, is strengthened each year and the centenary is bound to burn an imprint in our memories forever. To any outsider it will most certainly appear as our national day.

So many myths and legends feed into popular memory; memory of war being quite at odds with the scholarly memory, a careless blurring of historiography that allows the morphing of the story to take a myriad of shapes to suit a myriad of political agendas. Even the tour guide at the AWM proudly announced at the beginning of his tour that the 'AWM was a wonderful mixture of myth and history.'

²⁰⁵ BANTICK, C., (2013, Apr 20), 'Anti-War Poems Can Counter Hero Worship', *Weekend Australian*. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1328750029?accountid=14757>.

²⁰⁶ Lake, M., 'Women and the Peace Movements', in *The Guardian*, 10/8/2011, <http://www.cpa.org.au/guardian/2011/1513/11-pax-international.html>

Alistair Thomson writes in *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend* that the works of Carmel Shute, Robin Gerster, Richard White, Marilyn Lake, Lloyd Robson and David Kent have:

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... highlighted the dark side of the Anzac experience and explored the processes by which a selective ideal or legend was installed and aberrant experiences were marginalised or excluded.²⁰⁷ Anzac Day may be a popular pageant, but it is also a martial affair with military music and ritual that uncritically endorses the role of the military services in Australian history and society.²⁰⁸

Anzac Day remains a structured and institutionalised event in the Australian calendar; one that is embedded with military symbolisms and rituals. It is a view of a man's world that clearly believes that they are the reason you get to live the life you enjoy today. Without us you would be left rather vulnerable and all the talk of peace and non-violence isn't relevant in the world of 'Real Politik'? An article written by Eddie McGuire in the *Herald Sun* provides a poignant example of the disconnect between the right to protest and our involvement in WW1. McGuire writes:

I have written in the past of my experience as a schoolboy marching in the band in the Anzac parades in the late 1970s and early '80s where the Diggers were flower bombed by the "women against rape in war" -- a pretty fair reason to demonstrate. How the marchers laughed at the irony that the protesters' actions were able to happen as a result of them and their mates risking their lives and losing comrades in war. The right to free speech and the right to protest and the protection of democracy.²⁰⁹

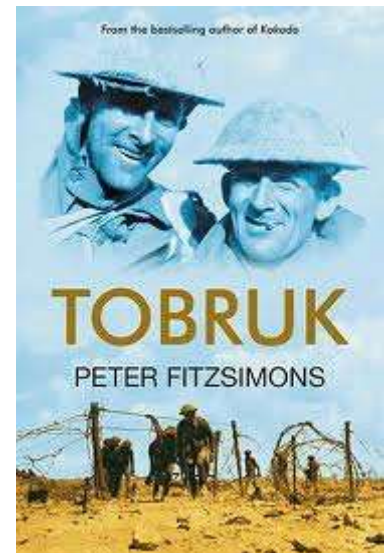
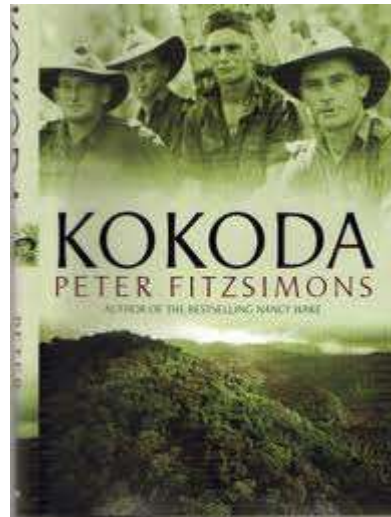
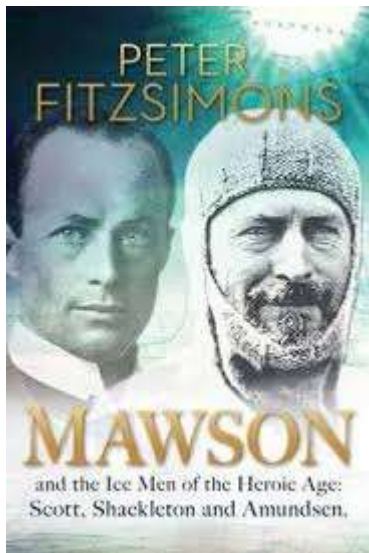
This is pure misinformation: there is no direct connection between Gallipoli and our modern day rights to protest and speak out. These rights were won through the constitution of Federation and the law, a peaceful construct of a modern day society and one we ironically fail to honour. That the diggers fought to maintain our freedom has been clearly disputed throughout the previous chapters. Australia's reasons for being in the war, had more to do with our sense of vulnerability and wanting to ensure that if we supported the Empire in battle, she would be here to assist us in our anticipated attack of the yellow man on our wide open land.

²⁰⁷ Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.195.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p.201.

²⁰⁹ Eddie McGuire, 'Don't Mess With Anzac Spirit', *Sunday Herald Sun*, 3rd May, 2009.

Who do Australians choose as our national heroes and what do they say about ourselves? If we look to popular writer Peter Fitzsimmons, who has written several biographies of the iconic heroes of Australian culture, it seems we value or sportsmen, soldiers of course, and a few explorers.²¹⁰



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This overview of Australia's populist writer does paint a relevant summary of the kinds of iconic heroes we choose to identify with. It seems that it is the (white) men who have created and shaped our nation. What about the Australian women?²¹² Surely there is more to them than making lamingtons and Anzac biscuits. Where are the Aboriginal heroes, those who fought directly for their land, their way of life and for their rights? These are not heroes for all Australians it seems and are therefore ignored and pushed back into the pages of history books that are well hidden from the public mainstream memory.

²¹⁰ For example there is: *The Ballad of Les Darcy* an Australian middleweight champion who got himself embroiled in the politics of conscription during the First World War and left Australia to avoid the aggravation; *Kokoda* and *Tobruk* both war stories; *Eureka* the story about the men who fought the injustices on the goldfields; and *Batavia*, *Charles Kingford Smith*, plus *Mawson*, all stories of adventurers and *Kokoda* which was published after Keating's visit to Kokoda in 1992.

²¹¹ Some examples of Fitzsimmons books.

²¹² Of all the books written by Fitzsimmons, only one is about a woman, namely *Nancy Wake*, who was in actual fact a New Zealander who served as a British agent during the later part of World War II. Ironically, Nancy Wake lamented that: 'The exploits of Australia's women at war have been sadly neglected for years.' Source: Susanne De Vries, <http://www.susannadevries.com/heroic_australia_women_in_war.html>; last viewed 25/10/2013.

Aboriginal men volunteered in all of our wars but none have been commemorated as heroes.²¹³ In joining the army many Aboriginal men were looking to escape the poor conditions they were living in, the constant racism and discrimination. When Aboriginal people returned from war they were given no recognition for what they had achieved. White diggers were the heroes; Aboriginal diggers forgotten and their names omitted from war memorials across Australia. They were even excluded from RSLs and unable to march with their comrades on Anzac Day or join with them in after-march events and certainly no access to any of the veteran's repatriation schemes.²¹⁴ As Joy Damousi writes in *The Labour of Loss*, the Anzac Legend becomes another salute to Anglo-Saxon supremacy when only the sacrifices of white Australians are publically honoured.²¹⁵ How can Anzac Day continue to claim it is for



all Australians?

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²¹³ Not even Len Waters was the first Aboriginal fighter pilot to serve in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II. Source: Creative Spirits, <<http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/history/anzac-day-coloured-digger-march#toc2>>, last viewed 12/10/13.

²¹⁴ Creative Spirits, <<http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/history/anzac-day-coloured-digger-march#toc2>>, last viewed 12/10/13; See also Damousi, *The Labour of Loss*, p. 68 and p.95.

²¹⁵ Joy Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.37-38. In fact, Aboriginal families were even further disposed by the soldier repatriation scheme as they had to make way for white returned soldiers. Damousi, *The Labour of Loss*, p. 106.

²¹⁶ One lone photo stands in the AWM of an unknown Aboriginal soldier. Photo taken 23rd September, 2013. The NSW government has recently funded the first state War Memorial in Hyde Park to honour the Aboriginal men who served in the wars. 'Calling Artists for Indigenous War Memorial', *City of Sydney Media Centre*, Tuesday April 9th, 2013, <<http://www.sydneymedia.com.au/calling-artists-for-indigenous-war-memorial/>>.

With the astonishing rival of our love of Anzac Day there is an obvious absenteeism of dissent and it is quite difficult to maintain a rational discourse detached from emotive rhetoric. This is perhaps because the Anzac legend these days is soaked in nationalism and patriotism. Shouldn't the perils of nationalism be considered as the rituals of Anzac Day are propagated each year? Nationalism breeds prejudice and encourages the 'them and us' mentality where people learn to love and praise only those who belong to their own nation (and race) and regard all those outside as potential contemptible enemies. Self-glorification becomes the rule and little sympathy or tolerance is shown to others. Does Anzac Day exhibit these qualities? Social commentator Dr Alan Stephens, a visiting fellow at UNSW Canberra shares these concerns and writes:

Our concern should be that relentless, officially-sponsored publicity has made our commemorations not so much acts of remembrance as expressions of an aggressive form of nationalism.

What about the Turks? What do they make of all this? Surely there were a few raised eyebrows when in 2004 Howard nominated Anzac Cove as a national heritage site?²¹⁷ What do the locals make of the vast amount of litter left behind by the pilgrims?²¹⁸ Satirist Ben Pobjie facetiously illustrates the insensitivity of our claim to Anzac Cove:

Because the thing is, Gallipoli doesn't really belong to the Turks, except in the most trivially geographical sense. Anzac Cove has become such a part of our national psyche that really, Gallipoli has become Australian property. Every year thousands of young Australians make the great pilgrimage across the world to stand upon that sacred soil, reflect on the sacrifices of their forefathers, and drink themselves into a state of mental retardation so movingly patriotic that the very vomit on their shoes is tinged with green and gold.²¹⁹

²¹⁷ Howard's nomination of Anzac Cove as a national heritage site was labelled as 'rather arrogant and insensitive'. Howard had publically declared that Anzac Cove was just as Australian as a suburban house in Melbourne. The Age, Jan 3, 2004, 'A Place We Should Not Call Our Own', <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/01/02/1072908904857.html>, last viewed 12/10/13; See also Curran & Ward., *The Unknown Nation*, pp.250-253.

²¹⁸ The mosque in Auburn is named the *Gallipoli Mosque* because the Turks also revere what happened at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. The Turks see it as the battle that allowed Mustafa Kemal Ataturk to carve a nation from the remains of the Ottoman Empire.

²¹⁹ Pobjie, B., 'This Time It's Personal', *New Matilda*, 31 Oct 2008. See also: Curran, J. & Ward, S., *The Unknown Nation*, pp. 250-253.

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By all accounts it looks like Australians are going to have difficulty in finding meaning to who we are outside of Anzac Day if education and emphasis on our military history continues to take the limelight. This ongoing endless debate over our identity has been described as ‘ceaseless to the point where Australians seem obsessed with who we really are.’ John Douglas Pringle called Australian’s search for identity ‘that aching tooth,’ and Australian writer David Malouf agrees stating that Australia was ‘endlessly fussing and fretting over identity’.²²¹

Lake in her essay *We Must Fight Free of Anzac, Lest We Forget our other Stories*, writes:

The myth of Anzac continues to exert its power. It looms larger than ever in Australian historical memory with the generous help it should be said of the Australian War Memorial, their massive research and public relations departments, many subsidised publications and the Federal Department of Veteran’s Affairs.²²²

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²²⁰ ‘PM Downplays Gallipoli Litter’, *ABC News*, April 28th, 2005: <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2005-04-27/pm-downplays-gallipoli-litter/1559350>> last viewed 2/11/2013.

²²¹ Stephens, T., ‘Mate You’re a Legend’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 17, 2003, <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/05/16/1052885396799.html>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

²²² Lake, M., ‘We Must Fight Free of Anzac, Lest We Forget our other Stories’, 2009.

²²³ Photo taken at the AWM on Monday 23rd of September 2013.

There are those who are quite clear that our identity and our very soul is grounded in the khaki pants of the soldier. A poignant example of a happy antipodean, who experiences no cognitive dissonance over who we are is the relatively newly appointed head chairman of the Australian War Memorial, Brendan Nelson. When asked what the current role of the Australian War Memorial is he answered:

It embodies the soul of our nation. Almost two million Australians have worn the uniform of our services and have passed from one generation to the next - in war and in peace - values by which we strive to live. Young Australians searching for a sense of meaning and belonging are increasingly finding it in our military history of sacrifice, endurance, concern for one another, and courage in the face of adversity.²²⁴

Perhaps it has become not only our substitute national day but also Australia's auxiliary state religion, where we mourn the dead, celebrate their heroic deeds and acknowledge how their sacrifice gave us life. A befitting ecclesiastical creation story that has more than one parallel with the Christian version. As Don Watson points out in his essay, *A new Opium*:

Not only do we have a new organic national day, to the inexhaustible advantage of politics, commerce, sport and wheedlers, cliché merchants and persuaders of all kinds, we appear to be in the presence of a default state religion.²²⁵

This is also reflected in the saint like depiction of Anzacs avatars in the chapel housing the bones of the Unknown Soldier.



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²²⁴ Michaela Boland, '10 Questions: Brendan Nelson, director, Australian War Memorial, 54, The Australian Weekend Magazine', 1st June, 2013: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/features/questions-brendan-nelson-director-australian-war-memorial-54/story-e6fmg8h6-1226652176692>, last viewed 2/11/2013.

²²⁵ Watson, D., 'The New Opium', *The Nation Reviewed*, June 2012. See also Inglis, *Anzac Remembered*, p.230.



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The valorised and sentimentalised version of the heroes and events surrounding Gallipoli become more and more entrenched as the exigencies of war become something that we only access in books or in the virtual world of the internet. We have forgotten the realities of war and with that distance lays the danger of glorifying war without even being aware of it. As Lake points out:

²²⁶ Photos taken in the chapel at the AWM. Clearly setting a rather canonical depiction and effusing an imagery of ecclesiastical sainthood of the digger.

²²⁷ Cardinal George Pell (2nd from right) and members of the Australian Defence Force take part in the Anzac Eve Service at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney, Friday, April 24, 2009. Photo sourced at ABC News: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-04-23/anzac-day---audio-slideshow/1663322>

The belief that WW1 and Gallipoli was a source of unique and positive national virtue sails directly into the winds of contemporary global interpretations, which portray the conflict as the prime source of the brutalisation of the twentieth century that fuelled vast and terrible violence.²²⁸

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While we may continue to honour the past, including our military history, perhaps the time has come to transcend Anzac Day and move towards a gender conscious, inclusive and broader social history. All our remembrance days, including Armistice Day are meaningless, unless we also vow to become resolute about peace because that is what those who died at all of the wars thought they were dying for.

²²⁸ Lake & Reynolds, 'Moving On?', p.164.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to examine the conceptual paradigm of the Anzac legend and asked: Is Australia's favourite narrative delusory and does it glorify war by occluding the exigencies of battle? Is the legend built on an erroneous myth that Australia's nationhood and identity was forged on the battlefield; a myth that potentially sentences our young generation to a state of pugnacious patriotism and ignorance? The study set out to challenge the simplistic thinking behind the Anzac legend, critique the liturgy of Anzac and highlight the use of language, rituals and symbolism embedded within the tradition of honouring the dead. Relevant scholarship was applied to underscore the dissertation's premise that there is much more to Australia's identity than one battle and that it is a ritual well deserving of critique and scrutiny.

Chapter 1 provided the historical context of the Anzac legend, including the facets that have habitually been overlooked, such as the anti-war and anti-conscription movements of Australia, proving that not all were eager to die for the Empire. The political and social turbulence on the home front during WW1 is downplayed and at times completely overlooked. The research found that the government was eager to join the war so as to secure defence against its paranoia of an Asian invasion. The nexus between our contemporary freedom and the sacrifice of the Anzacs is dispelled as evidence proves that our involvement in the war was in Britain's interest and had nothing to do with the life we enjoy today. Our current freedoms and rights were won in the peaceful process of federation and our ongoing political process, a fact which is insufficiently honoured or acknowledged.

Chapter 2 looked at the changing relationship Australians have toward Anzac Day from its inception to today and showed that the day has not always been so boastful and suffused by nationalism and pride. Driven by our ambiguity towards Australia Day and its induced cognitive dissonance, Australians have sought to find a day that symbolises our nationhood, a day where the *right* kind of blood was shed and our guilt over atrocities of British colonisation can be overlooked. The chapter reveals how the resistance to debate the sentimentalised narrative of Gallipoli and the Anzac legend has successfully managed to repress critical viewpoints of Australia's contemporary engagement in war.

Chapter 3 showed how myths do not accommodate the complexities behind the legends; the broken men, the sexism and racism as well as the Frontier Wars which are eschewed in favour of avoiding any 'black armband' history. Anzac Day celebrates the trenchantly masculine ideology of heroism and neglects the achievements of women as well as the peace movements born of this time. These omissions are all unremarkable when one considers Anzac Day does not renew our commitment to peace and diplomacy but rather fans the flames of military and national pride.

Chapter 4 examined the claim that we are militarising our history. There has no doubt been an extraordinary increase on the emphasis on war since the 1980s which is overshadowing our knowledge of other aspects of our history. Before the outbreak of World War 1, Australia had won for itself an international reputation as an egalitarian democracy and progressive society, a place that legislated to secure the equal rights of women and was one of the first countries to introduce state pensions for the aged and invalid. Yet these civic achievements continue to be drowned out by the sound of marching boots and it seems we'd rather inculcate our children with the stories of war than with narratives that truly reflect the values of inclusivity, tolerance and equality.

Chapter 5 focused on the upcoming centenary of Gallipoli and asked if we should continue to commemorate Australia in war or do we begin to focus on our laudable plurality and diversity? Evidence was presented proving that the Anzac legend is divisive and narrow and offers very little to those seeking identity outside of the parameters of war and bloodshed. This chapter strongly advocates a renewed acknowledgement of our social and democratic progress lest we run the risk of militarising our history and important achievements towards peace, equality and tolerance are forgotten.

As a quietist appeal for peace, perhaps it is time for the uncritical embrace of the Anzac legend, which sees Australians each year celebrating military might as the apotheosis of manhood, the birth of a nation, the embodiment of the Australian character and the entire parochial heroic machinery to be placed back on the hoist and given a timely overhaul. Even if all the appraisals are true and the Anzacs were truly 'the most impressive combatants this century has even seen', is this really what

we want to coalesce a national identity around?²²⁹ Is it not time to question why the trenchantly masculine ideologies of killing and aggression are what shape a nation? On the other hand, if we begin to celebrate our peaceful political development, our anti-war movements and those who heralded peace and justice and our Australian value of equality and fairness would that bring about a crisis of identity? Would it make us feel vulnerable if we valued peace, kindness and universal brotherhood above our infantry fighting skills?

We take our pledge to *Lest We Forget* extremely seriously and it seems our commitment to honour and remember the dead strengthens with each year. Under this panoply of remembrance a suitably contextualised historiography should also be remembered; facts such as that these young men died for the British Empire, they were volunteers keen to prove their manhood, they believed the war would be over by Christmas and simply saw it as a great adventure. These men were socialised into thinking that to fight and kill is the most admirable form of masculinity. Let us also remember the young men that Australian soldiers killed.

Perhaps it is time to provide our young people of today alternative narratives so they can identify themselves with the great peacemakers of our nation, those who opposed the war and conscription. Just as Scout from *To Kill a Mockingbird* learnt to admire her peacemaking, lover-of-justice father, Atticus:

It was times like these when I thought my father, who hated guns and had never been to any wars, was the bravest man who ever lived.²³⁰

There is merit to her observation. It takes a brave soul to stand up against the tide of fear and propaganda and to remain committed the values of peace, diplomacy and non-violence.

Anzac Day is not, we hear, a glorification of war. Yet if the day no longer serves the purpose of giving returned soldiers the chance to publicly remember the ones who fell, then what exactly is its purpose? Anzac Day is continuously linked to nationhood and to celebrate it as we do, many other aspects of our nation building are pushed into the shadows and Australia is at risk of suffering a serious bout of cultural amnesia.

²²⁹ Beaumont, *Australia's War*, pp.158 quoting the British historian D. Foot.

²³⁰ Lee Harper, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, (London: Pan Books, 1960).

While the crowds fight over the winning tickets to the Gallipoli celebration just as they did in *Charlie the Chocolate Factory*, we seem to have forgotten to ask what it all means to a modern Australia. After all, Australia is now in a new century and has well and truly become a country that made up of a pluralistic society. Do we really want to celebrate the 100th year anniversary of a failed and bloody war as we forge forward into the twenty-first century? Do we still believe that the only way a nation can be born is in bloodshed, or can we build our national identity on the values of egalitarianism, fairness and inclusion? If so, then it just might be time to prepare our young generation for a global village where skills of peacemaking and negotiation will be of high value.

Professor Galtung states in his book *A Theory of Conflict* there is no end to conflict as conflict reflects our human essence of contradiction and is driven by many counterforces. The task is not to end conflict but to learn how to handle it non-violently and constructively.²³¹ Rather than giving our nation, and most importantly our young people the narrative of glorious war heroes, they need to be taught 'powerful conflict literacy, knowledge, skills and creativity for transformation.'²³² Just as we teach them the ill-effects of alcohol, driving without a seatbelt and sun safety, we also need to leave behind the embedded structural state violence of the twentieth century and teach them a new way of overcoming direct violence and solving conflict non-violently.

It seems Australia has difficulty defining who we are, and that perhaps is not a bad thing. This dilemma could be embraced as a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate to the world that Australians are adaptable and capable of change, that we are compassionate global citizens who embrace new Australians to create a society that illustrates what is possible. Is this possible? Or is this version of national identity too effeminate?

Privileging a modern perspective there are hopes to see Australia one day become a Republic. In doing so, Australia may forge an identity that is shaped by *all* that we have done and achieved, including the achievements and contributions made by women and Aborigines as well as acknowledging our past mistakes. It is hoped that we will no longer limit ourselves to one event that some wish to have define us for

²³¹ Galtung, J., *A Theory of Conflict*, (Kolofon Press, 2010), *passim*.

²³² Galtung, J., *A Theory of Conflict*, p. 22.

centuries to come. Once the 2015 hyperbolic exaltation is behind us, perhaps the anachronistic version of Anzac Day can finally be transcended into a more modern variant, one that is inclusive and humble in nature, becoming more relevant to all Australians; a day on which we decree to seek out diplomacy, relationship and justice and to eschew military options.

It was refreshing to discover that these perspectives are not just voiced amongst the left-wing social critics. In 2012, Tasmanian Governor Peter Underwood suggested that Anzac Day should be used to 'ask hard questions about the meaning of wars, their causes and outcomes' and cautioned that the 2015 Gallipoli centenary may cause people to overlook the brutality and reality of war. In his 2013 speech he stated:

Australia needs to drop the sentimental myths that ANZAC Day has attracted. The soldiers of Gallipoli must be respectfully, but realistically honoured and each of us must remain resolute about peace.²³³

The entree of the First Fleet Review of 2013 has been served up and it would clearly seem that Underwood's wise words will fall on deaf ears. The main course of our Gallipoli centenary will make for a fine sanguineous dish, best served in the great halls of past kings and queens who sent their loyal subjects to the battlefield as a chess player might sacrifice his rook for glorious victory. We can only hope that when the plates of debauchery are cleaned up, the plastic cups swept up and the stench of cigarettes swimming in the bottom of empty bottles of beer is aired, that Australia will wake up with a bad enough hangover to finally learn how to place the Gallipoli story in the hallway of moderation, reflection and humility.

²³³ Anzac Day Speech by the Honourable Peter Underwood AC, Governor of Tasmania, The Cenotaph, Hobart, Thursday 25th of April 2013, <http://www.govhouse.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/anzac_day_2013.pdf>.

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