Testament of Youth: Childhood Encounters with Anzac, the Teaching and Dissemination of a Tradition, and the (Re) Invention of Remembrance

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The Australian National University

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Thesis Declaration

I declare that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of qualifications at any other academic institution and is my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged.

Rebecca Wheatley
June 2018
Acknowledgements

As my supervisor, Bruce Scates has provided untold support and guidance. I have learned so much from his passion for history, exhaustive research, and dedication to teaching. At every step of my candidature, Bruce’s confidence in my ability to research, write, teach, and present has motivated me. Thank you, Bruce, for being my supervisor, but thank you also for being an inspiring mentor and wonderful friend.

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My mum Kim and my dad Syd have provided unwavering support, in every respect, throughout my education. My sister Melissa carefully proofread several chapters and always took such an interest in my work. My husband Tom has been a willing assistant in the archives, kept our lives organised in the busiest moments, and cheered me on in moments of doubt. Finally, my daughter Harriet, as I start to hear her talk, I have been heartened that children’s voices matter in history.
Abstract

Children have always played an important role in Australia’s Anzac story. They have carried the burden of war, they have lived with the legacies of conflict, they have been compelled to learn the ‘right’ lessons of history, and they have reshaped and reinvigorated Anzac’s traditions. Yet children are largely forgotten in Anzac’s historical account and they are marginalised in the debates and discussions about its place in modern Australia.

This thesis embarks on a survey of how Australian children have lived with and learned about Anzac, from their families, their communities, and in their classrooms, from the end of the First World War to the Centenary of Anzac in 2015. This study draws on a number of archival collections, such as the National Archives of Australia’s repatriation records, the papers of the RSL and the Anzac Fellowship of Women, parliamentary debates, and school papers and publications. Central to this inquiry is a persistent endeavour to find ‘traces’ of children themselves. Much of the material I have consulted has been rarely used by historians and includes boys’ diaries, photographs, and ephemera from the Young Australia League pilgrimages to the sites of the First World War; dissenting secondary school students’ publications which challenged the Vietnam War and Australia’s culture of commemoration in the 1960s and 1970s; and children’s responses to the 1995 Australia Remembers commemorations. This project has created new archives all of its own. I have undertaken interviews with secondary school students and teachers to capture their experiences of how young people encounter Anzac.

This thesis aims to recover young people’s testimony, weave their experiences into the historical narrative, and position their voices more centrally to contemporary discussions about Anzac. I argue they have responded to the call to remembrance in diverse and complex ways.
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<td>ABC</td>
<td>Australian Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<td>ACARA</td>
<td>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority</td>
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<td>ADF</td>
<td>Australian Defence Force</td>
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<td>ASIO</td>
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<td>Australian Women’s Army Service</td>
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<td>AWM</td>
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<td>POW</td>
<td>Prisoner of War</td>
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<td>RSL</td>
<td>Returned and Services League of Australia</td>
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<td>RSSILA</td>
<td>Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia</td>
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<td>SLWA</td>
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<td>SOSE</td>
<td>Studies of Society and Environment</td>
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<td>State Records Office of Western Australia</td>
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<td>US</td>
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<td>Victorian Certificate of Education</td>
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<td>VET</td>
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<td>VVCS</td>
<td>Vietnam Veterans’ Counselling Service</td>
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<td>WRANS</td>
<td>Women’s Royal Australian Naval Service</td>
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<td>WAAAF</td>
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Introduction

Propped against the Anzac commemorative wall at North Beach, Gallipoli, a wreath, almost a metre in diameter and crafted of paper gum leaves, marked the commemoration by a school some fifteen thousand kilometres away. The wreath’s creators, students from Lowther Hall, an Anglican grammar school in Essendon, Victoria, had etched messages onto each leaf.¹ This memento is an indication of the enduring remembrance of the First World War, but it is also symbolic of some of the challenges, as well as the benefits, of focussing on children in history.

Figure 1: The wreath placed at Anzac Cove on behalf of students from Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School. Photograph courtesy Bruce Scates.

For a long time, the historiography of Anzac focussed on servicemen, their experiences, and the identity and traditions they had forged. However, in recent decades, Anzac’s histories have broadened, taking into account new

subjects and new perspectives. Even so, children are, for the most part, still marginalised or forgotten. There might be an anecdote about school students’ wartime fundraising or photographs of children at Anzac Day ceremonies, but there is not sustained or searching analysis. This near absence, or at least simplified depiction, is remarkable given children’s place in Australia’s Anzac stories. After all, children have carried the burden of war, they have lived with the legacies of conflict, they have been compelled to learn the ‘right’ lessons of history, and they have reshaped and reinvigorated Anzac’s traditions. This thesis endeavours to explore how Australian children have encountered Anzac over nearly one hundred years.

Histories of Children: Challenges, Historiography, and Literature

For all the obstacles involved in writing a history of children, the reward is working in an innovative historical space, and ultimately, the field’s greatest challenge becomes its greatest strength. Peter Stearns describes evidence of children in the past as ‘the granddaddy issue’ for historians. The problem is, Stearns observes, children ‘leave relatively few direct records’ and, as such, they are ‘elusive’ subjects. He sees this as somewhat of an eternal problem, acknowledging it is ‘hard to know how [children] experience work or schooling even today, much less in previous years’. While the ‘granddaddy issue’ is trying, even at times exasperating, it can be overcome.

James Marten advises researchers to take ‘advantage of unusual sources’. One such ‘unusual source’ might include Lowther Hall’s wreath at Anzac Cove. Each message inscribed on those paper gum leaves is the testimony of young

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Australians. Reading the leaves, a range of children’s responses to Anzac at its centenary is evident. Numerous students express patriotic sentiments; some proudly assert their Anzac ancestry; many are ‘grateful’ and ‘thank’ the dead of Gallipoli, of the First World War, or of all wars. There are traces of multicultural Australia in the Chinese characters printed on one leaf and on another the technological-kind-of-thinking of some students with the hashtag #worldpeace. Was the student who translated their words into Turkish trying to gain a more sympathetic, transnational, and balanced understanding of war? Were they of Turkish descent? Was it the student’s initiative or was it prompted by a ‘politically correct’ teacher? Was the student who quoted Sandra Bullock from Miss Congeniality (a romantic-comedy film produced for a popular market and completely unrelated to Anzac) bored, mischievous, or subverting this commemorative act? Several students wrote only their name. Were they lost for words, perhaps overwhelmed, or possibly uninterested, in the exercise? In truth, historians can only venture suggestions of students’ meanings or motivations, and often their responses defy easy explanation.
To discover children’s voices, like those of the Lowther Hall students, historians are required to pursue unconventional avenues of research. It says much for the promise of this sub-discipline that there are many impressive cases of such innovation. For example, Karin Calbert’s analysis of objects, including portraits, toys, and furniture, demonstrates how to read material culture as evidence of childhood experiences. Garry Cross’ work provides a model of how to discover historical attitudes towards childhood by examining twentieth century toys.\(^5\) Rich as these items might be, this intangible cultural heritage is mostly tucked

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away, collected in surprising places, or organised in ambiguous categorisation, which complicates the search for new material. Even so, it is worth persevering. Karen Sánchez-Eppler observes, ‘Records of childhood and records made by children have been housed in archives and library special collections all along, although they have usually been classified in a manner that tends to obscure rather than highlight their presence.’ Sánchez-Eppler suggests traces of children often ‘tend toward the ephemeral—the scrap and the scribble as well as the tome’ and she aptly describes this as ‘childhood flotsam’. Although some material is problematic, what enriches this field are its indefinable, complex sources— they pose problems, they are difficult to find, but they are new and exciting.

The ‘flotsam’ is crucial for the purpose of including ‘flesh-and-blood youngsters’ in a history of children. Admittedly, it is a constant challenge to maintain a focus on children without wandering back and relying on adult-focused interpretations. Early in the development of this field, scholars depended on formal, written, official records. Arguably what makes this evidence so appealing is its accessibility. I do not mean to dismiss such records. This thesis acknowledges that for all the enthusiasm for ‘unusual sources’, it remains necessary to consult more traditional archives as well. In the course of my research, I have accessed a number of organisations’ collections, including the papers of the RSL and the Anzac Fellowship of Women at the National Library of Australia and the Young Australia League at the State Library of Western Australia; government documents held by the State Records Office of

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7 Ibid., p.215, p.219.
8 For a discussion of the complications involved in reading certain sources, see Linda Pollock, Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp.43-52, and for this same issue in regard to her own research, see pp.68-95.
9 Marten, ‘Childhood studies and history’, p.53.
Western Australia and the Public Records Office Victoria; case files from the Repatriation Commission at the National Archives of Australia (NAA); and school papers at the State Library of Victoria. All these diverse archives have proven useful in constructing a more detailed and more nuanced history. Sometimes children’s voices appear in these sources too. Simon Sleight describes the reward of such discoveries: ‘When the voice of vanished youth is heard from beneath a pile of old newspapers or government records it really is a treasured moment’. Nonetheless, Sleight stresses it is necessary to ‘read across a daunting range of evidence in the hope of catching glimpses of young people’.

So where might historians catch a glimpse of young people in the past? Paula Fass suggests, to an extent, we are ‘beholden to the writer and publisher of memoirs’. As a genre, memoirs are often ‘accused of distortion, self-service, or outright falsification’, and their complexities as evidence are well-explored by historians. But the history of children is not the only field required to contend with the unreliability of memory and, despite their limitations, it would be careless to unreservedly disregard memoirs as sources. It seems more prudent to follow Fass’ advice ‘that we be careful, professional, and judicious as we give life to all those young people who allow us to understand the past more fully and on so many different levels’. Historians of children must also meet the challenge that often adult memories of childhood are ‘the best we have’.

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By consulting a vast and diverse range of material, including institutional records and official archives, as well as objects and ephemera, oral histories and memoirs, it is possible to situate children in their histories and to illuminate our subjects. Sources may prove frustrating to find and complex to negotiate, but it is enriching to ‘hear’ the voices of children themselves. This thesis has followed the leads where evidence is available and woven throughout the following chapters are children’s photographs, diaries, schoolwork, and personal writing, as well as interviews conducted with contemporary school students. But in the course of this study, readers will hear adult voices too, in heated parliamentary debates, the often bleak descriptions of post-war family homes as detailed in the repatriation records, interviews with teachers, and the unrestrained enthusiasm of the Anzac Centenary public submissions process. Hopefully, a blend of evidence has served to build a revealing study of Australian children and Anzac across 1919 to 2015.

The history of children is a relatively new field of study. Often regarded a beginning point in the historiography is the landmark Centuries of Childhood by the French historian Philippe Ariès, published in France in 1960 and translated into English in 1962. Centuries of Childhood placed childhood and children as subjects of serious historical inquiry. Drawing on texts and art, Ariès argues that ‘in medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist’, that childhood was a modern concept developed rather than set in biology or human nature. Ariès’ contention is that medieval parents extended less affection to their children and that a change in this relationship only occurred in the 17th and 18th centuries. Centuries of Childhood paved the way for other historians, including Lloyd de Mause, Edward Shorter, and Lawrence Stone, who also argue (with varying degrees of emphasis) that there had been a modern shift in emotions

14 Marten, ‘Childhood studies and history’, p.53.
towards children. According to Hugh Cunningham this ‘trio of books’ provided a ‘peculiarly 1970’s approach to the history of children and childhood’.

For more than half a century now, historians have been troubled by Ariès’ methodologies and his conclusions. Most acknowledge the challenges that the translated work posed, at times conveying a different meaning than the author intended. But this was not a simple matter of Ariès being lost in translation. One of the most thorough appraisals of the French scholar and his contemporaries is provided by Linda Pollock in her work Forgotten Children. Pollock criticises Ariès and those who shared his approaches and findings. She argues many of their claims were based on ‘suspect’ evidence, ‘the problems inherent in the sources rarely considered’, that their data and their findings were ‘factually inaccurate’, and that the foundations of this field bore the ‘hallmark of sloppiness’. Pollock established a ‘new paradigm’ for the next decade. Her research drew on an expansive collection of diaries and autobiographies and she assumed a perspective directed on children, rather than only on ideas about childhood.

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17 Hugh Cunningham, Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500 (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2005), p.7. In this same book, Cunningham provides a helpful discussion of the key texts that followed the publication of Centuries of Childhood, pp.1-17.


19 Wilson, ‘The history of childhood’, p.132. Further to this, Wilson criticises the omission of illustrations in the translated editions, evidence that Ariès used at length, and Wilson is also troubled by numerous shortened quotes and ‘suppressed’ poems and footnotes.

20 Pollock, Forgotten Children, p.263.

21 Cunningham, Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500, p.12.
In the 1960s and 1970s historians readjusted their focus with a curiosity ‘from below’. Developments in children’s histories ran parallel to the flourishing fields of gender, race, and labour studies. The women’s movement and feminist histories of this period were particularly influential, because as increased attention was given to concepts of gender identity, scholars asked how these ideas were shaped in childhood. There were also parallels drawn between childhood and feminist histories to the extent their subjects were both ‘seemingly powerless actors in society’.

Like feminist scholarship, the histories of children endeavoured to give agency to marginalised voices from the past.

Studies that focussed on, among others women, the working-class, and Indigenous people, resulted in a re-thinking of historical subjects, allowing children to be considered as their own unique group. Still, in this early phase of the field, research was, for the most part, based on official records. Historians drew almost entirely on governmental and institutional archives. So although children were the subject of study, the perspective was mostly a bureaucratic and formal one, and usually presented children only through adults’ gaze.

But the field expanded quickly. Paula Fass describes a ‘slow emergence and then the rapid development’ of academic work on children across many disciplines, including history.

Fass suggests that social historians in the 1970s and 1980s first entered the field, then cultural historians in the 1980s and 1990s followed, ‘social historians had opened a much wider angled lens on the past, cultural historians had made it imperative to focus on all its details’.

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25 Ibid., p.5.
There are many impressive examples of children’s histories within an Australian context. Jan Kociumbas assumed the ambitious task of writing the first comprehensive history of Australian children and, based on diligent research, she examines Australian children from before 1788 through to the 1990s. Given the breadth of her subject, Kociumbas’ book has some weaknesses, however *Australian Childhood* met a glaring omission and provides a good starting point into the Australian literature.

One of the most significant areas within this field of study in Australia concerns Indigenous children’s stories, particularly the forced removal from their families and the legacies of the Stolen Generations. Peter Read’s scholarship has been widely consulted to convey the historical detail of this subject to a broad readership, but his research also brings to light personal accounts, as told by the children themselves. Read, and others, have uncovered the enduring impacts of these policies and the entrenched racism which continues to define many Indigenous children’s struggles with their heritage and identity. Of course, Indigenous children’s stories should not be limited in their scope and there are other subjects that warrant attention, as Penelope Hetherington and Shirleene Robinson reveal in their work on Indigenous child labour.

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26 Carla Pascoe considers several other works in the evolution of this historiography in ‘The history of children in Australia: An interdisciplinary historiography’, *History Compass*, vol.8, no.1 (October 2010), pp.1142–1164. For an older, though still helpful, survey of the literature and Australian field to date, see Penelope Hetherington, ‘Childhood and youth in Australia’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.18 (1986), pp.3-18; Penelope Hetherington, ‘Writing the history of childhood in Western Australia’, in Penelope Hetherington (ed.), *Childhood and Society in Western Australia* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1988), pp.1-12.


28 Peter Read, *A Rape of the Soul so Profound: The Return of the Stolen Generations* (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1999); Coral Edwards and Peter Read (eds.), *The Lost Children: Thirteen Australians Taken from their Aboriginal Families Tell of the Struggle to Find their Natural Parents* (Sydney: Doubleday, 1989).

29 Penelope Hetherington, ‘Aboriginal children as a potential labour force in Swan River Colony, 1929-1850’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.16, no.33, pp.41-55; Shirleene Robinson, *Something*
Research which explores Indigenous children’s experiences is frequently grounded in the category of welfare histories, which is a particularly strong subset of Australian children’s histories. Indeed, Carla Pascoe goes so far to suggest that Australia’s historiography of children has been ‘led by historians of child welfare’. In their recovery of accounts of abuse, protection, adoption, and mistreatment, those historians have exposed the conditions endured by neglected and institutionalised children. But why does child welfare comprise such a substantial part of this field? Perhaps historians are attracted to the precision of a bureaucratic system and the rich archives often created by these institutions. Or perhaps the scale of this work is ‘indicative of the moral imperative some feel to tell the stories of children whose vulnerability was often exploited by the welfare systems charged with their protection’. It could be argued that this focus within children’s histories is more important than ever before given the attention currently paid to past injustices in the course of government inquiries into Indigenous children’s forced removal, forced adoption practices, and institutional responses to child sexual abuse.

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Though especially rich, Indigenous and welfare histories do not exhaust the field. In fact, Australian scholarship offers many fine examples of how historians might gain access to a child’s world. For instance, the study of children’s play habits offers insight into children’s social and cultural circumstances and their broader environments. In this relatively long tradition of studying Australian children’s playlore and folklore, historians, namely Gwenda Davey and June Factor, have provided strong foundations. More recent work on this topic of inquiry includes *Childhood, Tradition and Change: A National Study of the Historical and Contemporary Practices and Significances of Australian Children’s Playlore*. Led by Kate Darian-Smith, this project demonstrates how historians are willing to engage in fieldwork with children, generating history from their vantage point, rather than facilitating a pattern of drawing only on adult perspectives.

Place has also allowed historians to better understand children’s experiences. It has situated children as subjects at home, at school, even in institutions such as orphanages and hospitals. In his study of Melbourne’s youth around the turn

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of the twentieth century, Simon Sleight ‘takes to the streets’ fashioning a history which considers young people where they ‘played, worked, spent money and encountered one another’, and he investigates how young people, in turn, shaped their city.\textsuperscript{36} Looking from a perspective of place brings forth a sense of children’s agency and shows how they influence their environments, rather than simply the reverse.

The Australian research in this field is only strengthening. While there remains much to explore, such is the vigour of this new discipline, it is likely rich histories will continue to be written, especially ones where it is possible to hear the voices of children from the past.

While this thesis is grounded as a history of children, it traverses into other fields of historical study as well. Drawing extensively on oral histories, memoirs, and interviews to capture children’s testimony, many of my sources sit at an intersection of different kinds of memory. Considering various concepts, such as ‘individual memory’, ‘family memory’, ‘collective remembrance’, ‘postmemory’, and ‘prosthetic memory’, can help to make sense of the ways young Australians have responded to Anzac. The diversity of memory studies scholarship is particularly beneficial given the evolutions that occur in this study. As the century progresses, children’s ‘memories’ of Anzac change as they move further away from the lived experience of war and its aftermath toward a reimagining of the past.\textsuperscript{37}


\textsuperscript{36} Sleight, \textit{Young People and the Shaping of Public Space in Melbourne}, p.5.

\textsuperscript{37} Relevant literature includes: Jay Winter, \textit{Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European History} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Jay Winter, \textit{Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Timothy Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, ‘The politics of war memory and commemoration: Contexts, structures and dynamics’, in
Emotion plays an important role in many of these Anzac ‘memories’. Sarah Pinto suggests that Australian historians have largely looked on emotion ‘as a tool or method in the service of a range of other historical agendas’. Often that ‘agenda’ is examining Australians’ experiences of war.\(^{38}\) Research by Joy Damousi, Bruce Scates, Tanja Luckins, and Bart Ziino (among others) explores Australians’ emotional responses, particularly of loss and grief, to war.\(^{39}\) This work further illustrates how emotion has shaped the contours of the remembrance of war. From a broader perspective, Pat Jalland charts the patterns of grief, and other emotions, providing context from before the Great War and across the twentieth century.\(^{40}\)

Studies of memory and emotion offer frameworks to consider children’s intimate encounters with Anzac. However, it is equally necessary to examine the public influences shaping children’s historical sensibilities. From the earliest opportunity, Anzac has figured in the classroom and formal education is an important theme of this study. Education historians, such as Andrew Spaull and Bob Bessant, provide comprehensive surveys of Australian school systems


across the twentieth century. Taking into account the changing character of education enables further insights to what Anzac has meant in different classrooms over nearly one hundred years.

These disciplines do not stand apart from one another. Anzac ‘at school’ is not always in opposition to Anzac ‘at home’. Many families and communities take their cues from schools as a cultural authority and there is certainly overlap in many instances. By considering both public and private experiences, this study offers a broader understanding of how children have encountered Anzac from the end of the First World War to its centenary.

What is Anzac?

Reading Australia’s Anzac histories, it is remarkable how often historians note their own childhood impressions. Ken Inglis’ Sacred Places opens with his boyhood memory of visiting the Shrine of Remembrance. He was overcome, he recalled, with ‘awe and confusion and fear: awe in the presence of the holy, confusion about what to think and feel and do in response, fear of I don’t know what’. Inglis evokes the school traditions of Anzac; the Man and his Donkey in the Fourth Grade Reader, of ‘old soldiers’ sermons’, an honour board, and ‘the envied minority [who] wore their dads’ medals’.

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43 Ibid., p.3.
Bill Gammage remembers as a teenager beholding a country town’s war memorial. The monument piqued his curiosity about ‘what Australians had endured then’.44

I was carting wheat to the silo up in Lockhart, NSW, one summer and there was a long line of trucks in front of me. I got out and had a bit of a wander around. I went over to the local war memorial and there seemed to be more names on it of men who had gone off to the war than there were people then living in the town. I thought it had to mean something.45

For Gammage and Inglis, and many other Australians, these youthful encounters with Anzac ‘mean something’. These memories linger in adulthood. A commemorative service, a school lesson or a teacher, a family member, a memorial, or living through a war often defines Australians’ reading of Anzac, its histories and traditions.

A fundamental question any study of Anzac is required to grapple with is, what is Anzac? Even the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) concedes, ‘there is no known definition of exactly what [Anzac Day] officially commemorates’.46 Frank Bongiorno proposes that ‘term “Anzac” is more than 25 April; it refers to an entire culture of military commemoration and war remembrance that links Australian national identity to military endeavour’.47 One could argue it is even

45 Canberra Times, 13 September 1981.
‘bigger’ than that. In recent years especially, Anzac has not been confined to just military commemoration and war remembrance, it has become a kind of shorthand for a vague set of values. The Department of Veterans’ Affairs describes Anzac as more ‘than just a military acronym’.

The Anzac spirit encompasses values that every Australian holds dear and aspires to emulate in their own life: courage, bravery, sacrifice, mateship, loyalty, selflessness and resilience. This spirit has given Australians an ideal to strive for and a history to be proud of, even though it was born out of war, suffering and loss.\(^{48}\)

This spirit is often evoked in the face of contemporary, non-military adversity and hardship. In the aftermath of the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria, John McCrohan, the President of the Hurstbridge RSL, told the Anzac Day crowd that in addition to servicemen and women, this was also an occasion to commemorate those who fought in another war, a ‘war caused by man’s efficiency and nature’s wrath.’ ‘The soldiers of this war,’ McCrohan continued:

were CFA, the SES volunteers, police, ambulance and more importantly, bushfire victims who lost their homes and belongings. Even more importantly, those who lost their lives. Mums, dads, boys and girls. They should be remembered alongside our gallant diggers of past conflict … So I ask you today to remember these soldiers of Black Saturday, along with the fallen soldiers of past conflicts.\(^{49}\)


Even for the president of an RSL sub-branch, one of the conventional stakeholders of this tradition, Anzac had cut loose from its historical moorings. To many it now means much more than sacrifice in war.

Anzac is not just an Australian concept. Across the Tasman, New Zealanders read its meaning very differently. Christopher Pugsley suggests that where Anzac is synonymously Australian, New Zealand ‘has never been confident enough to use “Anzac” in the same national terms’, which Pugsley argues is because of an ‘aggressive self-confidence that New Zealanders never had’.50 While Anzac evokes similar themes in both countries, like national identity or assertions of independence, Australia and New Zealand have nurtured distinct versions of its histories and its rituals, and there has always been divergence in remembrance.51 While it is not within the scope of my study, it would be valuable to compare modern responses of young people from both countries. Distant from the lived memory of the First World War, is there now more commonality than divergence in how they read Anzac?

Quite aside from these geographical and cultural differences, Anzac’s historical setting is malleable. This was often reflected in the responses to my thesis topic from friends, family, and colleagues. Some people replied with, ‘I’ve been to Gallipoli’, or ‘My grandfather served in Vietnam’, or ‘I don’t know why we’re in Afghanistan.’ Anzac is impossible to categorically identify because everyone makes an individual interpretation. Rather than attempting to outline a firm definition of Anzac, I have adapted to its evolving timeline, acknowledging that

for many Australians, Anzac means more than Gallipoli and the First World War, that the term has enveloped the Second World War, and the wars in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and modern peacekeeping operations. There is scope to even further broaden Anzac’s military timeline, as demonstrated by suggestions for the Australian War Memorial to recognise navy personnel from Operation Sovereign Borders.\(^2\) When I discuss ‘Anzac’ in this thesis, I am referring to any of the conflicts listed above and their related histories and traditions.

Even though a precise definition of Anzac does not exist, interpretations are often based on deeply personal, often emotional readings. Martin Crotty advises, ‘we should appreciate that we are treading on what is for many people sacred ground’. So a degree of tact is beneficial. Crotty continues, ‘We tread lightly when we deal with Aboriginal issues in our history, or with religious issues; and so too should we tread lightly on the turf of Anzac.’\(^3\) Australians’ connection to this history, or even the sacralisation of Anzac, should not mean it is beyond criticism or question. Nonetheless, it helps to engage discerning sensitivity when working with a subject people feel so emotionally bound to.

**Thesis Structure**

This study is not bound by focussing on a particular age bracket within childhood. Given this thesis spans almost a century, numerous social shifts have occurred that have shaped and re-shaped understandings of ‘childhood’. I would emphasise that childhood is a construct and ‘not natural’ or unchanging. As Steven Mintz observes, ‘age categories … are imbued with cultural

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\(^3\) Martin Crotty, ‘Teaching Anzac: Fraught territory, teachable moments and professional responsibility’, *Agora*, vol.44, no.2 (2009), p.16.
assumptions, meanings, and values’.\textsuperscript{54} As such, it is necessary for this thesis, as many histories of young people do, to adopt a ‘flexible approach’ and the broadest possible definition of childhood.\footnote{Steven Mintz, ‘Reflections on age as a category of historical analysis’, \textit{The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth}, vol.1, no.1 (Winter 2008), p.93. See also Joan W. Scott, ‘Gender: A useful category of historical analysis’, \textit{American Historical Review}, vol.91, no.5 (December 1986), pp.1053-1075.} The cohort examined in this thesis ranges from five years of age to those on the cusp of adulthood (eighteen years old).\footnote{Studies of children are often required to assume a ‘flexible approach’ to age, this is a term borrowed from Simon Sleight and Shirleene Robinson, ‘Introduction: The world in miniature’, in Shirleene Robinson and Simon Sleight (eds.), \textit{Children, Childhood And Youth In The British World} (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p.7; see also, Sleight, \textit{Young People and the Shaping of Public Space in Melbourne}, p.44.} By eschewing a definitive age criteria of subjects and approaching the notion of childhood ‘flexibly’, I aim to reveal a more comprehensive account of how young Australians have learned, commemorated, and imagined Anzac and its meanings, traditions, and rituals (or how they have not) across nearly one hundred years.

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters and is framed in two parts. Part One provides a historical context, exploring the periods 1919-1939, 1939-1963, 1963-1981, and 1981-2010. These four chapters illustrate how patterns and debates surrounding children’s encounters with Anzac are not new; in fact, they are as old as Anzac itself.

Chapter One begins in 1919, as Australians, children included, faced the aftermath of the First World War. In this period of recovery, life could be exceedingly difficult. Bill Gammage describes, ‘Dreams abandoned, lives without purpose, women without husbands, families without family life, one
long national funeral for a generation and more after 1918.\textsuperscript{57} Is such a bleak description ‘black armband history’? Michael McKernan suggests not, and he too identifies this as a time of ‘grief and uncertainty’.\textsuperscript{58}

To understand how children experienced this ‘grief and uncertainty’, it is necessary to explore how children lived with the war at home. Such an intimate history is hard to recover, but by consulting servicemen and women’s repatriation records, it is possible to discover the conditions children confronted. Although children are not the specific subjects of the files, we do learn about the struggles they, and their families, faced. These files are critical to gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the lasting legacy of war experienced by Australian children. This chapter also refers to oral history collections and memoirs to complement the repatriation records and to further illustrate children’s encounters with Anzac in the public spaces of their communities.

This thesis will feature children’s voices in each of the eras studied. Accordingly, in this chapter, I examine the journals, photographs, and the press reports of boys who travelled with the Young Australia League on pilgrimages to the sites and cemeteries of the First World War in 1924 and 1925. This is the first time these hitherto forgotten records have been examined. This material recounts the experiences of the first youth journeys to the setting of the First World War, marking an important point in the historiography of battlefield pilgrimage. The experiences of the Young Australia League boys have remarkable resonance for considerations of modern youth pilgrimages, in light of the popularity of similar travel from the 1990s onwards. To date, thousands

\textsuperscript{57} Bill Gammage, ‘Was the Great War Australia’s war?’, in Craig Wilcox (ed.), The Great War: Gains and Losses – Anzac and Empire (Canberra: Australian National University, 1995), p.6.

\textsuperscript{58} Michael McKernan, The Strength of a Nation: Six Years of Australians Fighting for the Nation and Defending the Homefront in WWII (Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2006), p.xx.
of young Australians have embarked on educational tours to Anzac sites all around the world and, arguably, it all begins with these journeys in the 1920s.

Adults’ perspectives of how students should learn about Anzac is the third focus of this chapter. I examine the fierce debates concerned with the memory of war in schools that raged in Victorian, Queensland, and West Australian state parliaments. This chapter sets up this thesis’ contention that children encounter Anzac in their homes, their schools, and their communities. Furthermore, it asserts that teaching Anzac has always been politically and emotionally contested space.

In Chapter Two, this thesis will consider how Australian children experienced the upheaval of the Second World War. Schools and public spaces were altered in anticipation of invasion, and accordingly, young Australians sensed the excitement and the anxiety of war. To discover children’s insights, I have drawn on adult-composed memories of the war from oral history collections, memoirs, and surveys. Looking at how children lived through this war is a necessary inclusion in order to consider how Anzac has evolved and new wars demanded that its character, traditions, and meanings changed.

Chapter Two elaborates on many of the themes raised in Chapter One, and I will explore how the Second World War caused similar family fractures to that of the First World War and how children of another generation lived with the losses and legacies of conflict. Following the Second World War, Australian children were a part of the reshaping of Anzac, as politics and history influenced new readings of Anzac. Chapter Two examines the entries to an Anzac Festival essay competition to understand how the idea of Anzac evolved over these decades. These essays lend agency to children, challenging the monopoly of adult interpretations of children’s relationships with Anzac. Of
course, it is necessary to think about what motivated students to submit their work. Some were likely sincerely inspired by Anzac, others might have been stirred by academic success, or compelled by teachers seeking professional affirmation, or perhaps the prizes on offer encouraged some children’s participation. Regardless of such prompts or incentives, these accounts still illustrate what children believed older generations wanted them to think about Anzac. They wrote, as did those who compiled their memoirs, with an audience and purpose in mind. But that does not diminish their value as evidence.

Chapter Three marks a significant change in how Australians thought about Anzac and this period highlights disruption of history and tradition. This was a time of questioning and protest all too evident in the publications created by secondary school students. These circulars, critical of Australia’s involvement in Vietnam and commemorative culture generally, are remarkable because they give a voice to children’s dissent. Too often, young people are regarded as passive and powerless, but Chapter Three advances a different view of children, as agents determining, to an extent, the terms of their encounters with Anzac. This chapter also reveals how the Vietnam War caused similar reverberations for families as seen in Chapters One and Two. Although the impact was felt by far fewer families than either the First or Second World Wars, its consequences could be just as destructive and enduring. This chapter ends at a point where the Anzac revival begins.

Chapter Four investigates Australian children within the era of an Anzac renaissance. By looking at how a new sense of empathy and an increased interest in Australia’s war histories affected young people, it is possible to discover further insights into the resurgence of Anzac. This chapter draws on collections of children’s creative writing pieces, crafted both for Anzac Day and Australia Remembers, the fiftieth anniversary commemorations of the end of the
Second World War. Chapter Four also considers contemporary texts which embodied the new kind of Anzac histories emerging from the 1970s onwards. These books, novels, plays, and films, which school students studied in their classrooms, and consumed privately, depicted the tragedy and humanity of war characteristic of Anzac representations of the era.

Part Two of this thesis realigns its focus to contemporary Australia. Over these final three chapters, I examine how young Australians engage with Anzac from the perspectives of school students themselves, teachers, and the public and politicians.

In the last few years, there have been consistent, albeit varying, criticisms of how Anzac is being learned by young Australians. These criticisms often imply children are passive readers of an Anzac mythology, unable or unwilling to question its complex history. At the same time, there are those who bemoan students’ ignorance of their nation’s military past and thereby their national story. There are angry calls that students are not taught the right information and that Anzac does not feature sufficiently in the classroom. The same voices dominate this discourse - academics, politicians, journalists, and the most vocal members of the public. Most of these observers are not connected with the reality of the classroom. It is near impossible to hear the voices of teachers, let alone students, in such discussions. So while disapproval is coming from various sources, they are predominantly simplistic critiques and largely out of touch with modern classrooms and current education policy. Chapter Five and Chapter Six are based on interviews conducted with secondary school students.

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59 Ann-Marie Einhaus and Catriona Pennell note a similar pattern in Britain, where ‘tropes and cliches’ and outdated information infuse public anxiety of how school students are taught about war and remembrance, in ‘Teaching and remembrance in English secondary schools’, in Bart Ziino (ed.), *Remembering the First World War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), pp.165-166.
and their teachers, allowing those at the core of this issue to speak for themselves.

In my fieldwork, I spoke with almost seventy secondary school students. The group discussions focussed on exploring students’ historical consciousness of Anzac. As noted earlier, it is not the purpose of this study to undertake an examination of the Anzac facts children know or can recite. In this dialogue with young people, I sought to chart young people’s historical sensibilities. School students sit through history lessons, but they also bring their ‘own social and emotional worlds’ into the classroom. What they glean from their families, from films, books, the media, museums, and historical sites influences how they form their readings of Anzac.60 This thesis argues that children have always learned about Anzac in many different ways. Anna Clark’s work proved instructive regarding effective and thoughtful practice for interviewing students. Clark included analysis of Anzac in her study of Australian secondary school students’ historical thinking, but it was one of a number of themes. This thesis approaches the matter differently by focussing on one history subject and contextualising it in a long historical frame.61

Classrooms are not the only site where students develop their understandings of the past. Even so, their impact on shaping historical sensibility is significant. Chapter Six is based on adult perspectives by analysing teachers’ and educational authorities’ aspirations and anxieties about young Australians’ engagement with Anzac. Although this thesis is focussed on presenting

61 Anna Clark, History’s Children: History Wars in the Classroom (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2008). There are scholars who have laid constructive foundations by undertaking research which directly speaks to children and highlights how their responses can extend our understandings of the past, see Richard Coles, The Political Life of Children (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986).
children’s encounters with Anzac, inevitably adult actions are a part of a child’s world. This chapter will begin with the analysis of teacher responses to teaching Anzac, after all, they play an important role conveying this history from one generation to another. In their interviews, teachers described their successes, concerns, and criticisms regarding both the content and pedagogy of Anzac histories. This chapter will investigate why teachers think it is important (or sometimes not important) to teach certain aspects of Anzac histories. It is impossible for time-poor teachers just to keep adding to their lessons, so what motivates their choices of what to teach - and what not to teach - under the umbrella topic of Anzac? How does the Australian Curriculum alter these choices? What are the intended purposes and actual outcomes of teaching Anzac? These interviews occurred in a context where teaching history is deeply political, and often very controversial.\footnote{For an informed international context of debates surrounding history education, see Tony Taylor and Robert Guyver (eds.), \textit{History Wars and the Classroom: Global Perspectives} (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2012).}

This chapter will also examine the educational resources used for the history of Australia and the First World War. A neat historical interpretation of Anzac is not waiting for students to discover in their textbooks. In this survey of teaching resources, this chapter will consider what messages, ideas, and histories are taught – and possibly not taught – and seeks to find out if these educational materials lend themselves to rigorous historical study. To analyse these sources most effectively, I have undertaken qualitative analysis of their content and provided quantitative measures of the weighting of specific topics.

Chapter Seven goes beyond the school gates. How Anzac is passed on to younger generations is a matter of keen public interest and to research these expectations, I examined numerous sources. To begin with I undertook a scan of several daily newspapers, including \textit{The Age, Herald Sun,} and \textit{The Australian,}
across the date range 20 April to 30 April from 1985 onwards. This process demonstrated the sheer scope of the public’s arguments, opinions, and reflections on Anzac. Another archive I have used is the 2010 public submissions to the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary. More than 1500 ideas were proposed and education was an obvious priority amid this collection. The submissions, tendered by individuals and organisations, reported to the Commission how the Anzac Centenary should be observed, commemorated, or even celebrated. This chapter illuminates the range, and often formidable, public opinions about how to impart Anzac to another generation.

This thesis is ideally placed to consider both the official and the individual responses to children’s relationship to Anzac. In some ways, we can look to adults for insight, read the textbooks they write, listen to their fiery political debates and their advice on how to commemorate the Anzac Centenary. But children have their own family tree and they come from different cultural backgrounds, some children can afford exceptional educational experiences, some are politically motivated, others are entirely apathetic to history and its traditions. Children’s responses to Anzac do not develop in a vacuum, they are shaped by environments, and this study will consider how different historical moments have influenced children’s thinking. For instance, the invocations of imperialism from children in the 1950s are entirely absent from modern children’s reading of Anzac, and the Vietnam War provoked many young Australians to challenge Anzac itself, or at the very least its conventional meanings. In short, to understand the patterns, the continuities, and how diversely children have encountered Anzac across nearly one hundred years, we need to listen to them.
Chapter One
‘The Great War, my father’s war’: 1918 – 1939

The first chapter of this thesis examines how Australian children encountered Anzac between 1918 and 1939. A reader might wonder why a study concerned with Anzac does not commence with the outbreak of war in 1914 or perhaps with the Allied landing at Gallipoli in 1915. But starting this thesis from the end of the First World War was a careful and deliberate decision. Australian children’s experiences of the First World War have often been the subject of historical study. Maxwell Waugh’s Soldier Boys concentrates on schools’ cadet systems and he vehemently argues that this training inspired the militarism of youth before and during the First World War. Rosalie Triolo’s Our Schools and the War provides a rich account of how teachers guided their classrooms through the upheaval of global conflict. She illustrates how students asserted a place in their communities’ responses to war, particularly with enthusiastic fundraising. Triolo’s is an exceptionally focussed study, but broader histories of Australia and the First World War have also drawn attention to children. John McQuilton identifies teachers and schools as beacons of patriotism in his study of regional Australians and the war. Similarly, in The Australian People and the Great War, Michael McKernan observes that schools were ‘at the heart of the nation’s life’ during the war. Allowing for the nuances of religion, geography, and gender, he explores children’s expressions of patriotism.

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5 Michael McKernan, The Australian People and the Great War (West Melbourne: Nelson, 1980), p.43, for his discussion of schools, see pp.43-64. For studies of New Zealand children’s experiences, see Charlotte Bennett, “‘Now the war is over, we have something else to worry us’: New Zealand children’s responses to crises, 1914–1918”, The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth, vol.7, no.1 (Winter 2014), pp.19-41; Jeanine Graham, ‘Young New
Rather than retrace the years that have been subject to close scholarly attention, it is a more worthwhile pursuit to focus on how subsequent generations have encountered Anzac.

From 1918 children lived in the shadow of the First World War. In so many ways, its cost was visible and a constant reminder of the suffering and sacrifice wrought by war: damaged men, grieving families, countless memorials, and a flourishing national mythology. In another way though, the extent of its cost was secreted. How the legacy of war figured in Australian homes has long been cloaked in, as Judith Allen terms, the ‘privacy of family life’. As such, this has been a largely hidden history.

Publically, how Anzac’s lessons might be best taught to children was a question that troubled Australian educators, governments, parents, and communities. There were those who advocated teaching this history without extolling the glory of battle, hopeful to avoid inspiring a spirit of militarism in another generation. In opposition, others sought to teach Anzac by celebrating martial victory, the heroism of the nation, and the might of Empire. A key finding of this thesis is that the debates surrounding how Anzac is taught are recurrent across the century. Arguments and opinions raised in this chapter appear again and again throughout this study. From their beginning, the pedagogy and content of Anzac histories have been laden with politics and emotion.

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Anzac at Home

After 11 November 1918, the world faced peace. This was not an easy task, as Prime Minister Hughes conceded, this was a ‘new world; a world bled white by the cruel wounds of war’. Those wounds would bleed for many more decades to come and, as such, for the children of the 1920s and 1930s, their lessons of Anzac began well before they walked through their school gates.

For some children, this lesson was of loss. Twelve thousand Australian children were orphaned by the war. As well as fathers, countless brothers, cousins, uncles, and grandfathers were among Australia’s war dead. Children’s mourning extended to the first, second, and third ‘circles of grief’ identified by Annette Becker and Stéphen Audoin-Rouzeau, which encompassed immediate, and more distant, family relationships. Given each of these ‘circles of grief’, Ken Inglis’ claim that every other Australian family was bereaved by the war is a convincing estimate.

This bereavement was often marked with private shrines: uniforms permanently laid out, a bedroom frozen in time, and ghostly photographs of young men and their treasured mementoes on display. Don Charlwood never met his cousin Arthur, but his memory seemed to linger throughout their grandmother’s home. Charlwood recalled Arthur’s photograph as:

the most prominent one in the room … the colour patch of his battalion, the 58th, was on the mount, under the glass. It was his last

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8 *The Brisbane Courier*, 11 December 1919. Contemporary terminology referred to children who had lost their father as orphans.
10 Inglis, *Sacred Places*, p.93.
photograph ... at the age of nineteen, he was killed at Polygon Wood. In that obscene place he had been buried alive ... I felt [his] presence dominating the sitting room, a mysterious presence because I had never known him; a more potent presence than he ever knew he would be.\footnote{Don Charlwood, \textit{Marching as to War} (Hawthorn: Hudson Publishing, 1990), p.23. Photographs often served as memorials in family homes, but they also took quite different forms too. In another example of a grieving family’s ‘private shrine’, John Roberts, who ‘obsessively amass[ed] pieces’ of his son’s death, compiled volumes of scrapbooks, as described in Damousi, \textit{The Labour of Loss}, pp.59-60. Other objects placed around households served as souvenirs, prompting both memories and questions. For instances, see Jacqueline Kent, \textit{In the Half Light: Life as a Child in Australia 1900-1970} (North Ryde: Angus and Robertson, 1988), p.197, also George Johnston’s description of his family’s hallway with the ‘German gas-mask [that] hung on the tall hallstand, looking like the head of a captured Martian’, in \textit{My Brother Jack} (London: Collins Fontana Books, 1964), p.7. Other families created mementoes. Violet Harrison fashioned an intricate plaque in memory of her son George. The plaque features a decorative floral pattern and is set with a brass medallion together with her son’s uniform buttons, held in the G.R. Harrison collection, PRG 1022/3/1, SLSA.}

Arthur was one of sixty-two thousand Australian servicemen and women who died overseas. Around 260,000 Australians returned home from the war, but by 1920, more than one third of that number received a pension for some type of war-related disability. Ten years on from the Armistice, more than seventy thousand depended on some level of welfare.\footnote{A.G. Butler, ‘Section V, Chapter XVII – Statistics of the War’, \textit{Official History of the Australian Army Medical Services, 1914–1918}, vol.3, \textit{Special Problems and Services} (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1943), p.957, p.963, p.965.} These figures are a reminder that those who did not die on the battlefields could still become casualties of this war, long after 1918.

Beyond the statistics cited, it is more constructive to draw on an expanded understanding of loss. Jennifer Roberts poses:

if we are to engage more fully with the multi-layered and complex issues surrounding individual experiences of wartime bereavement, then the term, bereavement, itself, cannot just refer to loss as death.
must also mean the loss of what existed before, the essence of self, a potential unfulfilled.¹³

Building on Robert’s advice, it is useful to ‘more fully’ consider the bereavement incurred by children. There were those children orphaned during the war, but there were countless more whose fathers died in the years to follow. There were also children who lost their father as he should have been. Children lived with scarred, sick men and with ‘the inanimate props of that vast, dark experience’, like walking sticks, crutches, wheelchairs, ointments, atomisers, and prosthetic limbs.¹⁴ There were intangible sufferings too, like nightmares that roused homes, violence, alcoholism, and drug addiction, broken marriages, and inescapable poverty, often linked to the war.

Stephen Garton notes that every return home from war ‘was different in its own way’. But, he continues, ‘it was also something more general, shared, and universal’.¹⁵ This applies equally to the servicemen themselves, as it does to their families. To discover children’s perspectives of how they encountered repatriation there are personal memoirs, autobiographies, and oral histories. They offer reflections of childhood and captures the voices of those who lived

¹⁴ Johnston, My Brother Jack, p.17.
the experience. But with the failings of memory over time, the shape of the media, making sense of the present, and the need to ‘compose a past one can live with’, this testimony is always mediated by external influences.\textsuperscript{16} Now though, historians can also draw on further records to construct a more comprehensive account of coming home from war.

The richest source in this endeavour is Australia’s First World War repatriation records. This holding is comprised of some 600,000 files, which occupies around ten kilometres of shelving space. Despite its vast size, to date this collection has received limited attention from historians or the public. This is not an indication of its value, rather its provenance. When these files were transferred from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) to the National Archives of Australia (NAA), there was indecision. Who would even be interested in these papers? The files raised uncomfortable questions of privacy, they were chaotic and organised by a convoluted system, and again, their physical enormity necessitated precious shelving space and resources. So they were sentenced to destruction. Thankfully there were archivists who challenged this decision and rescued these files.\textsuperscript{17} Still, access is a slow process. The NAA is examining, opening, and sometimes digitising the records, but these are time-consuming measures. The NAA’s Victorian office facilitated the most dedicated staff and volunteer effort as part of Project Albany (the NAA’s Anzac Centenary project that committed to describing and digitising a sample of repatriation records). As of 2015, this branch had re-housed and indexed more than forty thousand items and digitised hundreds of files. But an estimated seventy thousand files remained unexamined and thus not part of the NAA’s record search.\textsuperscript{18} These

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Bruce Scates, ‘The last battle: Do wars really end when the guns stop firing?’ Monash University Alumni Speaker Series, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, 2 May 2017.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Statistics provided by Jean-Pierre Grenade, Project Supervisor - Project Albany, National Archives of Australia, email correspondence, 10 March 2015.
\end{itemize}
figures are only in reference to the series B73, the repatriation records based in Victoria. Other series are housed around the country and add to the largely inaccessible nature of this collection.  

The repatriation records offer detailed insights into households dealing with the pressures of living with a returned serviceman. Each file is unique and might include physical medical notes, psychological assessments, correspondence from the subject and their families, photographs, pension claims and appeals, and any other number of items. At times these records are disruptive, they bring to light unsettling stories, and they compel readers to look at this history in an entirely new way. In fact, these records have the potential to completely change the way the impact of war is remembered. The repatriation records are even more revealing when aligned with other archival sources, such as inquest reports, divorce applications, and soldier settlement files. Moreover, this collection is so significant because although for many families the First World War was a defining part of their lives, repatriation became a more immediate, demanding, and enduring ordeal.  

When Ernest Green enlisted as a twenty-four year-old, he worked in a tobacco factory. Thirty years later he was in the same industry, but the work was undoubtedly more demanding. He was much older, but he also struggled with his war injury. In Flanders, machine gunfire had torn through his right hand.

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19 The editors of History Australia note the backlog ‘crisis’ facing the NAA. They also comment that the effort to digitise a sample of the repatriation records will ‘open up an otherwise inaccessible world of personal and family experience’ of the First World War, in Tomoko Akami, Frank Bongiorno and Alexander Cook, ‘From the editors’, History Australia, vol.11, no.1 (April 2014), pp.3-5.

20 The following discussion of repatriation cases is based mostly on the author’s research as part of Bruce Scates, Rebecca Wheatley and Laura James, World War One: A History in 100 Stories (Melbourne: Viking, 2015). Many remarkable cases were also highlighted by students of Monash University subject ATS2385 Anzac Legends: Australians at War as part of their internship work scanning the repatriation files for Project Albany. For details of Project Albany, see National Archives of Australia, ‘Project Albany’, published 10 June 2015, accessed 17 August 2015, www.naa.gov.au/about-us/media/media-releases/2015/14.aspx.
Green was also exhausted, worn out by a relentless cough and from fighting the tuberculosis infecting his lungs. His employer warned him ‘to wake up to himself’, but unable to summon the strength, Green had to give up work, which denoted a rapid decline in his wellbeing. One Repatriation Commission officer, and Green himself, acknowledged how much the old soldier relied on his family. Ernest described his wife and daughters as ‘good people and very helpful to him’. He admitted ‘he wouldn’t know what to do’ without this support. Despite this acknowledgement, Ernest did not make life easy for his family. He was a difficult man to live with, even a terrifying presence in the Green home. Mrs Green fearfully, and in secret, wrote to the Commission: ‘His behaviour at times is violent and abusive all the time’. She was particularly concerned for her daughters as Ernest ‘hits them’. Alongside a wife’s frightened pleas for help are the bureaucratic notes from Repatriation officers and doctors who reported how Ernest ‘Continually spits on the floor and lives in filthy circumstances … and urinates on the floor’. They document more than a dirty home though. These records offer an insight into how the war reached into and damaged the most intimate aspects of family life. The Repatriation officer annotated in Green’s file, ‘Wife states continually strikes her’, and that ‘relations with family have been very poor’. Mrs Green and her daughters are examples of how, as Judith Allen argues, women’s bodies and minds often bore the brunt of the war at home.

Mrs Green’s correspondence is charged with urgency and desperation. There is a comparable tone in the letters from Mrs Dowell. Thomas Dowell was at

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21 Ernest Green, First AIF personnel dossier, NAA: B2455, Green E; Unit Diary, 22nd Infantry Battalion, October 1917, AWM4 Subclass 23/39, AWM; Medical case notes, Ernest Green, repatriation record, NAA: B73, M32375, Ernest McClelland Green.
Gallipoli from the beginning of the campaign, he survived the landing and took part in months of defensive actions around the Peninsula. In the August Offensive, Private Dowell was wounded and, unable to move, he was captured by Ottoman forces and held prisoner almost the duration of the war. The memories of his captivity never faded. Long after 1918, Dowell complained of nerves, nightmares, even hallucinations, and complained he felt ‘just like a spring wound up and can’t unwind’. Thomas’ wife Bessie described her husband’s physical and emotional ‘trouble’ for the Commission:

I do earnestly and sincerely believe that his trouble is due to his experiences while held a prisoner of war in Turkey … [he was] subject to extreme mental aggravation by the Turks; the strain of being surrounded by wounded and dead; cut off from all his own, and all contact with the outside world; his long confinement among strange people in foreign land, unable to understand speech or custom without difficulty, nor they him; his increased suffering from neglect and unskilful treatment of his war wounds … scanty rations of improper and unsuitable food … led to complications. His body, he declares was covered with scurf and large sores, jaundice and stomach trouble set up and he has never been really well of the latter, it appearing to accompany the nervous trouble.

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23 Turkish prisoners of war are a somewhat overlooked aspect of Australian military history. Kate Ariotti notes that ‘little is known of their time in captivity or of its wider ramifications’, in ‘“I’m awfully fed up with being a prisoner”: Australian POWs of the Turks and the strain of surrender’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.40, no.3 (2016), p.276.


The ‘nervous trouble’ worried Bessie and her children the most. Without warning, Thomas would pack up their belongings and place all their possessions in the yard, ready to move at the command of some unseen authority. He denied them food and imposed a strict regime of rations. The Dowell children could only nervously anticipate their father’s switch from indifferently mute to erratically violent. He threatened to do away with his family, he sharpened razors and knives in front of them, he climbed atop their roof and shot into the sky, and he built explosives to ‘bomb the place’. Bessie Dowell believed her husband had an ‘impulse to kill’. She also held suspicions of Thomas’ ‘degenerative habits’ and feared that he was sexually abusing their eldest daughter. In her desperate letters to the Commission, Bessie insisted that the war was the cause of the terrifying conditions she and her children were forced to withstand. Perhaps Bessie was honestly convinced that the war had made Thomas an unstable, brutal man. But maybe Bessie’s claims were part of a strategy to elicit sympathy for her husband’s pension claims? Or, especially in light of her suspicions of abuse, Bessie was desperate to rationalise marrying this man. The Commission was not persuaded that the war was the cause of Thomas’ behaviour or even of the veracity of Bessie’s allegations. An officer attempted to corroborate one of Bessie’s police reports, but finding no record, 

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27 Letters from Bessie Dowell to the Repatriation Commission, undated, 2 November 1934, 12 March 1935, 21 November 1935, and 14 January 1936 and Commission memo, 25 October 1937, Thomas Dowell, repatriation record, NAA: B73, M41646, Dowell, Thomas Henry. Notes in Thomas Dowell’s repatriation record raise the question of whether these ‘indecent’ behaviours are attributable to his service. For a discussion of the interwar years criminal defence of ‘sexual arousal and the battlefield’, see Allen, *Sex and Secrets*, pp.141-142. Ben Shephard also discusses the proposed connection of immorality and shell shock and its use as a defence in *A War of Nerves* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000), pp.149-150. Forensically, it is impossible for historians, nearly one hundred years later, to confirm a connection, and there is also every chance the suspected abuse was unrelated to Dowell’s service.
he determined her ‘statements may be exaggerated’. Bessie gives no reason to disbelieve her accounts, rather this officer’s misgivings point to a scepticism recurrent in the repatriation records. Particularly in the financially constrained years of the Depression, this ‘sprawling medical and welfare bureaucracy’ was wary of self-interest, entitlement, and desperation. Returned servicemen and women, and their families, were obliged to operate within its arbitrary frameworks, which often resulted in inconsistent approaches, subjective decisions, and considerable stress.

The abuse in the Green and Dowell households was not exceptional. Elizabeth Nelson observes there were increased rates of domestic violence in the years following the war. Nelson suggests that some instances of returned men’s victimisation of their families might be attributed to shattered men challenging their powerlessness and reasserting authority that they had lost in the trenches, and then again, in post-war society. But assessing the repatriation records, it is necessary to question whether the war was really a factor in cases of domestic abuse. After all, family violence did not begin in 1918 and not all war-wrecked men were abusive to their families. Nelson’s work advises against sweeping claims of causation between men’s service and patterns of violence in the interwar years. It is impossible for a historian, at one hundred years distance, to make definitive assertions. However, by using the repatriation records, supported by memoirs and oral histories, and proceedings such as inquest reports, divorce applications, and soldier settlement files, it is possible to discover clues in individual cases.

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28 Letter to the Inspector from Senior Inquiry Officer, 20 February 1936, Thomas Dowell, repatriation record, NAA: B73, M41646, Dowell, Thomas Henry.
29 Scates and Oppenheimer, The Last Battle, p.146.
31 Ibid., pp.83-111.
The Green and Dowell children endured awful abuse, but even a cursory review of the repatriation records shows how families endured the war’s reverberations in diverse ways. Rowland Lording was a child himself when he embarked for war. Barely seventeen, Lording survived shocking wounds at Fromelles. Declared a ‘surgical freak’, he underwent fifty-nine operations throughout his lifetime. Lording’s ‘refusal to die’ was celebrated, but it also meant he lived ‘seldom free from pain’. Publically, Lording’s stoicism was praised, he was a digger with ‘the heart of a lion’. A newspaper article on the honoured soldier described a ‘keen fisherman’ who enjoyed spending his ‘long week-ends afloat’. This profile contrasts starkly with the private details of Lording’s repatriation record. Medical notes and doctors’ reports annotate a twenty-nine year battle against physical and psychological agony. Not just Rowland struggled though. Lording’s three children, Helen, Edward, and Rowland also lived with their father’s war and his deteriorating health, his ‘severe nerve storms’, and his battle with alcohol and ‘all kinds of dope’. Rowland Lording’s case provides the opportunity to align a repatriation record with other historical sources. ‘[W]ithout any proper explanation’, Rowland deserted his wife Rosalind and their children in 1940. Their separation led to divorce and among those official papers is a letter addressed to ‘My Dear Rowlie’. Rosalind begged her husband ‘to come home’, and appealed to him to ‘be a proper husband and father to our children’. She closed her letter, ‘Honestly, dear, I don’t want to lose you’. Rosalind’s desperate plea is an example of the detail available when material is cross-referenced and how a

32 The Sunday Sun and Guardian, 7 May 1939, press clipping in Rowland Lording, repatriation record, NAA: PP645/1, M34291, Rowland Edward Lording.

33 Ian Gordon, Rowland Lording’s grandson, believes his mother Helen had a ‘grim’ and ‘traumatic childhood’. Ian’s own father served in the Second World War and according to Ian, ‘War and its legacies sat silently but heavy [sic] in my family’, email correspondence with Ian Gordon, 23 May 2017 and 20 December 2017; Medical notes, Rowland Lording, repatriation record, NAA: PP645/1, M34291, Rowland Edward Lording.

34 Letter from Rosalind Lording to Rowland Lording, 23 February 1940, Divorce Case Papers, series 13495, Rosalind Mary Lording and Rowland Edward Lording, 498/1940 and 278/1942, SRONSW.
triangulation of sources can more effectively, and more intimately, illustrate the legacy of war.

For some, like Lording, the effects of war were possible to conceal. Rowland and his family could mask their troubles behind a public persona of an admired Anzac. Other families could not hide their war. Jack McGrath was one of the legions of returned men who took up a plot as part of the soldier settlement scheme. But Jack was burdened with debility and his repatriation file catalogues a long list of sickness: wheezing, creamy phlegm, vomiting, headaches, ‘pale green clear fluid’ in his lungs, ‘inflamed eyes’, swollen throat, ‘gurgling chest’, and sharp pains throughout his body. Growing grapes in Red Cliffs seemed a good idea. Perhaps the dry and hot climate might relieve his tired lungs. The reality was that the hard labour of agriculture exhausted Jack, who was one of around three thousand soldiers who returned to Australia suffering tuberculosis. Years after he had come home, Jack’s war was transmitted to his daughter. Four-year-old Joyce began to feel pain in her right leg. At first it just hurt when she walked, but soon even standing still the ache would throb, she started to limp and was unable to place any weight on the leg. Joyce’s pain was diagnosed as tuberculosis of the hip in 1930. Three years later, Jack’s body relented and he died from cardiac failure. Without her beloved father, Joyce still faced years more of hospital stays, treatments, and rehabilitation. Joyce would be reluctant to see herself as a victim of the First

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35 For reading on the Victorian and New South Wales soldier settlement schemes respectively, see Marilyn Lake, The Limits of Hope: Soldier Settlement in Victoria 1915-38 (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1987) and Scates and Oppenheimer, The Last Battle.
36 Medical notes, John McGrath, repatriation record, NAA: B73, H12398, John McGrath.
37 Larsson, Shattered Anzacs, p.179.
World War, but it is irrefutable that the war, which ended seven years before she was even born, shaped her childhood, and her life.\footnote{Joyce McGrath’s extraordinary life is one of the subjects of Jan Harper’s \textit{Plaster and Paint: John Colquhoun, Orthopaedic Surgeon and his Patient, Joyce McGrath, Portrait Painter} (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007) and one of the stories in Scares, Wheatley and James, \textit{World War One: A History in 100 Stories}, pp.55-57.} 

Figure 3: Joyce McGrath with her parents on their soldier settlement farm in Red Cliffs, Victoria. Photograph courtesy Joyce McGrath.

Figure 4: Joyce McGrath spent years encased in plaster to treat her tubercular hip. Photograph courtesy Joyce McGrath.
Abuse, addiction, and illness stemming from the war plagued many homes. For some families though the war cast a more mystifying presence. Jay Winter explores the sometimes frightening, and frequently confusing, silences of war with which many children lived. Winter examines the prose of British Poet Laureate Ted Hughes whose father survived Gallipoli. In his poem *For the Duration*, Hughes pens: ‘But what alarmed me most/ Was your silence. Your refusal to tell.’ This ‘refusal’ is what Winter terms ‘communicative silence’. This is a ‘silence full of meaning’ that transmits messages beyond spoken words, it is the ‘silence of soldiers carrying the weight of war with them’. Winter contends it is now an ‘unanswerable question’ to know how many families were ‘marked indelibly by these silences’. Nonetheless, he argues, it is a worthy pursuit to explore the war’s long impact and he pleads with historians to end underestimations of the damage wrought by war. Indeed, the repatriation records speak to Winter’s appeal.

Winter is not alone in his work. Historians around the world are attempting to redress the lack of research into how children coped with the effects of the First World War. In the United Kingdom, Michael Roper is undertaking an oral history project speaking with the children of disabled soldiers. Roper asks how a father’s war might have impacted on family relationships and how a father’s trauma might have shaped their children’s lives and identities.

Children of returned servicemen and women developed a connection to the war, one that might be understood as ‘postmemory’. Marianne Hirsch explains

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43 Ibid., p.197.
44 Ibid., p.198.
that postmemory is ‘the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to constitute memories in their own right’.\textsuperscript{46} The postmemory of the First World War remained with its second generation, defining the way they thought about that conflict and the broader subjects of war, peace, and Anzac. Hirsch argues that in spite of the reflex to read ‘post’ as the aftermath, postmemory is ongoing and children who lived (or still live) with the legacy of the First World War, attach this experience to their identities.\textsuperscript{47} George Johnston eloquently captures this transmission of memory in his novel \textit{My Brother Jack}: 

In a sense, of course, I was too young for the war to have had any direct effect on me, since there was really nothing of that I could remember. Yet what is significant to realise now is how every corner of that little suburban house must have been impregnated for years with the very essence of some gigantic and sombre experience that had taken place thousands of miles away, and quite outside the state of my own being, yet which ultimately had come to invade my mind and stay there, growing all the time, forming into a shape.\textsuperscript{48}

\textbf{Legacies of War}

This ‘essence’ featured in children’s homes, but this ‘essence’ was also part of their local communities. Arguably all Australians witnessed the war’s human carnage of maimed, gassed, and insane survivors. Even as an elderly man, Norman could recall the list of names chiselled into the local memorial he read as a boy and the damaged men who haunted his hometown. Like Dave, ‘who had been shot in the head at Villers-Bretonneux, [and] sat hunched on the

\textsuperscript{46} Hirsch, ‘The generation of postmemory’, p.103.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p.106.
verandah all day, wrapped in a grey blanket, an old man of thirty who stared at nothing’. There was also Bill, at four o’clock each afternoon, he would ‘march[] up and down the main street, from the fire station to the war memorial and back, wearing a disgusting khaki Army coat and a pair of tattered trousers’.49

Even if the memories are not as dark as Norman’s, children’s impressions could resonate across their lifetime. Rodney remembers a particular game of bowls he paused to watch as a twelve-year-old. He noticed that one:

of the players appeared to be a dwarf but I soon saw that he had lost both legs at about the knees. His legs ended in what looked like rubber cushions and he used all four limbs to get from end to end. He protected his hands with wooden blocks which looked like black board dusters, which in those days were common. This chap saw me looking at him and in a cheery voice called out “I have an advantage over the others, I am closer to the ball.”

Decades on, Rodney can still recall this memory ‘in such fine detail’.50 A less ‘cheery’ sight, Donald Horne describes the grim side of Anzac Days when ‘“Old diggers” down on their luck’ slept rough ‘under the bridge or in the pig pens’.51 Given pitiful scenes such as this, some young people rejected the expectation of honouring Anzacs and their legend. One young man, who had grown up in the 1920s, was particularly forthright in his letter to The Labor Daily. He was ‘especially sick of anything relating to Australian soldiers’. Uninterested in an idealised Anzac character, he described:

49 Kent, In the Half Light, p.68.
50 Scates, Wheatley and James, The First World War: A History in 100 Stories, p.161. Rodney Smith wrote a letter to the authors detailing his childhood experiences with the legacy of the First World War and his career at the Repatriation Department, 24 January 2014.
What we actually see every day till they have got on our nerves are crippled, blind and battered wrecks, with brass badges on, begging in the streets, howling about pension reductions, while their women and children are in dire straits, so if there was ever any honour and glory in the wretched business, it vanished before I grew up.\textsuperscript{52}

The young man disapproving of these ‘wrecks’ points to how some young Australians were disillusioned with Anzac. It is impossible to gauge the extent to which children of this period questioned Anzac. At the best of times, children are elusive in history, but children are expected to be dutiful, so examples of their dissenting voices are even more challenging to discover. However, in some Australians’ reflections, in their memoirs for instance, they highlight moments of doubt, occasions when they were not entirely convinced of the worthiness of Anzac. This often marks a memorable disruption in their historical consciousness. When one of Don Charlwood’s teachers objected to the glorification of war, it was a defining moment:

\begin{quote}
We had been startled on Anzac Day to hear this controlled soldierly-looking man speak with emotion against War. On Armistice Day he spoke in the same tones. He was not cynical about sacrifices that had been made; he was saying rather that war must be seen as a monstrous waste of human life which seldom solved anything. I fancied there was some discomfort among some of the staff members when he spoke. Not that the others praised war, but they extolled duty and the readiness of the Anzacs to answer its call. [He] was urging us to think.\textsuperscript{53}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{53} Charlwood, Marching As To War, p.143.
Children are not a homogenous group, and just as with adults, their responses to Anzac are conditioned by class, politics, and gender. As a little girl, Amirah Inglis, the daughter of Polish-Jewish migrants committed to communism, had a complex reaction to Anzac:

April brought Anzac Day, and every year we assembled around the flagpole, every chest – except mine, it seemed – puffed out and glistening with father’s medals as we heard the same speeches about Gallipoli. Pride, admiration and patriotism were the emotions we were expected to feel. Admiration, envy, a twinge of shame and antagonism were the emotions that simmered in my flat chest. Admiration for the bravery, envy of those medals, shame that my father had not fought in this Great War and antagonism because he believed that the war was not great but an imperialist blood bath, and because Geoffrey Trease in A Call to Arms had convinced me that international arms manufacturers fomented war between nations and were its only beneficiaries.  

Amirah was torn, her instincts were to challenge the politics of Anzac Day, yet at the same time, she was drawn to its mythology. Surely Amirah was not alone in her conflicting response. Given the social inequalities, financial hardship, and high unemployment of the interwar years, as well as the momentum of the labour and peace movements, many children encountered philosophies at home that contrasted with a mythic military story.

In many ways, Australian children were encouraged to admire Anzac. As a tradition, they were told, it modelled lessons of resilience and bravery. Some children might have recognised Anzac’s virtues in an article on Simpson and

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his donkey in the School Paper or perhaps children were ‘awed into reverence’ at
the Shrine of Remembrance, like Ken Inglis’ account quoted in the Introduction
of this thesis.\textsuperscript{55} For others, it was more personal, like the ‘cheery’ bowls player
who joked about his disability. And, as Amirah Inglis’ and Don Charlwood’s
memories suggest, for some children, it was not always straightforward. They
encountered challenges to Anzac’s mythology, at home, at school, and in their
communities. Learning about Anzac did not always align with a prescribed
narrative and children’s readings of this history and its traditions are far more
layered than has often been assumed.

\textbf{School Books}

When historians claim to consider Australian children’s responses to Anzac,
often their evidence is based on educational materials. School papers and
primers provide insights into the messages disseminated and endorsed in
classrooms and, to an extent, their broader social and political context.
However, focusing on these sources exclusively is a restrictive methodology.
Inevitably, this evidence filters out children’s voices and does not take into
account the distinct circumstances of different schools and classrooms. There is
also a risk of interpreting sweeping summaries about children’s experiences
from these publications.

Looking at educational materials from 1914 to 1918 often leads historians to
surmise that schools were infused with ‘endemic patriotic fervour’ and ardent
militarism.\textsuperscript{56} However, a closer reading of these sources offers more nuance.
According to R.J.W. Selleck, Victorian schools’ ‘support for the war was

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{The Argus}, 24 October 1933.
\textsuperscript{56} Peter Stanley, ‘Part III: Society’, in John Connor, Peter Stanley, and Peter Ule (eds.), \textit{Centenary
History of Australia and the Great War}, vol.4, \textit{The War at Home} (Melbourne: Oxford University
complete’ and teaching was ‘saturated’ with the ideals of ‘loyalty and service’. Still, there was a line that was not crossed. Selleck describes the Victorian School Paper as ‘mild’ in its anti-German sentiments. He argues that while the department’s publications were focussed on duty and encouraged patriotism, they could have been more extreme. Examining the Victorian School Paper, Anthony Hannan determines that despite early efforts to provide a ‘documentary approach’ to the war, its character was essentially ‘emotive and self-righteous’. But there was also variation in the extent and strategies of its patriotism across the war years. It is also worth asking how these classroom resources spoke to schoolgirls and schoolboys as distinct audiences with particular gendered concerns and responsibilities. Ultimately, as Rosalie Triolo advises in her survey of the Victorian Department of Education’s literature, these materials are more ‘diverse and complex’ than they have often been reduced to in the past.

But what happened after the war? Again, one-dimensional assessments are frequently offered. Deborah Hull argues that in the interwar years Australian schools continued to teach their students ‘The Old Lie’ that it is sweet and fitting to die for one’s nation. Hull maintains that ‘children were being fed a much-distorted view of the war’. She can provide substantial evidence to support her claim. Many school paper articles reinforced nationalism, celebrated the glory of war, and worshiped the men killed on the battlefields.

58 Selleck, Frank Tate, p.216. See also Triolo, Our Schools and the War, pp.27-28.
61 Triolo, Our Schools and the War, p.9.
Nonetheless, Hull’s argument does not allow for the challenges against this style of teaching and it is limiting to suggest that ‘there was little room for words like fear, despair, waste, futility’.  

By contrast, Frank Bongiorno acknowledges that there was not one shared, straightforward message intoned in children’s literature. He notes that in *The Young Australias’ [sic] ABC of War* ‘predictably … “A” is “for ANZACS”’. But then ‘“R” [is] for “homeless REFUGEES”’. Bongiorno suggests that ‘even in this little picture book there is something rather more complex than a mere glorification of war being carried on’.  

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Figure 5: *Young Australias’ ABC of the War*  
(Australia: Gordon and Gotch Ltd., c1918), National Library of Australia.  

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63 Ibid., p.89.  
G.V. Portus’ *Australia Since 1606* featured in classrooms around Australia in the interwar years. First published in 1932, attesting to its popularity, twelve editions were published in just fifteen years.65 Today, a reader of this text could describe it as ‘sexist’ and ‘racist’.66 Nonetheless, like Bongiorno’s description of *Young Australians’ ABC of the War*, ‘there is something rather more complex’ about *Australia Since 1606*.67 This work manages to convey ‘something not only of the tragic inevitability, but the causal complexity, of the diplomatic crises that led to the outbreak of hostilities’. Graeme Davison identifies a ‘global perspective’ in this primer’s approach, something that is arguably often lacking in modern school materials, as will be explored in Chapter Six.68 Analysis like Davison’s and Bongiorno’s recognises the layers of texts, as opposed to readings which point to broad summary descriptions.

Consulting evidence such as a school paper or *Australia Since 1606* is valuable. But as historians of children, it is important to put the textbook down and step outside the classroom to construct a more comprehensive understanding of how children encountered Anzac, as well as the politics of teaching this topic.

**Educational Reform?**

The epitaph of the First World War as ‘the war to end all wars’ is a reminder that in its wake, the world desperately sought peace. Of course, this was not the end of war, rather these years gave rise to the horrors of the Second World War. But for a time there was hope, and a groundswell of pacifist work. To that end, it was imagined children would assume a pivotal role. Diana Selig writes that

‘children offered the best hope for redemption and renewal’. To redeem and to renew, there needed to be revision to the traditions of nationalism and militarism enshrined in school texts and pedagogy around the world.

In a global context, the connection between peace and education was drawn immediately after the war. In Australia, peace organisations committed to its advocacy and the press occasionally discussed its merits, but things really came to the public’s attention in 1924 and 1925 when the Victorian, Queensland, and West Australian governments set out to make practical changes in accordance with an internationalist and anti-militarist agenda. Despite their shared intention, in each state a distinctive debate unfolded.

**Victoria**

In 1919 the Victorian Labor Party adopted a platform ‘that all questions relating to militarism be struck out of the curriculum of State schools’. But then there was silence. In opposition for five more years, Labor rarely spoke of the policy. When George Prendergast, ‘a veteran of Labor’s anti-conscription campaigns, a radical committed to sweeping social reforms and an outspoken advocate of world disarmament’, became Premier, it had been more than a decade since his party had been in power. Moving swiftly and decidedly, the Prendergast government was determined to reshape the way the war was being remembered in Victoria. The debate about how to teach the memory of war ran

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70 Such changes were a priority of the League of Nation’s Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. International delegates deliberated how to implement changes to teaching around the world. Among their proposed strategies were free League-produced publications and directives about how much space school books ought to devote to the topic of war, see, for example, *World*, 27 August 1920.

71 *The Age*, 1 March 1919.

alongside the equally controversial questions of the form, role, and funding of the state’s war memorial and of Anzac Day as a public holiday.\footnote{Ibid., pp.44-47.}

John Lemmon, the Secretary for Public Instruction, was a devoted union man and ‘education was … [his] forte’.\footnote{Ann G. Smith, ‘Lemmon, John (1875–1955)’, Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, published first in hardcopy 1986, accessed 12 April 2013, www.adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lemmon-john-7168/text12385.} Lemmon sought to immediately implement changes in his portfolio that might genuinely promote an anti-war philosophy. Within a month of his appointment as Secretary, Lemmon accepted £21 from Melbourne’s Trades Hall Council for a peace prize for primary school students. The prize aimed at fostering ‘a desire amongst the children to extend the hand of brotherhood and sisterhood to the children of all countries without any regard whatever to Creed, Colour or Nationality, to love Peace and hate War and the understanding that we are members of one great worldwide human family’.\footnote{Letter from Trades Hall Council to the Secretary for Public Instruction John Lemmon, 21 August 1924, Inward Correspondence of the Department of Education, VPRS 794, unit 1092, PROV.} Students were invited to write a 1500 word essay which would be judged by members of the Council and the Education Department. The winners would be awarded their prize on Armistice Day and the best essay would be published in the School Paper. This competition antagonised those opposed to Labor’s broader pacifist platform. Specifically, concerns were raised that an external group was interfering with education, and though the aim was admirable, ‘it was coming from a wrong source’.\footnote{The Argus, 28 August 1924.} Essentially, these objections might be best understood as trepidation of Labor’s next move.\footnote{Hannan, ‘Patriotism in Victorian state schools 1901-1945’, p.182.}

In Lemmon’s statements on the essay competition, he indicated that such initiatives were aligned with Labor’s ideology and he hoped the tone of the
state’s educational materials would follow suit.\textsuperscript{78} Ensuing from Lemmon’s fairly general aspirations, the press and the Opposition evoked the impression of an unbridled minister radically editing the \textit{School Paper}. There was alarm that by recalibrating the conventions of the \textit{School Paper}, future generations would be unprepared and uninspired. With Lemmon’s ‘emasculaton of school books’, the Opposition foresaw numerous problems in terms of citizenship of Australia and of Empire.\textsuperscript{79}

There were claims that Lemmon’s revisions would threaten the Australian type. From a generation which had proven the mettle of Australian manhood, would follow an ‘anaemic’ and ‘namby-pamby people’\textsuperscript{80}. This was more than a matter of national character though, there might be real implications for national security. The Member for Boroondara Edmund Greenwood reminded Labor if ever there was a country that needed committed patriotism it was Australia, given such a ‘small population and wide area’.\textsuperscript{81} Greenwood and his nervous colleagues fretted that excluding Australian and Empire war heritage from the classroom would, in turn, weaken future defences. From the Nationalist Party, Alexander Bell provided the figures for the argument, pointing out ‘round about us, in India, China, and Japan, there are from 800,000,000 to 900,000,000 coloured people’.\textsuperscript{82} Given the explicit concerns about ‘coloured people’, teaching Anzac history was linked to racial purity and to ensuring Australia’s (white) future.

\textsuperscript{78} The \textit{Argus}, 23 August 1924.
\textsuperscript{79} Victoria, \textit{Parliamentary Debates}, Legislative Assembly, 3 September 1924, p.219 (Frederic Eggleston, Member for St Kilda).
\textsuperscript{80} Victoria, \textit{Parliamentary Debates}, Legislative Assembly, 9 September 1924, p.298 (Harry Lawson, Member for Castlemaine and Maldon); Victoria, \textit{Parliamentary Debates}, Legislative Council, 2 September 1924, p.147 (Richard Abbott, Member for Northern Province).
\textsuperscript{81} Victoria, \textit{Parliamentary Debates}, Legislative Assembly, 3 September 1924, p.241 (Edmund Greenwood, Member for Boroondara).
\textsuperscript{82} Victoria, \textit{Parliamentary Debates}, Legislative Council, 2 September 1924, p.145 (Alexander Bell, Member for Wellington).
For many politicians, indeed for many Australians, that future was tied to Empire. At school, children were meant to learn the grand histories of Britain and, admittedly, ‘blood and thunder’ were among its essential themes. These lessons were intended to inspire pride in Australia’s place in Empire. Horace Richardson, ‘on behalf of the loyal section of the community’, worried that Lemmon’s alterations destabilised children’s faith in Empire. Richardson was particularly troubled about where these proposed changes would lead. Would Empire Day be banned next? For devout imperialists like Richardson (and many others) children deserved to inherit glorious traditions, but they also had to be trained to preserve Empire.

Both the Houses were gripped by the controversy and their chambers echoed its fiery debates. Many members of parliament were keen to take to the floor to grandstand and display their devotion to Empire, Australia, and the war dead; to beg that Lemmon and Labor heed warnings about the impacts of their revisions; or to shame the government for daring to question the memory of Anzac. Despite this spectacle, the Labor Party never intended to delete references to the First World War from school books. In the commotion of the debate, confusion occurred as a result of the conflicting interpretations of ‘militarism’, which Martin Crotty identifies is still a ‘contested term’. Some of these politicians understood militarism as the mere presence of the subject of war, while others defined it as a celebratory spirit of war.

There were those in parliament who genuinely wanted to see a different kind of teaching in Victorian schools. They argued that Anzac’s history had to be more

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83 Ibid., p.144 (Esmond Kiernan, Member for Melbourne North and Alexander Bell, Member for Wellington).
84 Ibid. (Horace Richardson, Member for South Western).
than adventure and heroics, it needed to admit the horrors of war too. The Member for Grenville, and a former teacher, Arthur Hughes admonished the Opposition for attempting to conceal aspects of Anzac. ‘You were not game to put in the school books the mistakes that were made on Gallipoli and at Fleurbaix,’ Hughes called across the floor. He took direct aim at Harry Lawson, the former Premier: ‘Perhaps if you had seen a bit of the war you would have altered your opinion.’ Awarded a Military Cross and wounded in France, Hughes had certainly ‘seen a bit of the war’ himself.

Lemmon’s protests were milder than Hughes’ and he maintained his were ‘humble efforts’. Lemmon had ‘intimated’ a desire for his department to adhere to the values of peace and goodwill, but he vowed he had never intended to ‘destroy the records of brave deeds’ of the Anzacs. Though unwilling to commit details or specific intentions, Lemmon defended his moves with a constant, rather abstract, explanation of ‘encourag[ing] the principles of peace’. In the end though, Lemmon’s attempts to appease his critics undermined his stance. They continued to censure his ‘mutilation’ of history, all the while deriding his ‘back down’.

A short time after the furore in parliament, the state’s Council of Education put

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86 Victoria, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 9 September 1924, p.296 (Arthur Hughes, Member for Grenville). Other Labor members highlighted their party’s commitment to the war. Attorney-General Bill Slater countered ‘seven ex-soldiers on this side of the House’. Victoria, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 9 September 1924, p.298 (Bill Slater, Attorney-General). There were returned men in Opposition too, including Matthew Bair from the Nationalists and Sir Murray Bouchier from the Country Party. To have served awarded one a more authoritative position in this parliamentary debate.

87 Arthur Hughes, First AIF personnel dossier, NAA: B2455, Hughes A Lieutenant; Garry Snowden, *They Answered Their Country’s Call: Short Accounts of Service and Sacrifice from Ballarat General Cemeteries* (Ballarat: Ballarat Heritage Services, 2015), p.162.

88 Victoria, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 9 September 1924, pp.313-316 (John Lemmon, Secretary for Public Instruction).

89 Ibid., p.296 (Harry Lawson, Member for Castlemaine and Maldon); Victoria, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 3 September 1924, p.206 (John Allan, Member for Rodney).
forward a motion that discussions of expunging war and its glory from school texts were unfounded. Labor’s rhetoric was out of step with the Council who declared it was ‘hardly too much to say that the Australian nation was born at the landing at Gallipoli; that it would be pernicious to have the teaching in State schools in violent antagonism to the general convictions of the nation’. Labor failed to convince the Opposition, and their constituents, of their objective and in doing so they ‘incurred significant political costs in the effort to substitute an alternative understanding of Anzac promoting international peace’.

Queensland

Just weeks on from the Victorian debate, the Queensland Parliament similarly grappled with how war ought to be presented to children in the School Paper. Frank Brennan, the Secretary for Public Instruction, declared it ‘the most important debate that has ever been held in [the] Chamber in connection with the Department of Public Instruction’. Brennan was a ‘lively, active, aggressive’ politician and he was adamant that, unlike his Victorian counterpart, he would not ‘back[] down in the matter’ to rid his state’s School Paper of articles that might ‘inflame the mind of youth with a desire for war’.

Brennan rebuffed the similarities drawn between himself and Lemmon and he

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90 Motion moved by Dr Alexander Leeper at the Council for Education meeting as reported in The Argus, 17 September 1924. The Council was a key stakeholder group that shaped the Department of Education and included prominent school principals, as well as Frank Tate, the Director of Education.


92 Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 24 September 1924, p.1082 (Frank Brennan, Secretary for Public Instruction). Brennan also noted that he had received several requests for copies of Hansard from around the country which, he believed, indicated the ‘far reaching’ interest in the debate, p.1076.

made it known he was not merely ‘following’ Lemmon’s lead. Brennan disparaged Lemmon’s about-face and where the Victorian Secretary had yielded to pressure, Brennan promised he would not relent. The Queensland debates are much longer and far less apologetic than those held in Victoria.

In the Legislative Assembly, a procession of politicians took to the floor to declare their position. Hour after hour, session after session, men blustered over the subject. Labor’s George Barber taunted that the Opposition had ‘work[ed] themselves up into a white passion’ and ‘tore their hair – what little they had’, but both sides of the Chamber seemed equally agitated. The addresses were theatrical, some quoted historical figures, like George Washington and Napoleon, and others slung vicious insults. Exasperated, the Chairman frequently had to remind speakers to adhere to time limits, to follow conventions, and to relate their speech to the question at hand. Regardless of whether commending or condemning the Secretary, each politician was careful to affirm their devotion to Anzac.

What exactly was it about the traditional School Paper that troubled Labor? Members took the publication – and its advocates - to task from a range of perspectives. Naturally, for a Labor government, this issue could be read as a matter of class. Randolph Bedford, a ‘vivid literary’ man who ‘was absolutely saturated with the spirit of the working-class cause’, envisioned the proposed changes would empower ordinary Australians. Denying the entrenched imperialism and militarism of past education systems, the working-class would thereupon refuse to be the cannon fodder of empires. Then, according to

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94 Queensland, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1924, p.1008 (Frank Brennan, Secretary for Public Instruction).
95 Ibid., p.1016 (Frank Brennan, Secretary for Public Instruction).
96 Ibid., p.1017 (John Appel, Member for Albert).
97 Ibid., p.1035 (George Barber, Member for Bundaberg).
98 *The Australian Worker*, 9 July 1941.
Bedford, there would be no war. But was Bedford actually just inciting ‘class warfare’? Labor members condemned war, at the same time, they were eager to foster a connection with the Anzac tradition. According to Brennan’s statistics, ‘98 per cent of the soldiers who left Australia to take part in the great war were industrial heroes’.

Other members approached the debate from a more pedagogical standpoint. Labor’s William Lloyd, a former teacher, criticised more than the School Paper, he denounced the much-celebrated Deeds that Won the Empire as ‘the most misleading and pernicious literature that could be put before young people’. Similarly critical, Randolph Bedford was concerned that such Empire-minded messages presented a naive dichotomy to young Australians, ‘that all nations who fought Britain were scoundrels, while Britain remained the pure merino’. Several politicians, particularly those who subscribed to ‘Australianism’, were frustrated that educational materials represented Gallipoli as the birth of the nation, a moment when Australia was ‘consecrated’. At this, Labor’s Charles Collins furiously called out to the floor: ‘She was a nation without that. Cut that out!’

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99 Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1924, p.1014 (Randolph Bedford, Member for Warrego). Similarly, Myles Ferricks advised ‘the workers of the world … to tell those who caused the wars to go and do the fighting themselves. Then there would be no war.’ Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1924, p.1022 (Myles Ferricks, Member for South Brisbane).

100 Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1924, p.1016 (John Appel, Member for Albert).

101 Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 3 September 1924, p.557 (Frank Brennan, Secretary for Public Instruction).

102 Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1924, p.1027 (William Lloyd, Member for Kelvin Grove).

103 Ibid., p.1014 (Randolph Bedford, Member for Warrego).

104 The Australian Worker, 9 July 1941; Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 24 September 1924, p.1057 (Reginald King, Member for Logan).

105 Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 24 September 1924, p.1057 (Charles Collins, Member for Bowen).
Labor also expressed its frustration at the unwillingness to look at the war’s lasting impact. David Weir, the Member for Maryborough, reminded the parliament that the repercussions of the First World War endured and they would do so throughout the twentieth century. Weir saw that the lessons of war were, in fact, part of the social landscape. He lamented:

What does war bring? We speak about the glories of war. We see the results in the street every day – poor unfortunate demented soldiers, maimed and crippled soldiers, ruined women, and the afflicted children of shell-shocked parents. These evil effects will be apparent in the country for the next fifty or sixty years.\(^{106}\)

Just as I argued in the earlier discussion of the repatriation records, Weir’s point was that children did not just learn about war in the classroom, it was a part of their lives.

But the Opposition remained unconvinced. They feared that Brennan’s ‘censorial pen’ would compromise young Queenslanders’ education.\(^{107}\) Brennan’s was a ‘falsified’ past and his version of history would be, as John Appel of the United Australia Party described, like ‘a skeleton … no backbone, no legs, and nothing else. It will simply be a phantom’.\(^{108}\) But was it really the integrity of school history that concerned these parliamentarians?

Appel’s colleague, James Maxwell ‘did not trust’ Brennan to faithfully honour the ‘deeds of the Anzacs’. As though to shame the Secretary, Maxwell solemnly

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\(^{106}\) Ibid., p.1065 (David Weir, Member for Maryborough).

\(^{107}\) Queensland, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1924, p.1008, p.1017 (John Appel, Member for Albert).

\(^{108}\) Ibid., p.1009 (James Stevingstone Kerr, Member for Enoggera) and p.1016 (John Appel, Member for Albert).
recited the *Ode* and then sneered that Brennan and the Labor Party did not ‘want to remember them’. The Opposition reproached Labor that their attempts at removing references to war from the *School Paper* were akin to forgetting the dead of the First World War and thereby destroying the Anzac tradition.

As in Victoria, the intentions of the Secretary were misrepresented in the press. Regardless of whether this was deliberate or otherwise, Labor complained that the sensationalist headlines were ‘treacherous, contemptable insinuations and innuendo’, and they criticised the Opposition for jumping at falsehoods. For all his indignation, Brennan was unwilling to pursue his cause to any practical action. He felt that the public was not supportive, albeit because of misinformed attacks that he described as ‘cowardly’. Brennan hoped that the government would be ‘strong enough some day’ to make real changes to the way the First World War was taught in his state’s schools, but it seemed that time was yet to come.

**Western Australia**

As Lemmon and Brennan embarked on their revisionist campaigns, on the other side of the country, John Drew, the Chief Minister of Western Australia, was besieged by a host of organisations. Among these delegations were the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, the Methodist Church, and the League of Nations Union, each pleading for change to the state’s education system. Drew agreed with these groups in principle, conceding, ‘in the past men have spoken too much of the glory of war and of the heroes of war. What we want to hear is more of the glories of peace and the heroes of peace.’

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109 Ibid., p.1038 (James Maxwell, Member for Toowong).
110 Ibid., p.1035 (George Barber, Member for Bundaberg).
111 *The Longreach Leader*, 26 September 1924.
112 *The West Australian*, 23 March 1925.
So Drew and his government took decisive, if different action to Victoria and Queensland. Western Australian newspapers reported schools’ Anzac Day assemblies hosting decorated returned servicemen, religious leaders, and RSL presidents and secretaries. The press described ‘inspiring sermons’, men regaling audiences with their ‘adventures’, and children calling ‘lusty cheers’.

The Chief Minister declared that from 1925 only teachers and principals would be allowed to address students at Anzac Day school assemblies. This ban on guest speakers was intended to weed out, as the press put it, ‘poetical cranks [who took] advantage … to recite their verse’. Drew had heard some dreadful examples of the type. Perhaps the worst instance was a school which endured a two-hour lecture from a returned soldier. A conscious politician, Drew would not divulge the school’s name. Less diplomatically though a letter to the Sunday Times described the case of a ‘pneumatic humbug … [who] spout[ed] his poems and prose for 45 minutes!’ Drew’s intention was not only to check the celebratory spirit of war, because sermons from the other end of the spectrum sounded equally disconcerting. The government was troubled by reports that extreme pacifist groups planned to parade ‘maimed returned soldiers’ at schools ‘as exhibits of the horrors of war’.

Drew reached a resolution that seems extraordinary today, superseding the authority of organisations like the RSSILA, this government assumed responsibility for regulating commemorations.

Drew hoped he could control the ‘collective remembrance’ of the state’s schools. A circular was distributed which suggested assemblies should ‘dwell

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113 The Australian, 7 May 1920; The Daily Telegraph, 28 April 1921; The Bunbury Herald and Blackwood Express, 3 May 1921.
114 Sunday Times, 29 March 1925.
115 Deputation from the RSL re: Anzac Day in Anzac Day, Premier’s Department, Administrative and Functional Files, series 36, 1496, 1919/0242, SROWA; Sunday Times, 29 March 1925.
117 Winter, Remembering War, p.276.
upon sacrifice, devotion to duty, and service, as exemplified by our brave men’. Teachers were advised to acknowledge the community’s ‘responsibility towards returned soldiers and the families of those who fell; and on the duty that devolves upon us of maintaining the ideals of liberty, justice, and righteousness for which they fought.’

This template did not appease the RSSILA. They believed the bans implied ‘the men who had gone away, fought and survived, were not fit and proper men to talk to children’. Deeply insulted, they interpreted Drew’s actions as a challenge to their integrity as witnesses, as ‘people who were there, people who [had] seen war at close range, people whose memories [were] part of the historical record’. The RSSILA leadership wrote angrily to the press:

Mr. Drew is trying to tell us in effect, that we cannot trust our returned men. He is trying to tell us that these men of ours who have endured war’s horrors, will give the men of to-morrow the wrong idea of war. In other words Mr. Drew would have us believe he and the members of his Cabinet who have never heard a shot fired in anything more terrible than a sham-fight, are better qualified to draw the lesson from the war than the men who have fought it … It is an unprecedented impudence for the politicians to say that they know more of this subject than the soldiers. It is an affront that the soldiers who live and the memory of those who are dead, have certainly not earned.

118 Letter to Primary Producers Association from Acting Secretary, Premier’s Department, 26 March 1925 in Anzac Day, Premier’s Department, Administrative and Functional Files, series 36, 1496, 1919/0242, SROWA.
120 Winter, Remembering War, p.7.
121 Call, 20 March 1925.
But Drew stood firm. Likely adding further strain to this controversy was the parallel dispute between the government and the RSSILA regarding the state’s war memorial.\(^{122}\) Both debates were concerned with who owned Anzac’s memory and who controlled its messages.

Members of the RSSILA attended school services around the state in 1926 and surveyed the changes to school services. They found several problems. Their most frustrating discovery was that Drew himself had addressed an assembly, in contradiction to his directive that only teachers ought to be the occasion’s orators. Drew was thanking the school for hosting his visit and avoided the topic of war, but he had commented that he ‘sympathised with Anzac Day’. David Benson, of the RSSILA leadership, declared Drew a poor substitute for an Anzac and he wondered if a ‘man using such an expression could possibly understand what Anzac Day means?’\(^{123}\) Less indignation surrounded other services, nonetheless, the RSSILA questioned whether the ceremonies had any impact without an old soldier’s presence. Maurice Zeffert, also from the RSSILA, thought the children seemed uninterested in the services compared to previous years. The committee decided ‘it would be better if the school commemorations were not held at all, since they were more or less farcical’.\(^{124}\)

As in Victoria and Queensland, Western Australia’s Labor Party struggled to win the public’s support to reassess how children learned about Anzac. Labor’s efforts were portrayed as political and extreme, and the party was accused of undermining Australia’s memory of war. Drew’s efforts to challenge the sanitisation of Anzac, like Lemmon’s and Brennan’s, seemed only to generate

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\(^{122}\) John Stephens, ‘Forgetting, sacrifice, and trauma in the Western Australian state war memorial’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.37, no.4 (2013), pp.466-484.

\(^{123}\) *The West Australian*, 27 April 1926.

\(^{124}\) Ibid.
sensational headlines in the press and foster hostility with the self-appointed guardians of its story.

Upon reflection, some historians argue that Labor’s aims were, to an extent, achieved. It might have been unpopular to announce revision, but school resources adjusted their approach. Hannan describes this shift as a ‘new mood’. He argues this revised ideology, which focussed on peace and internationalism, cannot be attributed to any one individual, rather it was reflective of society. This process was already underway by the time Lemmon announced his plans in 1924. This is not to say that vestiges of the ‘older-style patriotism’ did not remain in classrooms. But by the 1930s, articles about the League of Nations and items espousing world peace were ‘acceptable and respectable’ inclusions in the School Paper. Books that taught blind patriotism, imperial superiority, and militarism might have had a place in the classroom prior to and during the First World War, but in its wake, they no longer met with community aspirations for peace.

Whatever the state, whatever the specifics of the debate, each of these cases is an instance of adults speaking on behalf of children. In the next section of this chapter, I will introduce children’s voices into the discussion.

**Acts of Remembrance**

John Drew recognised the influence of the annual Anzac Day assembly on his state’s youth, likewise this thesis contends that children have always gleaned messages about war from their school and local community commemorations.

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From its beginning, Anzac Day was observed in diverse ways.127 Children attended countless occasions that adhered to a strict template; services that affirmed devotion to Empire and nation; included the requisite anthems, hymns, sermons, and speeches; and the special touches of a moment’s silence, a bugle call, and the flag. However, remembrance was not limited to the local war memorial, in fact, it could take place very far away.

The long history of Australians’ pilgrimages to battlefields, war memorials, and cemeteries has been explored by various historians.128 As will be discussed in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, travelling to these sites has become an increasingly popular way of teaching Anzac, and over the last two decades, thousands of school students have explored the sites of Australia’s wars. However, this educative experience originates from well before an Anzac revival. Almost as early as the first journeys made by bereaved families, young Australians embarked on pilgrimages.

In 1924, and then again in 1925, Australian schoolboys visited France and Belgium as part of international educational tours organised by the Young Australia League (YAL). The League was founded in 1905 to advocate for Australian Rules Football in Western Australia, though its aims soon expanded to promoting nationalism and developing teaching opportunities. The League’s philosophy was ‘education by travel’ and they advertised their tours ‘add[ed]


to the storehouse of individual knowledge, [broadened] the outlook and [brought] first-hand information in a way never reached by book study’.  

The 1924 and 1925 groups combined involved nearly two hundred boys and their experiences are documented in extraordinary detail, including the time spent in remembrance of the First World War. Gathering the traces left by these boys is valuable for two reasons. Firstly, this testimony animates this chapter with the voices of children, which as has been noted is an imperative of this study. This evidence has broader implications too. I suggest that these boys are undertaking the earliest youth battlefield pilgrimages. After all, these journeys occurred well before British school children began travelling to Menin Gate or the excursions organised by the Ypres League in the 1930s. As a result, the Young Australia League boys mark a critical point in the historiography of pilgrimage.

With a price tag of £250 only the very wealthy could send their son on a tour that cost as much as a man’s average yearly income. The Sun News-Pictorial quipped it might have been ‘something like … [a] magic carpet … But there’s just a slight catch in it. You must have sufficient money to pay your way.’ Although the League subsidised this ‘magic carpet’ and the tours lasted some six months and included uniforms, international passages, local fares, food,

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129 Letter from the YAL to the Victorian Premier’s Department, 15 April 1924, Inward correspondence of the Department of Education, VPRS 794, unit 1091, PROV.
130 The links drawn between Anzac and sport have always existed, see for example Kevin Blackburn, War, Sport and the Anzac Tradition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
133 The Sun News-Pictorial, 28 July 1923.
laundry, accommodation, and entertainment, it was still an enormous sum. Battlefield pilgrimage remains an expensive exercise. Modern school tours cost thousands of dollars, while this is quite different to outlaying your father’s annual income, it is still a substantial expense. Only open to ‘decent living, healthy boys from 14 to 17’, the privilege of the League’s tours also extended to gender.\textsuperscript{134} Girls were never considered for the 1924 or 1925 European tours. At the suggestion that the same educational opportunities be afforded to them there was unease. Mrs Jackson, Chief President of the Australian Women’s Christian Association, cautioned that young girls, at such a pivotal time in their ‘being moulded for their future well-being’ needed to be under the guardianship of their mothers. She insisted that the fundamental differences of the sexes should not be discounted.\textsuperscript{135} It would take many more years for the League to offer Australian girls the chance to travel overseas.

Regardless of concerns like Mrs Jackson’s, it is unlikely that girls would have been welcomed visitors on the battlefields anyway. The boys’ warm reception in France and Belgium reflects a sense of inclusion not extended to all visitors during this time. David Lloyd argues that early pilgrimages to the sites of the First World War emphasised the roles of soldiers and civilians, which in turn largely represented the battlefield and the home front, and respectively masculinity and femininity.\textsuperscript{136} The League’s boys did not precisely fit these dichotomies. These boys were regarded as the young men who missed the war simply by the chance they were born fifteen years too late. The League, always eager to display the quasi-military character of their organisation, presented the boys to French dignitaries. Upon inspecting the group, Field Marshall Foch declared that these young men ‘represented a great nation’s sons’, and General

\textsuperscript{134} Young Australia League brochure, Inward correspondence of the Department of Education, VPRS 794, unit 1091, PROV.\textsuperscript{135} \textit{Evening Sun}, 6 April 1925.\textsuperscript{136} Lloyd, \textit{Battlefield Tourism}, p.33, p.45.
Pau agreed, they were the ‘sons and brothers of those who fought with France,’ he told them, ‘You boys are met here with great and deep sympathy. France will never forget the Anzacs.’ Given their recognisable Anzac and martial qualities, these boys were invited to explore this landscape unlike most other non-combatant visitors.

The Young Australia League European tours were only an option for a few, but their privilege is indicative of gender and class inequalities of both mourning and education that existed at the time. For these privileged few, this experience was a remarkable opportunity, but it also entailed responsibility. This was not a holiday. Every boy was required to keep a thorough diary to reflect on their journey and to make the most of their time abroad. Documenting the tour went beyond the written word too, around eighty per cent of the boys had a camera with them (also a sign of the privileged social background of the group). One of the chaperones beamed at his charges, ‘each boy with his diary making notes, cameras always clicking, and keen brains ever absorbing everything of interest’. Thanks to those diligent League officers encouraging - or perhaps compelling - these records, it is possible to access the testimony of some of those boys. In the Rare Books Collection at Monash University and in the Young Australia League papers at the State Library of Western Australia, as well as in contemporary press reports, some of the boys’ observations are recorded. From my research, I have discovered the voices of Thomas Donnan and Jack Tulloch from the 1924 tour and Jim Steward and Donald Griffiths from the 1925 tour. At times, the boys report matter-of-fact details, like the weather and particulars about sites, they offer straightforward opinions (Thomas describes most favourable things as ‘jolly fine’), and the reader quickly detects the obligatory

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137 *The Daily News*, 17 May 1924.
nature of these journals. At other times though, the entries are illuminating, revealing perceptive impressions made by these boys.

The League’s tour itineraries resemble those that a school group might follow today. Charmed by the attractions of Paris, the boys climbed the Eiffel Tower and explored the Louvre. Exciting as these sites were, the boys had already begun thinking about war and its memory. They marched to the Arc de Triomphe to lay a wreath by the Unknown Soldier and they visited Versailles to learn about the treaty for peace. Even still, ceremonies and lectures were not why the boys had come to France.

Figure 6: The Young Australia League boys explore the sites of Paris. Here they are pictured at the base of the Eiffel Tower and descending its staircase. *Excelsior Paris*, 13 February 1925, Young Australia League records, 1904-1971, 7292A/91, SLWS.
Asleep in Amiens barracks, Reveille woke the boys at four-thirty in the morning. This excursion aimed for military authenticity and it insisted on the difficulty of pilgrimage. Hardship, in a physical sense, is a hallmark of religious pilgrimage, and while it is not always a part of modern secular pilgrimages, for legitimacy, there demands an element of ‘emotional duress’.

Out on the former battlefields, the boys listened to accounts of the war from Australian and French military men. The boys knew these battles by name, but being there they took on an entirely new meaning. With crowded schedules, the boys covered extensive ground. Thomas Donnan’s diary notes their route from Adelaide Cemetery to Crucifix Corner stopping at Villers-Bretonneux and the cemetery there, then on to Fleurs and Baupaume. Travelling over these hundreds of miles, the enduring impact of war on France and its people was startling. This landscape contrasted starkly with the boys’ home towns and cities back in Australia, and they were unprepared for the ravaged terrain, grisly detritus, and broken buildings they observed. At Villers-Bretonneux, Jim Steward wrote how the ‘houses, churches and other buildings are still in ruins’ and the ‘surrounding country is torn up with trenches, shell-holes, and dug-outs’. Donald Griffiths could not help but notice ‘the marks left by the Great War. Ruins, patches in houses, immense craters, and trenches, told their own story … ruins and uneven ground tell the tale’. By train, road, and foot, these boys saw a reality of the First World War that had been hitherto unimaginable for them from the distance of Australia.

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141 Jim Steward to his parents, published in Bendigo’s Advertiser, 26 May 1925, press clipping in Young Australia League records, 1904-1971, 7292A/62, SLWA (hereafter, Young Australia League records).
Generally, poor weather was bad for the boys’ spirits and it hampered their plans. However, on their pilgrimage dreary skies made their experience all the more accurate, and in ‘unceasing’ rain, the boys saw, what they were told was, the typical war-time mud of the Western Front.\textsuperscript{143} The vicarious experience that these conditions elicited persuaded the boys of the authenticity of their journey.

In 1924 the Tour’s guide was Major Phillips, the Superintendent of the Somme war graves. Phillips’ dedication to the task of burying Australia’s war dead earned him high praise. He was commended for turning a ‘not too creditable organisation’ into an efficient administration; and his familiar accent was also a relief to the boys struggling with their French.\textsuperscript{144} Phillips led the group, with ‘inches of Somme mud on their boots’, into ‘uncleared areas hitherto not visited by tourists, where they found live shells and wrecked aeroplanes and guns. The

\textsuperscript{143} The Register, 22 May 1924.
\textsuperscript{144} Letter from General Birdwood to Australia House, 11 October 1920, NAA: MP367/1, 446/10/1840, Court of Inquiry - to Inquire into and Report upon certain matters in connection with the Australian Graves Services.
lads inspected trenches and “pill boxes” and the German divisional headquarters dug-out, all as in wartime’. At Albert, the boys daringly climbed atop the town’s ‘ruined cathedral’.145 These descriptions and Thomas Donnan’s photographs of the boys wandering bomb craters attest to just how boldly they explored these sites.

Figure 8: Boys exploring the cemeteries, still a work in progress. Thomas Donnan, Young Australia League World Tour 1924, Rare Books Collection, Monash University.

The photograph above of the boys at work in a cemetery highlights how the Western Front was still a ‘traumascape’. It was ‘marked by traumatic legacies of violence, suffering and loss’ and ‘the past [was] still unfinished business.’146 These boys surveyed terrain that was just years on from the fighting. In his diary, Thomas describes the corpses that could never be buried because they were ‘all churned up in the mud’ and he noted he had seen ‘several skulls’ scattered in the earth.147

145 Herald, 22 May 1924; The Register, 22 May 1924.
147 Thomas Donnan diary, 20 May 1924, Young Australia League World Tour 1924, Rare Books Collection, Monash University.
Skulls were just the beginning. As they rambled across the landscape, the boys unearthed countless war relics. Indeed, searching for ‘souvenirs’ was all part of the adventure and possibly all the more thrilling given the macabre nature of some of their discoveries. Among their spoils were discarded ammunition, a uniform decaying still on a skeleton, ‘seven bayonets, which provoked comparison with a steel-spined porcupine’, ‘“tin hats” musty and earthy after years of disuse’, and a German Iron Cross. At one point, the boys had so many ‘souvenirs’ that an additional taxi had to be called from the train station to deliver their haul to their accommodation.

The boys felt the war as a presence, this went beyond the landscape and the relics, beyond its physical scars. Jack Tulloch sensed that the region was haunted by the horror, death, and destruction of the war years. He recorded these impressions with remarkable compassion: ‘I could not help but feel that many children in the Somme area seemed as if the terror still hung over them, and that they could still hear the cries of the wounded and the sound of the guns.’ It is likely that Jack compared his childhood in Australia to those children who still lived with the ‘terror’ of war. Jack’s life in Kyneton truly was a world away from these recovering villages. His moving description of French children’s suffering is indicative of the empathetic lessons that occurred on this pilgrimage.

These young men were not just in France and Belgium to learn about the war. They were there to remember as well. For some boys, it was personal as they laid wreaths at relatives’ graves. Thomas, Jack, Jim, and Donald were not among these boys, but they were affected by the grief they witnessed. At

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148 Ibid.
149 The Western Mail, 14 May 1925; Daily Herald, 28 May 1924.
150 Daily Herald, 28 May 1924.
151 Herald, 22 May 1924.
Baupaume, Captain Brough, one of the group’s leaders, laid a wreath at his brother’s grave and ‘he fell into tears’. It must have been confronting for the boys to have witnessed such an openly emotional response. Brough’s reaction was quite uncharacteristic of the ‘stoicism [and] privacy’ typical of mourning in this era. In the days following, Thomas wrote in his journal how the Captain sat with him and some of the other boys and ‘told us about the war’. Observing this display of grief and listening to the first-hand accounts of the war touched Thomas and influenced his journey.

Regardless of whether the boys had a relative’s grave on the Western Front, they were all part of an extended family – the old boys of the League. Some five hundred members of the Young Australia League had enlisted in the war and eighty had been killed. The boys tended the graves of some of these young men, though they did not know the men buried in France and Belgium, they shared a

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152 Jalland, Australian Ways of Death, p.326.
153 Thomas Donnan diary, 20 May 1924, Young Australia League World Tour 1924, Rare Books Collection, Monash University.
connection to them and they would have been friends, if not for the decade between their ages.\textsuperscript{154} Although the boys were already connected by their membership to the League, this ‘work of remembrance’ cultivated a sense of ‘fictive kinship’ among the group.\textsuperscript{155}

These boys did not just commemorate on behalf of the League though, they also served as representatives of Australia. Bart Ziino observes ‘pilgrimages in the interwar period had a function among the bereaved that transcended the specific experiences of those who undertook them’. Given that most Australians knew they would never visit the graves of their loved ones, there emerged a ‘culture of sharing of pilgrim experiences, intended to help console those who remained at home’.\textsuperscript{156} So the boys’ travel entailed responsibilities beyond requisite journal entries, they had obligations as members of the Young Australia League and as Australians. This obligation was not merely an abstract idea either.

On 4 May 1917, Private Joseph Claude Bolton from Sydney died of wounds he had received on the Belgian battlefield. He was buried in Vaulx Australian Field Ambulance Cemetery, alongside thirty-one other Australian soldiers. The Bolton family was devastated by the loss of its youngest son. ‘Just away, not forgotten,’ their memorial notice read.\textsuperscript{157} Joseph’s body was very far away though and that made his mother’s grief all the more consuming. Lydia Bolton pleaded with the authorities for any trace of her son, and in return she received

\textsuperscript{154} The figures of Young Australia League enlistment and losses appear in \textit{The Kalgoorlie Miner}, 8 April 1922. As part of the 1925 tour, the group tended the grave of Valentine Dexter, ‘one of the early boys of the League’, Young Australia League European Tour 1925 booklet, p.19, Young Australia League records, 1904-1971, 72924/54, SLWA. Detail about Val Dexter appears in \textit{The Boomerang}, 12 December 1922.


\textsuperscript{156} Ziino, \textit{A Distant Grief}, p.163.

\textsuperscript{157} \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}, 4 May 1921.
a scroll, a booklet, and a photograph of Joseph’s grave. But these tokens were
not enough. Lydia wrote to the Young Australia League, she asked if they
might seek out her son’s grave. The thought of these Australian boys visiting
Joseph’s resting place offered her some solace. Perhaps the boys reminded her
of her son. Obliging the request, the League provided the consolation of a
pilgrimage by proxy. They organised a commemorative service for Private
Bolton, they laid a wreath, and took photographs of his headstone. Knowing
that Mrs Bolton would never tend this grave, the boys picked forget-me-nots
from the cemetery. These were mementoes she could touch and hold and
thereby form a physical connection with her son’s resting place.

The Young Australia League boys were afforded an extraordinary experience,
one that most Australians could only dream of in the aftermath of the First
World War. Their journeys to the Western Front battlefields, war memorials,
and cemeteries taught them lessons about the horror, bereavement, and
compassion of the First World War. Walking over the devastated landscapes,
along the lonely graves, and in their ‘acts of remembrance’, the League boys
learned about loss that continued to define the world and of the pervasive grief
that haunted families, communities, and countries.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has illustrated how Australian children encountered Anzac’s
legacies in myriad ways. The histories of the First World War were presented to
students in the pages of their school books. Often these materials encouraged
sentiments of nationalism and imperialism, which tended towards an
overarching glorification of war. Not always though. There were also sources
that prompted students to think about the war in a more complex way than is

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158 Joseph Bolton, First AIF personnel dossier, NAA: B2455, BOLTON J C.
159 Herald, 22 May 1924.
often assumed. The related uncertainty of how to best teach this history and the heated parliamentary debates discussed in this chapter mark the beginning of an unresolved question about how Anzac should be taught to school students. Arguably though, Australian children’s intimate encounters with war would prove the most lasting lessons. To develop a more meaningful understanding of children’s relationship with Anzac and its histories and traditions, it is necessary to expand the scope of inquiry to include family and communities as sites of learning. With this approach, it is evident that Anzac profoundly affected this generation and those to follow.
‘The war – this war or the last one – was the reason for many things,’ observes the young narrator in David Malouf’s ‘semi-autobiographical novel’ *Johnno.*¹ This chapter takes up Malouf’s point and examines how children lived through another world war - this time much closer to home. This chapter will also consider how children endured the legacies of both wars and faced a future shaped by its histories. The year 1964 marked fifty years since the beginning of the First World War and twenty-five years since the outbreak of the Second. As these anniversaries neared, it was obvious Anzac was neither singular nor static. New veterans, new stories, and new priorities demanded changes to tradition.

**This is History: Living Through the War**

Australian children who lived through the Second World War understood this was an extraordinary time. As one teacher told his students: ‘This is history.’² For the first time, Australia experienced ‘total war’. Children watched on as half a million men marched to the front and a similar number again served at home.³ Grainy newsreels and photographs showed a second generation of Anzacs fighting in the deserts of North Africa, the jungles of the Pacific, and over the skies of Europe. Each day children faced austerity measures and rationing; they read the growing lists of killed, wounded, or missing in newspapers; they lived in a landscape shaped by fear; and they saw dramatic

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² Kent, *In the Half Light*, p.163.
social shifts. All Australian children were conscious of the war, but they responded in varied ways to its conditions.

Compared to the scarcity of children’s memories of the First World War and its aftermath, childhood impressions of the Second World War have been extensively recorded. Many prominent Australians have authored memoirs which detail their youth across these years. Admittedly, this material is limited in its range and largely speaks to middle-class and urban settings. Nonetheless, these accounts offer thoughtful, detailed insights of childhood and remain valuable to the historian. Offering more diversity of subjects, there has been steady and widespread interest in collecting ordinary Australians’ testimony about the war years. The ubiquity of this material reflects a heightened interest in the topic, but is also symbolic of, as Kate Darian-Smith terms, the ‘race against death’ to capture this evidence. Further to this urgency, these memories were also preserved as part of the *Australia Remembers* commemorative program in 1995. History groups and schools embarked on interview projects and bound their transcripts as a sort of act of remembrance. These booklets gather diverse recollections of the war and many focus on children’s perspectives.

Across these sources, many admit that before the later wearier years, they were delighted by the war. For Ned Denman, it seemed like ‘the best Cowboy and Indian story that [he] had ever heard’. Indeed, the war could be particularly

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5 School students’ *Australia Remembers* projects and the process of this work will be discussed in Chapter Four.
exciting if you did not have the strain of family away at the front.⁶ As a boy, Gavin Souter did not think of the war as ‘a monster to be feared, but rather some fabulous beast like the centaur or Pegasus’. Confident that his own life was far enough removed from any danger or anxiety, Souter recalled:

the war had done me no harm at all; in fact it had been a pleasure. I had seen the Lightenings and the Thunderbolts from a safe distance … to a distant observer like myself the war had been a spectacle rather than ordeal. It had been a long and exciting serial … and to be perfectly honest I was sorry it had to end.⁷

Taking into account this ‘Cowboy’ and ‘Pegasus’ nostalgia is important. These perspectives provide an opposition to the more oft-recounted strained childhood responses to the war. Nevertheless, it is worth bearing in mind how these memories could have changed or even been formed after the war. In the safety of hindsight, there might be a tendency for sentimentality rather than accurately recalling hardships or even mundane moments of the war.

Australia was unsettled by the commotion of war, but in 1939 the prevailing rationale was there was no need to panic. Australia was reassured by its remoteness from the battlefields and early on there were ‘few tangible signs of war’ on the home front.⁸ Any kind of subdued understanding of being at war changed radically though following a series of disastrous events; the loss of HMAS *Sydney* II; the bombing of Pearl Harbour; the attacks on Darwin; and the fall of Singapore, a supposedly invulnerable fortress which had stood guard

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against the real fighting. Each strike made a once distant war seem alarmingly close.

It is now widely accepted among historians that Japan did not intend, nor did they have the capacity, to invade Australia. Even if Australia and its territories figured in Japanese strategies for expansion and there were those in command with designs for invasion, ultimately, there was not an authoritative, official plan to occupy Australia.\(^9\) Even so, during the war years, Australian people feared that possibility. As Peter Stanley notes, this fear was ‘a reality in the mind, rather than of fact … and we need to understand just how real that fear was’.\(^10\) Australian children confronted this ‘real’ fear as they learned terrifying lessons about Japan’s cruelty, their cunning, and their perverse inclination for torture, sexual violence, and killing. Joyce remembers her neighbour’s warning ‘that the Japanese make innocent women and children drink water until they burst’.\(^11\) Ellen’s older sisters frightened her, telling the four-year-old if ‘the Japs get hold of you, they’ll poke pencils through your ears until they meet in the middle’.\(^12\) Margaret Maxwell and Shirley Ingram both overheard their mother’s intention to kill their children before they would allow the Japanese to take them and other children overheard similar plans of infanticide and suicide if Australia was invaded.\(^13\)

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\(^10\) Peter Stanley, *Invading Australia: Japan and the Battle for Australia*, 1942 (Camberwell: Viking, 2008), p.123, in particular, see pp.3-18 for discussion of how the question of a Japanese invasion has been remembered.

\(^11\) Kent, *In the Half Light*, p.177.


\(^13\) Joanna Penglase and David Horner, *When the War Came to Australia: Memories of the Second World War* (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1992), p.93; Geraldine Doogue, ‘Children in World
Children’s rumours and whispers at home were one thing, official propaganda another. Children may not have been the intended audience, but they were still exposed to the widespread campaigns that presented a message of unique Japanese brutality. In her analysis of Australian propaganda, Judy Mackinolty concludes that the approach was ‘stronger’ and ‘particularly harsh’ towards Japan compared to the depiction of European enemy nations.14 Kay Saunders also acknowledges this distinction. She observes that ‘despite the description as “savages” anti-German propaganda in Australia … never totally dehumanised [the Germans] … [they] were never depicted as insects or apes as the Japanese came to be represented’.15 Children paid attention to their parents’ worries, sensed their communities’ concerns, and they learned that the Japanese were a much-hated enemy who ought to be feared.16

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Figure 10: Exceptional barbarity and inhumanity were characteristic of the Japanese, as represented in the Australian press and propaganda material. *The Argus*, 12 March 1942.

Fear of invasion was more than an abstract anxiety. Children watched their local world transform into a prepared landscape: mountains of sandbags were piled high, zigzag trenches were cut through public spaces, and barbed wire fencing was erected along shorelines. Children also readied for attack at home. In his memoirs, Graham Freudenberg recalls constructing an air raid shelter with his father and brother, but given Brisbane’s inclement weather, the shelter flooded.\(^\text{17}\) Other families managed more secure protections. Ken Inglis proudly describes the structure built by himself, his father, and his grandfather, as ‘a beauty’. It certainly sounds sturdier than the Freudenberg family’s effort. ‘With its protective hump of earth, square wooden tower designed to admit fresh air,

and water pump sticking out of the tower,’ Inglis admired nearly fifty years later, ‘the shelter looked at first like a submarine moored behind the house.’

It was not just a prepared landscape that constantly reminded children about the war; it was also who they saw. To children, it must have seemed like the whole adult world was in uniform. Reinforcing the armed services, Australian women mobilised to join auxiliary units. By the end of the war, some sixty thousand women, from girls to grandmothers, had been recruited to the WRANS, WAAAF, AWAS, and AAMWS. Dressed in ‘familiar khaki’ or looking ‘smart in their navy-blue’, these women appeared convincingly a part of the military.

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Figure 11: The Australian Women’s Weekly, 24 October 1942.

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Women in uniform might have seemed somewhat unusual, but there were also unfamiliar, albeit glamorous, men in uniform. It is estimated that around one million US servicemen passed through Australia during the war. These men were a fascinating presence – their accents, their charm and charisma, and their money captivated Australians, children included. In an expression of goodwill, schools asked students to learn about American culture and customs. Children might have sung along to ‘The Star-Spangled Banner’ at assembly or perhaps they were one of the thousands of pupils who attended rallies in celebration of the ‘Glorious Fourth’. But encountering the Americans went beyond requisite school activities. In the streets, awed children flocked to the glamorous Yanks for autographs. Australians had an ‘obsession with American film stars’ and it is likely children perceived a connection between these troops and Hollywood. Like those ‘stars’, these celebrity servicemen appeared to have plenty of money and enterprising children recognised a lucrative market. The shoeshine trade was described as ‘reaping harvest’ among the US troops who did not ‘haggle over ha’pennies’.

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23 News, 31 March 1942.
Children also met Americans at home. As part of the war effort, Australian families sat down to ‘supper’ (in the American vernacular) with homesick troops. Graham Freudenberg remembers his patriotic mother’s hospitality

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26 Cultural confusion – and conflict – was anticipated among the servicemen, so a pocket guide to Australia was created for US troops. The handbook outlined Australian history, geography, social customs, values, music, food consumption, and also provided a phrasebook of sorts. In this list of terms, it is outlined that for Americans ‘dinner’ was Australian ‘lunch’, and for
hosting American sailors and, in thanks, the guests offered gifts of cigarettes, beer, chocolate, comics, chewing gum, and nylons. Thrilled by these sought-after items, Freudenberg was struck how these men embodied every bit the ‘glamour and wealth’ he associated with the US.\(^{27}\) This powerful impression lasted a lifetime. Freudenberg believes the American presence during the war laid the foundations of his commitment to an Australian and United States political alliance.\(^{28}\) Other children were affected at a more emotional level. With Inga Clendinnen’s family, several lonely marines found ‘a sanctuary against homesickness’. Clendinnen recalls similar gifts as those received by Freudenberg, but it was not these extravagances that touched her most; she was moved by the realisation they would likely be killed, wounded, or at the very least, damaged in the war. When one of her family’s new friends returned to Australia from fighting in the Pacific, seven-year-old Inga watched her mother ‘[take] his face in her hands, and pull[,] his head against her breast, and [hold] it there until he started to cry, [hold] it there until he had stopped crying’. On reflection, Clendinnen wonders, ‘Perhaps I have spent my life trying to understand that’, this intimate and poignant moment of war.\(^{29}\)

**At Their Post: The War Years in the Classroom**

When a nation is at war and ‘everyone must remain at their post, the child’s place [is] at their desk’.\(^{30}\) Although the possibility was raised, Australia never

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\(^{27}\) Freudenberg, *A Figure of Speech*, p.2. American generosity, homesickness, and allure, as witnessed by children, is also detailed in Anthony J. Barker and Lisa Jackson, *Fleeting Attraction: A Social History of American Servicemen in Western Australia During the Second World War* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1996), pp.119-122.

\(^{28}\) Freudenberg, *A Figure of Speech*, p.3.


enacted an official child evacuation policy, as in Britain. Nonetheless, some children could not help but notice the ‘sons and daughters of people who had a quid’ were moved to ‘safer’ areas of the country.\textsuperscript{31} For most Australian children their daily routine of school carried on, even if, in one way or another, they were reminded that Australia was at war.

As in the First World War, educational texts used during the Second World War were neither static nor homogenous. In fact, they varied considerably over the course of the war, particularly depending on geography. In some states, wide-eyed pupils studied the war’s key sites, events, and figures. In their analysis of the Victorian School Paper, Andrew Spaull and Bob Bessant found the publication monitored the war ‘almost as closely and as strategically as a metropolitan daily newspaper’.\textsuperscript{32} Contrasting with this approach was a determined silence in more ‘vulnerable’ states. In Queensland, close to the perceived threat of invasion, the Department of Public Instruction chose to avoid the subject in teaching materials. School authorities assumed a ‘policy of diverting attention away from the exigencies of war’, and they hoped that instead the School Paper might be a welcome distraction.\textsuperscript{33}

Queensland’s desire for distraction is not surprising given how inescapable the war must have seemed to some children. Even school buildings and playgrounds were readied for attack. Alex W. knew his school’s slit trenches were designed to be protective shelter, but noticing how they flooded, he worried he would face a choice of ‘being killed by the Japs or drowning in the


\textsuperscript{32} Bessant and Spaull, The Politics of Schooling, p.23.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p.21, p.45.
trench’. Between Alex’s school and the Freudenberg shelter described earlier in this chapter, it appears makeshift defence measures were often hazardous. This is possibly the case because at many schools students were tasked with their construction. The work itself could be unsafe as well. Students from Northcote High School described how their ‘hard work’, justified by taking place in physical education classes, unearthed layers of ‘relics’ on a site that had evidently once been ‘more or less a dump for rubbish’. And in the picture below, boys labour with picks as tall as themselves.

![Children digging trenches at Ascot State School in Brisbane, 1942.](figure13.jpg)

Figure 13: Children digging trenches at Ascot State School in Brisbane, 1942.
John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland

It was not just a matter of equipping schools’ infrastructure for war, children themselves had to be prepared. Students were instructed in emergency

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34 Teaching Anzac survey, Monash University, Human Ethics Project CF11/3403-2011001818, Alex W.
35 Smith, ‘Six great years as a student at Northcote High School, 1942-47’ and Inglis, ‘An historian does research’, p.4, Northcote High School Archives.
procedures, such as: in case of attack, put your head down, do not look up, and bite down on your rubber mouthpiece, so your ears drums do not burst.\footnote{Keesing, \textit{The Home Front Family Album}, p.44. A similar drill is described in an account written by Vic Myers for Kate Challis, 9 October 2013, Northcote High School Archives.}
Figure 15: In one minute and forty seconds, 550 students from West Brunswick State School were evacuated to their playground. In the picture above, children lie with their chests raised on their folded arms. Also pictured is a young schoolgirl taking shelter underneath her desk. It was noted that the school’s headmaster did not favour this strategy. *The Sun News-Pictorial*, 19 February 1942.

School students were also subjected to bomb and air raid drills, learned first aid, and practised aircraft identification. It is likely some children were made anxious by these measures. The young girl huddled beneath her desk, pictured above, does not look at ease. Perhaps this is why her school’s headmaster did not favour this particular drill strategy. Certainly some children found these kind of exercises entertaining though. Josephine Wundersitz delighted in the air raid drills, or as she and her friends called them, ‘the whistle game’. 37 Were the students at West Brunswick State School troubled about the prospect of invasion? Or did they enjoy a welcome disruption to classroom routine, preferring to lay in the summer sunshine to sitting at their desk?

37 Josephine Wundersitz, ‘Childhood memorials of World War II’, p.17, AWM PR00924.
Schools insisted on official vigilance, even if they were wary that ‘alarmist’ reactions could have adverse effects on young minds. One technique to ‘precaution against panic’ included group singing. Young voices bellowing *It’s a Long Way to Tipperary* and *Keep the Home Fires Burning* would hopefully calm children’s fears. Through song, or otherwise, it was a teacher’s responsibility to reassure their classrooms. In doing so, teachers would comfort nervous students, but there would also be a broader impact. Michael McKernan illustrates how children served as an intermediary. By correcting misinformation or providing instruction to young Australians, they would in turn ‘allay their parents’ anxieties’. Just as Ross F. Collins notes in the comparable American case, children were ‘the kind of magic bullets that could target the hearth, carrying the message of the war into the homes’.

A similar ‘message’ was of children’s contributions to the war effort. Schools’ Anzac Day assemblies were an ideal occasion to compel students to be part of the ‘all in’ mindset. Like at Broken Hill High School, where the headmaster appealed to his pupils, ‘The most that we can do is the least we can offer to support the men who are bearing the brunt of the war.’ Young Australians’ devotion to nation and Empire, their sacrifices, and their fundraising were celebrated and, at the same time, served as a model to adults. Community austerity measures were mirrored in the classroom and students were asked to be resourceful, for example, they could save paper by not ruling margins and empty spaces in workbooks were not tolerated. Children salvaged all kinds of materials, including floor polish tins, foil, medicine bottles, even toothpaste tubes. As the students at Northcote High School reminded their classmates: ‘We

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39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., p.11.
42 *Barrier Miner*, 24 April 1942.
MUST feed the guns.’44 And children committed to War Savings Certificates as a ‘painless exercise in patriotism’.45 Similarly to the First World War, even if somewhat less ‘frenetic’, children’s labour was mobilised for fundraising.46 In Victoria alone, students raised £432,822 and produced 470,576 articles for the war effort.47 Children also provided hands-on work for the war industry, including tasks like knitting socks and weaving camouflage netting.48

Figure 16: The Ginger Megs Salvage Corps at Essendon, ‘who collected nearly two tons of paper, rags, rubbers, bottles and other materials in just three weeks’. Victoria, School Paper, 1 June 1943.

44 ‘Our school war effort’, Spectator, May 1941, Northcote High School Archives.
45 Inglis, ‘An historian does research’, p.3.
47 Victorian Department of Education, School Paper, 1 October 1945, p.139.
48 For accounts of children’s war work, see McKernan, All In!, pp.234-235; Penglase and Horner, When the War Came to Australia, pp.202-205; Spaull, Education in the Second World War, pp.57-62; Connors et al., Australia’s Frontline, p.84. Children around the world undertook similar labour. For the American case, see Robert William Kirk, Earning Their Stripes: The Mobilization of American Children in the Second World War (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1994).
Fundraising and volunteering helped to underwrite the cost of war, but it also taught students valuable lessons. Michael McKernan suggests that schools encouraged this war work because they believed it ‘stimulated pupils to a higher understanding of the civic virtues of the value of giving, of working, of team spirit and self-denial’.49

In addition to this ‘higher understanding’, there were concerns that children were learning other, less laudable, lessons. Reporting on the increased rates of juvenile delinquency, truancy, and vagrancy, The Catholic Weekly reminded its readers that the worrying figures only accounted for the children whose misbehaviours were caught, let alone those who evaded authorities.50 Moral outrage at children’s behaviour was frequently drawn back to the matter of women’s employment, even if this was a ‘simple explanation[]’ and failed to acknowledge other relevant factors.51 During the war, at its peak, women made up almost a quarter of the total Australian workforce. Society was forced to grapple with ‘tensions between the traditional roles of women as homemakers and mothers, and their new national importance as war workers’.52 At least these women were respectable absent mothers. Much worse was the woman who merely ‘pursues pleasure herself’, leaving her children alone while she chased a good time.53 With fathers away at war and mothers occupied at work (or pursuing pleasure), some children were left unattended and these ‘latchkey children’ became an ‘awkward community problem’.54 The press evoked disturbing scenes, like the child ‘fed by a neighbour through a window’ or

49 McKernan, All In!, p.234.
50 The Catholic Weekly, 16 December 1943.
51 McKernan, All In!, p.215.
53 The Sydney Morning Herald, 21 December 1944.
54 The Barrier Miner, 20 December 1943.
gatherings of wayward truant boys. Kate Darian-Smith identifies these anxieties were part of the ‘general sense of moral alarm’ in society during the most trying war years.

Figure 17: The absence of mothers and fathers led to ‘the sad story of uncontrollable children – boys who fall into a life of petty crime and girls who, seeking glamour, find a life of drunkenness and vice’. The Sydney Morning Herald, 27 December 1944.

Despite criticisms of women’s parenting, or lack thereof, little was done to offer them any support. A shortage of places in childcare facilities meant that many mothers had no alternative than to leave their children unsupervised. Mary Miller, one such working mother, lamented: ‘You were encouraged to come into munitions but nowhere did they say, “At this munitions factory there is a childcare centre, you can leave your children”… they are very peculiar, governments, how they just don’t think through the problem.’ The statistics

55 Army News, 25 November 1943; The Sydney Morning Herald, 7 November 1944.
57 Penglase and Horner, When the War Came to Australia, p.146.
support Mary’s complaint. From April to August 1943, there were more than nine thousand children under the age of five whose mothers worked in the war industries, compared to just 750 places available in Commonwealth childcare programs.\(^{58}\)

The mobilisation of women into the workforce was just one of the confrontations to traditional society during the war and children responded in different ways to these disrupted conditions. For some children their mother’s new wartime role caused distress and loneliness (and perhaps hunger), for others it offered boundless opportunity for adventure (and possibly mischief).

Figure 18: The Victory Medal for children. On one side is ‘a figure symbolic of Australia’s resistance’. On the other side is a map of the southern hemisphere. *Examiner*, 17 April 1946. Figure 19: A young Bunbury girl receives her Victory Medal from the town’s mayor. *The Western Mail*, 13 June 1946.

\(^{58}\) Davis, ‘Minding children or minding machines’, p.97. For further discussion about childcare, or lack thereof, and women’s work during the war, see Darian-Smith, *On the Home Front*, pp.122-129; McKernan, *All In!*, pp.214-215.
Children encountered the Second World War in many ways. Some children relished in the adventure of the historical moment or in their new sense of freedom. Or, perhaps from a safe distance, children’s lives did not change much at all. Regardless of how they were affected, all Australian children knew the world was at war and they learned that they and their family, communities, and nation had essential roles to play. In the peace celebrations of 1946, more than one million children received a Victory Medal from the Australian Government. A commemorative keepsake designed in recognition of children’s efforts and sacrifices, this medal is a reminder that children endured the impact of war. For some children, the war did not end in 1945. Just as in the previous chapter, this chapter will explore how the consequences of war are felt far from the front line and coming home meant another set of battles.

**When the War Ended**

As discussed in Chapter One, historians are now at a point where understandings of First World War repatriation can be informed by both official archives and personal memories. We are not quite there for the Second World War.

Repatriation records exist for the Second World War, but they are far more difficult to access than those of the First World War. Kirsty Muir describes her frustrating interactions with the ‘gate keepers’ of this collection in her PhD thesis. She recounts how her request to access a sample of Second World War case files was rejected, she suspects this was a result of DVA’s ‘fear of what will be found’ in terms of the mental health of veterans. Possibly DVA’s resolve to protect their history is the reason for this preservation of confidentiality, but there are also the politics of archives and the bureaucratic decisions regarding

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which records are sensitive. DVA estimated that in 2017 there were around 25,000 surviving Second World War veterans in Australia, as such, fewer files are available to be a part of an archival collection.\(^{60}\) In the future, hopefully the Second World War repatriation records will be available to historians and it will be possible to discover similarly valuable insights to the legacy of this conflict. At this time though, the National Archives of Australia, via the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, deems the collection ‘not suitable for general public release’.\(^{61}\)

While the repatriation files are protected, substantially more testimony from children of Second World War veterans is recorded in memoirs, family histories, and oral histories, than those from the First World War. As reflected on earlier, these sources can offer intimate insights, but it is necessary to remember this material is a ‘form of storytelling that is mediated by the ways that their writers wish to interpret their lives to others and to themselves’.\(^{62}\) In spite of any limitations as evidence, as has been noted, historians of children must acknowledge that often these memories are ‘the best we have’.\(^{63}\)

Still, for all the talk, silences endure. Some families of returned servicemen and women feel that their suffering ought to remain private.\(^{64}\) In a collection of essays by the children of prisoners of war, Dianne elaborated on this position. ‘There are things I can remember about my father that I do not want to write about,’ she confessed, ‘Maybe like the men, I feel that some things are best left


\(^{63}\) Fass, ‘Childhood and memory’, p.162.

\(^{64}\) Kirsty Muir discovered this anxiety ‘about betraying family secrets’ in her interviews with Second World War and Indonesian Confrontation veterans and their families, in ‘Public peace, private wars: The psychological effects of war on Australian veterans’, *War and Society*, vol.6, no.1 (May 2007), p.68.
in the past.’65 This philosophy of silence is not uncommon. Indeed, some take a position that their loved ones have the right to be forgotten.

Just as with the First World War, it is impossible to know each intimate story of coming home - or possibly not coming home - from the Second World War. While there is no ‘typical’ story, historians can discover some experiences which provide insights into the wider experience of the aftermath of war.66 Michael McKernan’s thoughtful advice is that ‘in knowing the few we may know something of the many’.67

Maureen’s father was one of the 27,000 Australians who died during the Second World War. For Maureen, the ‘hardships and uncertainties of growing up without a father’ were harrowing. Her childhood was ‘totally disjointed’. She felt powerless, as though ‘from the day her father died her life began to fall apart around her’.68 Children like Maureen faced a host of particular anxieties, such as worrying their mother might die, agonising that maybe they had been a naughty child and that was why their father had not come home, or perhaps he was not really dead and would one day return.69 Maureen remembers her father as a ‘gentle, kind’ man. Her childhood memories of him are fixed and, arguably,

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66 Christina Twomey’s The Battle Within: POWs in Postwar Australia (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2018) is the most recent contribution to this field. Twomey consults the Prisoner of War Trust Fund records, which is a fascinating collection and often confronting in its detail and its candour. John Raftery has drawn on various sources, official and personal, to demonstrate the diversity of dealing with the trauma of the Second World War, in Marks of War: War Neurosis and the Legacy of Kokoda (Adelaide: Lythrum Press, 2003). For further reading on repatriation and Second World War servicemen, see Lloyd and Rees, The Last Shilling, pp.283-306.
67 Michael McKernan, This War Never Ends: The Pain of Separation and Return (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2001), p.4.
68 Scates et al, Anzac Journeys, p.105.
lend themselves to a romanticisation.\textsuperscript{70} Other children were forced to navigate new relationships and confront strangers when their fathers came home as very different men.

When children were reunited with their father, the public story was of ‘happy homecomings’, but this narrative was often at variance with the private reality.\textsuperscript{71} Germaine Greer’s description of seeing her father for the first time after the war evokes the distance and awkwardness that had developed in his absence. Here was a man ‘who was forced to abandon a cuddlesome toddler and allowed to come back … to a sharp-faced skinny little girl’. And Greer was underwhelmed by the old man whose ‘eyes were sunken, his skin grey and loose’. He looked so different to the photographs - and memories - she had treasured.\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{70} Bruce Scates interview with ‘Maureen’ (Sandakan, April 2010), Australian Research Council Discovery Project DP1093729: \textit{Revisiting Australia’s War: International Perspectives on Heritage, Memory and ANZAC Pilgrimages to the Cemeteries, Sites and Battlefields of World War Two}, Chief Investigator: Bruce Scates.

\textsuperscript{71} Such reports were published in \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}, 10 September 1945; \textit{The Courier-Mail}, 12 September 1945; \textit{The Argus}, 20 September 1945.

Figure 20: Pictured on the left, Private Cooper meets his son Leslie for the first time. Private Cooper was captured at El Alamein. *The Argus*, 19 June 1945.

Figure 21: Pictured on the right, Private Allso sees his son Warren for the first time after four years as a POW in Greece. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 July 1945.

Figure 22: Pictured above, Corporal Dial with twenty-one members of his family at Concord Hospital on his return from Singapore. Thelma, Dial’s daughter, is seated on his lap. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 September 1945.
For many of the children who welcomed their father home, the happy public moment soon disappeared into a private lifetime. Families endured long periods of domestic readjustment as men tried to reintegrate where they had left years before. Returned servicemen were forced to resume their lives in a world that had not stopped while they were at war. Families were advised to be patient, but the rejections could be challenging, even hurtful, for loved ones who could not understand why these men, finally home, felt so out of place.73

Fathers who had been absent for years could be a strange, often jarring, presence in homes. Michael McKernan offers one such example in his study of prisoners of war and their families. Nola missed her father dreadfully during the war, but on his return their family dynamics changed. Nola was no longer given a voice and the close bond she had with her mother was intruded on. Father’s and daughter’s ‘personalities clashed’ and they could not develop the connection they both craved. Nola said: ‘I wanted to be very close to Dad and I never was. I tried ... I wanted a piece of him and he couldn’t give it to me.’74

It was not just the time away that disrupted families. Children learned about the war by watching the dreadful diseases and injuries that their fathers fought the rest of their lives, such as: wracked digestive systems, beri-beri, anaemia, headaches, dizziness, recurrent ulcers, skin conditions, bouts of diarrhoea and vomiting, insurmountable fatigue, fainting, chronic malaria, parasites that persisted, and scars from their captors’ brutality.75

73 Patience was the advice from ‘Dear Dorothy’ to a woman who was considering leaving her returned serviceman husband, published in *The Newcastle Sun*, 2 March 1945. See also Michael Caulfield, *War Behind the Wire* (Sydney: Hachette Australia 2008), p.330; McKernan, *This War Never Ends*, p.125; Sally Dingo, *Unsung Ordinary Men* (Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2000), p.271.
74 McKernan, *This War Never Ends*, p.130.
Those scars were not just physical either. Many returned men seemed to drown in their memories. Scholars who have studied the psychological scars of war acknowledge there is no one response to the trauma of war. There is a broad and complex range of reactions which, as John Raftery argues, cannot be ‘confined to simple clichés’. Even the supposed success stories of returned men hint that life was never the same and that the war stayed with them, and their families, in one way or another. As explored in Chapter One, there is the aftermath of war that only families see. While there might be a public face of coping and recovering, private struggles should not be discounted. Behind closed doors, many children of Second World War servicemen endured their father’s heavy drinking, anxiety, anger, and their struggle to transition from the military back to a domestic space.

Sally Morgan’s father spent extended periods in the repatriation hospital. Eventually it seemed as much time as at home. When he was home, he would lock himself away with liquor and avoid his family or fly into a frightening rage. Then it was back to hospital. Sometimes Sally ‘hated [her] Dad for being sick’. When her father was happy, so was her family. But then things would change because ‘there was always the war’. ‘Just when things seemed to be looking up, [the war] would intrude and overwhelm us,’ Sally lamented, ‘The war had never ended for Dad. He lived with it day and night.’ So did his family though and Sally suffered the burdens that came with a broken man. She often could not sleep for the anxiety about her parents when she heard them

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76 Raftery, Marks of War, p.92.
77 McKernan, This War Never Ends, p.140; Raftery, Marks of War, p.93.
80 Ibid., pp.19-20.
arguing late at night.\textsuperscript{81} As the years went on, her father was ‘drinking more than he was eating’, he no longer even tried to find work, and he spent more and more time in hospital.\textsuperscript{82} Getting by on just her mother’s income meant financial hardship for the family, yet there was always ‘plenty for Dad’s beer’.\textsuperscript{83} Sally was nine when her father died. He killed himself, though her mother told her ‘the war had killed Dad’.\textsuperscript{84} Sally was sad, but she also felt guilty that her father’s death brought relief; there would be no more fear, no more hospitals or ambulances, no more hiding from his anger.

Anger appears to be a common demon for war-wrecked men. Rex, like Sally and her family, lived on edge. In his father’s presence, Rex recalled, ‘you couldn’t scratch, you couldn’t do nothing as would make a noise, he used to be that irritable’. That irritability would inevitably erupt. Rex described how his father ‘kicked him in the fire, all his tea and all went’. On another occasion, his father threw a knife at him. Rex claimed these were ‘things he never done before he went away’.\textsuperscript{85}

A precarious line between annoyed and abusive was also drawn in Rob’s home. Rob learned a new mantra when his dad came home from the war: ‘Don’t annoy your father.’ When he was ‘annoyed’, he was ‘dreadful’, Rob explained:

For no reason at all, it seemed, his face would become smaller, tighter, his black eyes furious, his mouth thin. His hands could move faster than a striking snake … I couldn’t understand how or why these things happened; why we had a violent stranger in the house.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., p.20.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., p.29.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., p.53.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p.60.
\textsuperscript{85} Penglase and Horner, \textit{When the War Came to Australia}, p.233.
Rob’s description of his father as a ‘stranger’ alludes to how the war changed some men. Sue Moxham believes the war transformed her father and, in a way, he was defined by his trauma. Bill Moxham endured appalling horrors as a prisoner of the Japanese and he was one of just six survivors of the Sandakan Death Marches. Sue believes Bill’s war never ended, he was always ‘tortured’. In captivity, Sue suggests, Bill ‘crossed that barrier, crossed that line, where he had ceased to be a civilised human being’. How else might a daughter reconcile watching her father hold a rifle to her mother’s head or kicking her pregnant mother’s stomach and ‘the blood all over the floor of the bathroom’?

Interviewed as an adult, Sue’s reflections are sympathetic, though this is based on her compassion and willingness to learn about Bill’s imprisonment, rather than any contrition on her father’s part. As a child, Sue knew her father was dangerous. When she was eight-years-old, Sue begged her mother to leave, telling her: ‘People’s lives are more important than houses.’ Sue does not regret her advice, she is sure ‘he would have killed us if we’d stayed’. Not long after Sue and her mother and her brother and sister had escaped the violence, Bill took his own life, shooting himself in the head on his forty-eighth birthday.

Admittedly, the Moxham case is extreme. But then so was Sandakan. Considering Bill Moxham’s inability to cope and the terrifying abuse he inflicted on his family alongside the experiences of Dick Braithwaite, another Sandakan survivor, points to the individual nature of trauma and highlights

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88 Sue Moxham interview in Raymond Quint (producer and director), Return to Sandakan (Canberra: National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, 2011) and excerpts from her extended interviews for the documentary, as cited in Richard Braithwaite, Fighting Monsters: An Intimate History of the Sandakan Tragedy (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2016), p.402.

how distinctly the war affected families. Dick’s son Richard has authored a sizeable book - part history and part exploration of his family story - in an attempt to better understand his father. Richard concedes his was ‘Not a terrible childhood’, but his chosen adjective of ‘satisfactory’ indicates there were challenges. Dick was ‘often grumpy and [a] cynical person who preferred to be left alone’, and Richard attributes aspects of Dick’s character, and his parenting, to Sandakan. More specifically, Richard recognised the war had shaped Dick’s ‘exacting’ standards which, in turn, had made him an ‘anxious child, or “nervy”, to use the term of the time’. Even the little things could be drawn back to Sandakan, like how Richard was made to feel guilty for leaving food on his plate. While he had a complicated relationship with his children, Dick Braithwaite was a completely different father to Bill Moxham. But Dick still lived with trauma, even if it was a managed trauma. At times, Dick demonstrated greater resilience, perhaps this was when ‘the scars were much more hidden’. But Dick’s children could see their father operating at ‘different levels of depression’ and, at times, he appeared to hover at the brink of a breakdown. Richard’s childhood is an example of how the Second World War encroached into homes, and even if its legacy did not destroy families, it could still wield an imposing influence.

It is impossible to know how widely, or diversely, families encountered the war that came home. Just as after the First World War, this was a scourge ‘hidden behind the brick walls of suburbia’. Of course, not all men who returned from the Second World War were violent, negligent, or distant fathers. And some

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90 Braithwaite offers brief descriptions of other Sandakan survivors and their family relationships in Fighting Monsters, pp.403-404.
91 Ibid., p.399.
93 Ibid., p.375.
94 Ibid., p.384, p.375.
95 Walker-Fox, ““Strong images but frail””, p.22.
children delighted in the altered family dynamics of the war years, and even begrudged their father’s return as a disruption to normality.96 In any case, as discussed in Chapter One, having a returned serviceman father most likely reshaped family life.

Like the generation before, family encounters with war defined many children’s understandings of Anzac. But after the Second World War, Anzac was also being reimagined, even reinvigorated, in Australian society. Growing up as the world recovered from the devastation of war, how did children negotiate the Anzac tradition?97

**To You From Failing Hands We Throw The Torch**

As the First and Second World Wars receded further into history, there was growing anxiety that Anzac might not always strike a chord with young Australians. In the aim of relaying the story of Anzac from one generation to another, commemorative organisations assumed the ‘work of remembrance’.98 One of the earliest and most influential of these groups was the Anzac Fellowship of Women. Under the direction of Dr Mary Booth, the Fellowship’s founder and long-time president, the Anzac Festival designed to ‘link up the younger generation with the story of the past’.99 In pursuit of this ‘link’, the

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96 Margaret explained in her family, ‘we resented being told what to do by a man who we hadn’t seen for five years … He had known me as a child when he left, and I was a fully grown woman when he came back’, in Penglase and Horner, *When the War Came to Australia*, p.237. For similar examples, see Doogue, ‘Children in World War Two’.
97 Five years after the Second World War, 17,000 Australians served in the Korean War. Though this conflict falls within the timeframe of this chapter, I have not focussed on how children of its servicemen responded to its legacy. Though there are some accounts recorded, given the smaller commitment by Australia, there is far less opportunity to retrieve evidence. Despite recent attention paid to Australia’s role in the Korean War, often referred to as ‘the forgotten war’, Joy Damousi observes, ‘it continues to be a largely undocumented war in terms of its impact on families’, in *Living with the Aftermath*, p.42.
99 Anzac Festival Competitions 1938-1939 booklet, Papers of Mary Booth, MS 2864, box 12, folder 10, NLA. For further reading on Mary Booth, see Scates, Wheatley and James, *World War
Festival ran an essay competition for senior school students. Preserved in Booth’s papers at the National Library of Australia is a selection of essays from the 1950 contest. That year the question posed to entrants was: ‘What Anzac Day Meant To Me.’ The responses offer a range of perspectives, but they are all thoughtful, detailed, and carefully composed. With these essays, this thesis can weave ‘children themselves: their voices, experience, and agency’ into the historiography.

This opportunity builds on the testimony from the previous chapter. Examining the records of the Young Australia League’s pilgrimages, only boys’ impressions of Australia’s war histories were considered, whereas this competition favours girls’ voices. Of the surviving twenty-three essays, nineteen were written by girls. The file does not account for how many students entered the competition in total, so it is not possible to say with certainty that this collection is complete. However, the gender disparity among these submissions indicates that at this point girls had confidently claimed a stake in this tradition. Perhaps the Fellowship in particular convinced girls they were a part of this story. Or, possibly because it was a Fellowship competition, boys were dissuaded from entering. RSL sub-branches ran similar initiatives and they were recognised as ‘the main proponent and guardian of the Anzac tradition’ and offered a more traditionally masculine audience.

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102 Of the twenty-three essays, nineteen were written by girls and two by boys. Two of the essays are unnamed and do not identify the school their authors attended.

It is also necessary to contemplate the motivations of participants, mindful this was a competition. The stakes were not exceedingly high, first prize was a few pounds, but we might still wonder what really inspired entrants.\textsuperscript{104} Were students stirred by a genuine interest in Anzac or were they writing strategically, hoping to win academic accolade or some pocket money? Though this in itself is interesting. Even if an essay is not entirely frank, children still offer insights to what they thought they were expected to think about Anzac.

Aware of such expectations, some students reflected on how their generation had assumed a responsibility for Anzac. Fourteen-year-old Judith accepted there were anxieties that the Anzac tradition was ‘being neglected and misunderstood by the youth’. She assured the Fellowship these concerns were unwarranted.\textsuperscript{105} Indeed, some considered Anzac was already the possession of ‘youth’. Fifteen-year-old Margaret claimed that the ‘young can readily understand and appreciate the spirit of Anzac, because the spirit of Anzac is the spirit of youth, the appeal of Anzac is for the best in youth, the traditions of Anzac belong to youth’.\textsuperscript{106} If these traditions did belong to young Australians, as Margaret argued, then what responsibilities followed? Over and over, children refer to their ‘debts’, their ‘thanksgiving’, ‘repaying’, and ‘gratitude’, and in one way or another, all the essays grapple with a sense of obligation to Anzac.

Generally, essays identified that at its core Anzac was about remembering those killed in war, specifically the First World War. But eight years after the Second World War and within these children’s (admittedly, very early) memories, its losses had been folded into this tradition too. Children felt compelled ‘to pay

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item First prize was advertised as £3/3 in \textit{The Sun}, 23 June, 1950.
  \item Judith Campbell, Fort Street Girls’ High School, Papers of Mary Booth, MS 2864, box 13, folder 8, NLA (hereafter Anzac Festival Essays 1950)
  \item Margaret Christie, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
homage’ to the war dead, as though they were fulfilling a promise of eternal memory.\textsuperscript{107}

The promise to remember the fallen was an explicit instruction. In fact, fourteen-year-old Nancy interpreted \textit{The Ode}'s line ‘We will remember them’ as a ‘challenge’, one ‘that def[jed] anyone to forget’.\textsuperscript{108} Still, children knew the cost of war could be counted in many ways. Arguably, these costs were most conspicuous on Anzac Day, particularly at the march. Rosemary described a ‘procession …. [of] wounded men, disabled or sightless’ men who represented ‘the dread and horror of war’.\textsuperscript{109} Nancy also noticed among those marching were ‘many with missing limbs, a slight limp and scars gained in battle’.\textsuperscript{110} Dorothy remarked on the wounds that were more difficult to see: ‘People who will never be the same again, people who can not act as they could before … unsettled people … mentally unsettled’. Struggling to articulate exactly what she meant by ‘unsettled’, Dorothy clarified, it might have been one’s ‘outlook of life. Their sense of humour even their ability had changed’.\textsuperscript{111} These observations substantiate the prediction made in the previous chapter that the ‘results’ of war would be ‘apparent’ in the social landscape for decades to come.\textsuperscript{112} But Nancy’s, Rosemary’s, and Dorothy’s comments tell us even more than that. These schoolgirls define Anzac as aging and frail, which renders sympathetic characters, and thereby possibly a more sympathetic tradition. Their descriptions also mark the beginning of a wearying of Anzac, a pattern which escalates in the following decades and is a focus of the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{107} Judyth Shaw, Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{108} Nancy Smith, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{109} Rosemary Randall, Fort Street Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{110} Nancy Smith, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{111} Dorothy Midgley, Burwood Home Science High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{112} Queensland, \textit{Parliamentary Debates}, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1924, p.1063 (David Weir, Member for Maryborough).
It was not just limping, limbless, or ‘unsettled’ men scarred by war. In her essay, fourteen-year-old Patricia recognised its reverberations within families. At the Anzac Day march, she was struck watching the ‘grim faced crowd’:

I saw a stout old lady quietly brush a tear from her eye. Was she thinking of husband or son, whose grave was marked by a path of lawn and neat white cross in some foreign country? The grey headed old man staring fixedly ahead was perhaps remembering the last time he had seen his fine, manly son wave good-bye. There was a young girl tearfully watching the gallant procession, with her secret thoughts of sorrow.\(^\text{113}\)

Was Patricia caught up in a literary flourish appealing to the judges’ emotions? Or were bereft mothers, stoic fathers, and crying children actually the most memorable, perhaps the most haunting, impressions from her Anzac Day? Patricia’s response highlights the mournful nature of Anzac Day, but it was not necessarily an entirely sombre occasion for all. Ruminating on the cost of war - lives lost, wrecked bodies and ‘unsettled’ minds, families devastated - was one aspect of this anniversary, another was devoted to remembering what was gained. Most of the essays celebrated the ‘heritage’ forged in the ideology of Anzac. Children described a ‘priceless heritage’, a ‘glorious heritage’, even a ‘golden heritage’.\(^\text{114}\) Their version of ‘heritage’ certainly fits with David Lowenthal’s description that it is ‘not history at all; while it borrows from and enlivens historical study, heritage is not an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it’.\(^\text{115}\)

\(^{113}\) Patricia Conder, Fort Street Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\(^{114}\) Nancy Smith, North Sydney Girls’ High School; Denise Carey, school not noted; student and school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
For many of the students, like many Australians, the ‘celebration’ was the belief that Anzac symbolised a beginning point in a national story. By recognising Gallipoli as a baptism of fire, students were drawn to a redemptive narrative, in which the terrible costs, like those highlighted by Nancy, Rosemary, and Dorothy, were not in vain because from the ashes emerged a legend.

Anzac’s ‘heritage’ might have been established in 1915, but nearly four decades on this story had been cut adrift from its historical moorings. Once a story about Turkey, France, and Belgium, its geography had come to encompass New Guinea, North Africa, and Southeast Asia. The generation of Australians who went to war ‘in the footsteps of their fathers’ had upheld the ‘heritage’ formed at Gallipoli. But time and history demanded the reshaping of this tradition, which was evident in the ‘younger faces’, and even the women, who now marched on Anzac Day.\(^ {116}\)

Despite these new faces, to an extent, Anzac’s most potent associations endured. In 1950 many Australians remained devoted imperialists and both the First and Second World Wars affirmed a place in Empire. Seventeen-year-old Vivienne insisted the Anzac sacrifices gave her ‘the right to go where I liked and when and to say “I am British”.’\(^ {117}\) Was Vivienne’s declaration of Britishness in keeping with wider Australian attitudes? In the late 1940s, Australia showed signs of a vigorous nationalism, but the desire for stability in the 1950s somewhat restored faith in Empire and rendered this nationalism timid. Richard White identifies that at this point, while there was a ‘break with Britain’, this did not necessarily lead to a ‘leap towards a confident national

\(^ {116}\) Norma Buckley, school not noted; Denise Carey, school not noted; Rosemary Randall, Fort Street Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.

\(^ {117}\) Vivienne Inder, school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
These tentative steps towards nationalism were mirrored in the classroom. Teaching Australian history was recalibrated, and there was a renewed focus inwards, as well as on new alliances outside the British Empire. Andrew Spaull argues that the Second World War ‘spelt the final blow to the hegemony of British history’ in Australian education.

Certainly examples of nationalism are expressed among the responses, like Graeme who rejoiced in a ‘feeling of pride at being an Australian’ on Anzac Day. But Graeme’s patriotism was not shared by all. Possibly these essays were written before the ‘final blow’ can be discerned in students’ thinking. Indeed, some students bristled at any attempt to undermine Australia’s allegiance to Britain. One particularly dutiful schoolgirl wrote:

The Empire for which our heroes fought so gallantly has not been hopelessly weakened. It has, just like a beautiful or valuable plant, been subjected to a pruning season from which it will emerge with far more beauty, power and … a great increased prestige.

While the ‘pruning season’ might have diminished some Australians’ imperial faith, mostly these children stood firm in their loyalty and they continued to tie Anzac to its roots in Empire.

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121 Judith Campbell, *For Street Girls’ High School*; Graeme Goodsir, school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
Children felt an obligation to remember the fallen, those who returned, the bereaved, and Empire and nation; still they owed more to Anzac. The Anzacs had ‘set a standard’.\textsuperscript{123} This ‘standard’ was at the core of many essays and students celebrated qualities they associated with Anzac, like selflessness, service, courage, comradeship, sacrifice, and loyalty. It was possible to humanise these characteristics by referring to the most celebrated Anzac personality, John Simpson. This is not surprising, as Peter Cochrane identifies, Simpson has long been a figure ‘etched indelibly into the minds of Australia’s school children’.\textsuperscript{124} It was not just the man and his donkey who were revered though. There was something inherently venerable about all Anzacs. Nancy eulogised that ‘in the “book of death” [their] names will be written as kings’.\textsuperscript{125} In a model of Anzac virtue, children assumed a ‘solemn vow to live up to their ideals’. But with sacred Simpson and Anzacs ‘high among the immortal’, the ‘standard’ was set impossibly high.\textsuperscript{126}

Some children felt this obligation to Anzac was overwhelming, like Judyth, who wrote of the ‘utter unworthiness [that] flooded [her]’ on Anzac Day.\textsuperscript{127} A similar reaction is explored in \textit{Johnno}, the novel quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Dante, Malouf’s narrator, describes his impression of the Anzacs in opposition to his generation’s ‘unworthiness’:

\begin{quote}
They were noble, dedicated, remote, and too good for the rest of us in our prickly flannels, bored with the rhetoric that made this other, earlier generation sound oddly as if they had never stood where we now stood, had never faked a geometry exercise or cribbed a Latin
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{125} Nancy Smith, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{127} Judyth Shaw, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
unseen, scribbled dirty words on lavatory walls, had evil thoughts, existed in the flesh that so palpably contained us.\textsuperscript{128}

Judyth and Dante indicate the Anzac tradition could be daunting, even oppressive. These children were encouraged to live up to the Anzac ‘standard’, yet in immortality, these men were romanticised. Idealised figures, or even ‘martyrs’, gave children the sense that the Anzacs were, as Dante observes, ‘too good for the rest of us’.\textsuperscript{129} Admiring Anzac to the point where they appear ‘too good’ is problematic. This thinking leads to a blurring between history and values, and often results in an unwillingness or a timidity to question aspects of this story. This trend has continued to affect Anzac histories and the concern that young people might be nervous to interrogate the past will be explored further in Chapter Five.

Even though striving to achieve the values espoused by the Anzac tradition was challenging, it was still not the most difficult obligation that children shouldered. Like in the aftermath of the First World War, in the years after the Second World War, schools were considered crucial sites where peace could be nurtured. In classrooms around Australia, boys and girls pursued that very goal. But this was more than a goal, it was also, as Rosemary described, an ‘inevitable duty’ to the memory of the Anzacs.\textsuperscript{130} Practically speaking, students advised various strategies. Shirley proposed aid ‘to feed, clothe and educate … peoples, not worrying whether they be black, brown, red or yellow’.

Rosemary recommended ‘promot[ing] [peace] among peoples not knowing what co-operation means in the modern world’.\textsuperscript{132} The details are vague and

\textsuperscript{128} Malouf, \textit{Johnno}, p.157.
\textsuperscript{129} Rose Ann Fuller, school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{130} Rosemary Randall, Fort Street Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{131} Shirley Benson, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{132} Rosemary Randall, Fort Street Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
their advice is layered with racist overtones, still, Shirley and Rosemary illustrate Spaull’s claim that following the Second World War, there was ‘a greater realisation that students needed to understand their own complex twentieth-century world’.133

In the end though would Shirley’s or Rosemary’s advice make any difference in this ‘turbulent world’, or more importantly in ‘this new atomic world’?134 Children were not convinced that the sacrifices of the First and Second World Wars would mean peace for their generation. Many believed the future appeared bleak with ‘the clouds of war … on the horizon’.135 Written in the ‘alyptic threat of World War III’, the essays evoke the anxiety of the Cold War.136 Nervously, one student wrote: ‘Communism advances almost to our shores, China, India, the Islands of the Pacific – our nearest neighbours are utilising the terrors of the advancing Red.’137 If such ‘terrors’ threatened, had enough been done to keep the promise of peace? Rose Ann did not think so:

How wasted the sacrifice of the men who died on Gallipoli if they knew of the controversy of our present world … Often we have been told they died for Liberty, well, we should be worthy of their standard and keep peace. How let down they would feel if they were alive today … But how ungrateful Humanity – we build up Wars and

134 Vivienne Inder, school not noted; Shirley Campbell, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
137 Student and school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
expect them to do the fighting, go into battle without question and save us from our own selfishness …\textsuperscript{138}

Rose Ann’s scathing reproach could be read as a protest. She was not mindlessly enchanted with a mythology, she was frustrated by the waste of war.

None of the essays suggest children shared a uniform or straightforward reflex towards Anzac. The diversity of their perspectives is a result of their individual historical thinking. Rarely did students acknowledge schoolbooks as informing their understanding of Anzac. In fact, Vivienne dismissed these materials as ‘coldly printed history books’.\textsuperscript{139} It is as though Anzac had such a visceral power it could not be contained by such mundane limitations. This is not to say classroom activities did not influence Vivienne’s, or others, readings of Anzac, but it is a reminder to look at the other factors shaping children’s historical consciousness. For instance, fifteen-year-old Graeme recalled his ‘Uncle, who was an Anzac himself’ as a narrator ‘relating his story of the first Anzac Day’. ‘I remembered the words of my uncle as he sat in our lounge in 1946 and told us of his personal experiences at Gallipoli,’ Graeme wrote. He also stressed the authenticity of this account too, that his uncle ‘told me of the real experiences and fame that the Anzacs encountered’.\textsuperscript{140} Other children described how their understandings of Anzac were affected by the remembrance they witnessed. Patricia, whose observation of Anzac Day’s ‘grim faced crowd’ was quoted previously, admitted that her perception was transformed after she attended the march.\textsuperscript{141} Shirley was most moved at school, although it was not as a result of the School Paper, it was at ‘the annual ceremony held in the quadrangle’. For

\textsuperscript{138} Rose Ann Fuller, school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{139} Vivienne Inder, school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{140} Graeme Goodsin, school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
\textsuperscript{141} Patricia Conder, Fort Street Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
Judith, it was a ‘beautiful memorial’ that prompted her to ask new questions about this tradition.¹⁴²

Whatever their inspiration, these compositions illustrate some of the ways Anzac was interpreted in this post-war period. To an extent, young Australians continued to commemorate Anzac in somewhat traditional ways. They celebrated its associated values, rejoiced in Empire, and on occasion professed nationalism. But children’s readings were more insightful than mere platitudes, they recognised the costs of war and they also feared that history might, once again, repeat itself. Regardless of the approach to their essay, all these children assumed an obligation to Anzac and in that way, they also asserted their place in this tradition.

**Conclusion**

In 1939 Australian children watched the world, once again, descend into the ruin of war. For some, the war provided a thrilling adventure and unrestricted freedoms, whereas others faced more trying conditions. When the fighting ended, children were again forced to carry its painful costs as families confronted the difficulties of coming home. This chapter reiterates the claim previously made that children witness and live with the impacts of war in their families and their communities for a long time.

For the children in this chapter, Anzac was being reshaped. Its meaning had become to represent the horror and sacrifice of the First and Second World Wars, and broadened further still as Australia committed troops to the Korean War and lived with the threats of the Cold War. Many children assumed the task of remembrance, but a higher responsibility was placed on their young

shoulders in the expectation they play a part towards peace. In the next chapter, Australia’s school children grow frustrated as older generations appear less committed to that cause.
Chapter Three
Lest we forget … Best we forget …?: 1964 – 1985

Reporting on Anzac Day 1977, The Age described Melbourne’s march as ‘weary’. ‘Every time the music stopped you could hear their joints creak,’ and the procession of aging men seemed unrecognisable from the Anzac Legend. ‘Their faces were red. Their hair, if any, was white. They were stooped and stiff … they looked like tired old men,’ and it seemed Anzac Day had become ‘only about growing old’.¹

That year, the scattered crowd standing along St Kilda Road was the smallest the city had seen for decades, with many more marchers than those watching. Ever since the end of the Second World War attendance at Anzac Day services and events had declined. The character of commemoration was changing too and Anzac’s inclusion of men from Korea, Malaya, and Vietnam saw ‘more beards, longer hair, few hats, more men out of step and not worrying about it’.²

Young Australians might not have been attending Anzac Day ceremonies in large numbers, but they were congregating elsewhere. Anti-war sentiments culminated with a series of mass demonstrations around the country in 1970 and 1971. The protests drew diverse assemblies, mirroring the broad public opposition to the Vietnam War. David Marin, a participant at the first Moratorium in Melbourne, described some of the marchers in the kaleidoscopic crowd: a ‘veteran of the last Great War’, ‘Four high school girls’, a ‘stamp dealer’, a ‘young architect’, a ‘retired schoolmistress’, and ‘two Anglican nuns’.

¹ The Age, 26 April 1977.
'These must be the pack-raping bikies Billy Sneddon was talking about,' Martin quipped.³

Australian society was divided by the Vietnam War.⁴ Robin Gerster describes ‘a traumatic time for the men who fought in it and for the nation which committed them to the fight’.⁵ Nonetheless, against the backdrop of this ‘traumatic time’, Australia’s youth was defined as a ‘confident generation’. They did not grow up with the privations of the Depression or endure the stresses of living through the First or Second World Wars. Instead, young Australians enjoyed ‘previously unimaginable material prosperity … [and] more and more education’.⁶ They were also significant in number. A generational swing occurred as the children of the baby boom grew up, and by 1966 forty per cent of the population was aged under twenty-one years.⁷

In this brave new era of social and political change, young people initiated new readings of Anzac. This generation transformed the approach to commemoration and reconsidered the values of Anzac. In this chapter, we will ‘hear’ the dissenting voices of children as they contest its histories and traditions.

Although Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam War was on a much smaller scale than other conflicts, its aftershocks still disturbed homes and scarred

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⁷ Fabian and Loh, Children in Australia, p.188.
families. As seen elsewhere in this thesis, for many children, family was the prism through which they understood Anzac.

**Vietnam Scars**

Australia’s commitment to the Vietnam War was long and costly. Over eleven years, more than sixty-thousand Australians served, 521 were killed, and thousands more were wounded. There was also a psychological toll. Siobhan McHugh estimates that fifteen thousand servicemen returned to Australia suffering post-traumatic stress disorder.\(^8\) Even so, as with the First and Second World Wars, the protracted mental health issues associated with Vietnam War may have been underestimated. Unlike other wars, Vietnam has attracted closer analysis of the health and social impacts on its servicemen. Simon Wessely and Edgar Jones identify the Vietnam War as a watershed in thinking about conflict and trauma.\(^9\) Numerous studies have examined the long-term health of Vietnam veterans and, in both the clinical research and social and cultural history, the effect this war has had on families is forcefully acknowledged.\(^10\)

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\(^9\) Simon Wessely and Edgar Jones, ‘Psychiatry and the “lessons of Vietnam”: What were they, and are they still relevant?’, *War and Society*, vol.22, no.1 (May 2004), pp.89-103.

Servicemen in Vietnam were often exposed to dangerous chemicals and veterans’ families have long been concerned about the generational transmission of illness that they believe resulted. One such veteran is Alan Krikki. He struggled with his health when he returned to Australia, but he was more troubled by the sickness he saw in his children. His daughter Elizabeth was born with dislocated hips and spinal kyphosis, ‘basically that’s the hunchback type,’ Alan clarified. She developed asthma and required speech therapy and ‘the minute she turned sixteen they put her on an invalid pension’. Alan’s other children were born with health problems too and so were his grandchildren. ‘The kids have had a bad trot,’ Alan regretted.¹¹

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the veracity of the claims regarding Vietnam’s chemical warfare and the links drawn with birth abnormalities and generational illnesses.¹² Regardless of whether there is an association between the Vietnam War’s chemicals and veterans’ and their families’ ongoing physical health issues, this anxiety remains a burden for many and has become a part of the Vietnam War narrative.¹³

Beyond the physical health implications, there are alarming trends for Vietnam veterans’ children and mental illness. Children of Vietnam veterans are three

¹³ John Shoebridge notes references to Agent Orange in his interviewees’ testimony, in “We, the family exist”: Women’s narratives about their experiences as wives and daughters of Australian and South Vietnamese veterans’ (Master of Arts, University of Wollongong, 2010), pp.43-45. There is also extensive discussion of the controversy of chemicals and the political fallout of the legacy of Agent Orange in Ambrose Crowe, ‘War and conflict: The Australian Vietnam Veterans Association’ (PhD thesis, Monash University, 2003).
times more likely to suicide than the general population. Arguably, this is because the children of Vietnam veterans grew up amid the battles beyond the war. Living with physically or emotionally damaged men placed an enormous strain on households and many children endured abuse, alcoholism, and impossible relationships related to their father’s war service. Clinical research acknowledges these stresses. Ann Davidson and David Mellor’s study notes the higher frequency of ‘characteristics of family dysfunction’ within Vietnam veteran families. Jan Westerink and Leah Giarrantano’s project echoes this point, concluding that these children ‘lived in families with significantly higher levels of conflict’.

In 2005 the Vietnam Veterans’ Counselling Service (VVSC) published a collection of anonymous contributions of veterans’ children’s poetry, prose, and art. The book’s objective was to illustrate the vast, and often unsettling, experiences of the children of Vietnam veterans’ children. By initiating this conversation, the VVCS hoped to assist those with mental health problems, relationship struggles, and drug and alcohol addiction. The creative pieces explore complex memories and emotions. Often they do not provide contextual detail, so readers face ambiguities and silences in the narratives. Despite the challenges of the material as historical evidence, the collection is revealing and includes deeply personal testimonies of childhood. Through these responses, it is possible to access private mediations of trauma and grief. These reflect a more recent interest in individual and family stories as opposed to national and public statements of loss.

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An impression of anger – at many things and many people – is recurrent throughout … And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That. This anger is often ‘learned’ from damaged men. As one writer lamented, the ‘sins of the fathers do pass on to the children’.\textsuperscript{17} These ‘sins’ are an example of Marianne Hirsch’s theory of postmemory, which was discussed in Chapter One. Hirsch argues that it is because children’s encounters with their parents’ memories of cultural or collective trauma are ‘so powerful, so monumental’ that they can ‘constitute memories in their own right’.\textsuperscript{18} One writer perfectly captured this, describing how memories like these might be transmitted. She had taken on their father’s trauma:

I go to all the Anzac marches  
Standing straight, tall and proud,  
And as I watch my Dad go by  
To everyone else I’m just one of the crowd.  
But in my heart, I know I am different.  
I know the experiences I have are not my own.  
They have been influenced by those around me  
Even some from my Dad are on loan.\textsuperscript{19}

Hirsch’s definition of postmemory fits with many of the authors’ negotiations of their father’s past. Despite the implied intimacy of ‘postmemory’ or memories ‘on loan’, many children articulated a profound disconnect with their

\textsuperscript{17} ‘Why is everyone angry?’, in Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service, … And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That: Reflections by Sons and Daughters of Vietnam Veterans (Canberra: Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service, 2014), p.108.


\textsuperscript{19} ‘Dad Poem’, in … And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That, p.62.
father. In the poem *Hard to Feel*, the writer listed the reasons they felt estranged from their father:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Poem Lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drinking</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he sits there drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Movies</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he makes me watch his war movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun Pointing</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he points his gun at me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Grenades</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he gets his old war grenades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chest Locking</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he locks me in a chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beating</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he hits me so hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crying</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he cries so uncontrollably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Love</td>
<td>It is hard to feel anything but hate for him when he never says he loves me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This poem suggests an almost insurmountable divide between father and child. The image of angry, drunken men is commonplace throughout the collection. One account outlined a damaging routine:

He would be a happy drunk at first, telling funny stories about his day as he made a big cup of coffee for himself. This cheery behaviour did not last though and quickly ‘his memories would turn

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20 ‘Hard to feel’, in ... *And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That*, p.64.
to earlier years and then inevitably he would become very dark as his stories led him back to the War.

Suddenly their father would become aggressive, ‘then slump into tears, back and forth from one extreme to the other’. Such children confronted the terrible truths of war:

As a child I heard stories from the war, stories that should have been told to a professional. I heard how his best friend got his head blown off, how he killed men with his bare hands, how Vietnamese were so evil. I saw my father melt down, time after time after time.21

And time after time, alcohol was a part of the abuse. This same contributor acknowledged their father must have known he was hurting his family, but he could not restrain that broken part of himself. ‘It was like living with a Jekyll and Hyde personality,’ another contributor wrote, ‘How I hated the soldier, cold, arrogant, cruel, heartless.’22

Living with a man’s dual personality meant children felt they did not really know their father. To grapple with the complex nature of their relationship, several authors drafted ‘letters’ to their fathers:

You get angry at the drop of a hat – an explosive anger, which flares up and dies away quickly but leaves us frustrated and a bit hurt. I know that when I was a kid, I used to wake in the middle of the night sometimes when you were creeping around without sleep. I know

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22 Ibid.
that sometimes you were distracted, like there was a movie playing
in your head.\textsuperscript{23}

These children were acutely aware of their family’s dysfunctional nature. Several contributors wrote of a kind of ‘loss’, and mourned a father they felt they had never really. One contributor wondered what their father might have otherwise been like if:

that tragic event thirty years ago not robbed him of so much. I wonder if he would be like normal Dads, like my friend’s [sic] Dads. I wonder if we would go on holidays or whether he would get up early in the morning and go to work. I wonder if he would eat dinner at the kitchen table and laugh with his family instead of hiding silently in the lounge room in the dark.

Sitting on the family’s mantelpiece an ‘Under Sixteen best and fairest award’ from 1963 served as a memento of that man’s former life. But this trophy belonged to a stranger:

He must have been some footballer, yet I never kicked the footy with him as a kid, or played cricket with him in the backyard … sometimes a conversation is asking too much. It seems like everything he once was, is gone, robbed from him in eighteen months of jungle warfare. It’s like Vietnam somehow transformed this bubbly, exuberant teenager eager to grab life by the scruff of the neck and shake the hell out of it, into a scared, confused alcohol-ridden man.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{23} ‘A letter to the man my dad once was’, in \textit{... And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That}, p.38.
\textsuperscript{24} ‘Hole watch’, in \textit{... And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That}, p.77.
What ‘is gone’ speaks directly to Jennifer Roberts’ definition of extended bereavement. As noted in Chapter One, in addition to those killed, Roberts reckons in the cost of war there is ‘the loss of what existed before, the essence of self, a potential unfulfilled’.  

Without conflating different wars and different times, it is striking how the accounts in this collection echo details of post-war family life described in Chapters One and Two. These instances of anger, addiction, estranged relationships, of families living on edge might well be found in the First World War repatriation records or the memories of the Second World War’s aftermath. For every generation, and every veteran’s family, the cost of war is different. Yet some of its emotional consequences seem remarkably similar and they affirm Stephen Garton’s description of repatriation as ‘something more general, shared, and universal’.

... And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That is produced by a counselling service, so it is not surprising that there are so many stories of pain and anguish. Notwithstanding these descriptions of troubled family-life, this thesis does not endorse a simplistic caricature of damaged Vietnam servicemen. George Swiers argues that this depiction is ‘so commonplace that one pictures the children of Vietnam veterans shivering beneath their blankets and wondering if Daddy will come in with a goodnight kiss or a Black and Decker chainsaw’. This trope only limits understandings of the impacts of war on veterans and their families. John Shoebridge adds that families of Vietnam

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veterans have been largely represented as passive victims, a rendering that is without complexity and ultimately disenfranchising. Despite significant evidence of the victimisation of the families of Vietnam veterans, Shoebridge rightly criticises the simplification of the narrative and his research demonstrates that not all children believe the Vietnam War damaged their childhood or ruined their relationship with their father.28

... *And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That* is not all bad either. Veterans’ children often recognised positive traits they could attribute to their fathers’ war. Looking back on their childhoods, some authors saw a resilience and strength in themselves and their families. As one contributor put it: ‘I am proud that my father fought in Vietnam, it is a part of who I am today.’29

For many families, the aftermath of the Vietnam War is too painfully close to recount in any detail. Here again, the historian must be mindful of the chosen silence of the witness.30 Hopefully, in time, the Vietnam veterans’ repatriation records will yield rich detail about the legacy of this war. As Chapter Two observed, such files are ‘not [considered] suitable for general public release’ and they are accessible only to the subject of the file or their next-of-kin under the Freedom of Information Act.31 In the meantime, collections like *... And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That* and the growing catalogue of literature exploring the social histories of coming home from Vietnam demonstrate, once again, that wars go far beyond the battlefield.

28 Specifically, Shoebridge’s work on the children of veterans focussed on daughters, ‘‘We, the family exist’’.
29 ‘Counsel’, in *... And the Pine Trees Seemed Greener After That*, p.33.
30 The wife of a Vietnam veteran articulated this obligation of discretion, ‘He was very concerned about pride and privacy and I was very concerned about loyalty’, in Giblett, *Homecomings*, p.35.
31 National Archives of Australia, ‘Veterans’ Case Files’.

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School Children and the Vietnam War

Just as with the First and Second World Wars, the Vietnam War could not be kept outside the school gates. At times, schools attempted to rouse support for departing servicemen. Backing the troops did not necessarily raise the uncomfortable politics of this conflict. The covers of *Orbit* and *Meteor*, two Victorian school papers, demonstrate how the Department of Education evoked history to situate the Vietnam War within a heroic chronology. The department’s portrayal was somewhat superficial though because, despite the military imagery adorning the front pages, neither of these editions actually goes on to discuss the war.

Figure 23: The *Orbit* cover demonstrates the evolution of the Anzac Legend from the First World War through to the Vietnam War. Victorian Department of Education, *Orbit*, April 1969.


Regardless of the silence in these publications, some teachers believed that the subject warranted class discussion. In the RSL papers at the National Library of
Australia, a small folder contains letters addressed to ‘the troops in Vietnam’ from Mrs McCulloch’s grade five class at Gowrie Park Primary School in Tasmania. Mrs McCulloch’s pupils stressed that they knew about the war. Tony wrote to his unknown soldier pen pal: ‘I listen to the news and read what is going on in Vietnam’. Mary also assured her correspondent she knew ‘whats [sic] going on in Vietnam we here [sic] it on television we also read it in the papers’. The war must have seemed even more intimate for their classmate Mark, who wrote: ‘Dear Soldier my brother is fighting in Vietnam his name is Wayne.’ Perhaps Mark was curious about his brother’s experience. ‘How do you feel [sic] when you are fighting,’ his letter inquired.32 Tony’s, Mary’s, and Mark’s letters convey how children glean knowledge from all around them. It is possible Mrs McCulloch taught her students some detail about the war as part of this activity, but evidently the media and family were most influential on these children’s understandings of Vietnam. Even if Mrs McCulloch had doubts before her lesson, reading her students’ letters, she must have realised that they knew about this war.

Mrs McCulloch’s writing activity might have had an influence on her students, but other classroom lessons of the Vietnam War would prove far more challenging. Just as children during the First and Second World Wars had done, some students watched their teachers march off to the front.33 During the Vietnam War, children also watched their teachers resist military service.

William White, a teacher at Denistone East Primary School, defied his draft

33 Mark Aarons details such an experience in ‘Scenes from my Cold War’, in Ann Curthoys and Joy Damousi (eds.), What Did you Do in the Cold War, Daddy: Personal Stories from a Troubled Time (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2014), pp.190-191. Dick Manuell describes his distress as a boy when his music teacher, and a ‘loved’ teacher, Mr Flynn did not turn up to class because he had enlisted in the Second World War, in Scates and Frances interview with Dick Manuell. For teachers’ service in the First World War, see Triolo, Our Schools and the War, pp.105-144.
notice as a contentious objector. White was one of the first, and arguably one of the most prominent, individual protests against conscription. His refusal to comply led to his dismissal from the Department of Education and he was imprisoned. On the one hand, some believed that White’s position as a teacher made his stance all the more reprehensible. One letter-writer to the Canberra Times expressed this reasoning succinctly: ‘How many people really want a man who flouts the laws of his country, to teach their children?’

On the other hand, others rallied to White’s support within the education community. Schools around the country called meetings to protest his conviction and pupils from Denistone East collected signatures to petition the Prime Minister.

William White was not alone. Several others teachers followed his example. Ken McClelland, a young teacher at Hawkesdale High School in the Western District of Victoria, also defied the draft, arguing he made far greater contribution to society as a teacher, than as a soldier. At the beginning of the 1972 school year, Commonwealth officers ‘arrested [McClelland] inside the school, in front of his students and he was led away to Pentridge to the accompaniment of one of the finest uproars that old Hawkesdale high school has ever seen’. The students of this ‘dastardly pedagogue’ were horrified as they watched their teacher marched off and detained for his opposition to national service and war. Described as ‘a heartwarming manifestation of teacher-student solidarity’, the pupils of Hawkesdale jeered the police and called out their support for McClelland. Some of the most outraged students

35 A school meeting at Fort Street Boys’ High School was reported in The Canberra Times, 28 July 1966. For further detail on the William White case, see Ann-Mari Jordens, Conscientious Objection and the Vietnam War (Canberra: Peace Research Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1989), pp.23-36.
36 McClelland’s arrest on 7 February 1972 followed an attempt the previous Friday, but he was smuggled out of the school to evade arrest. He came to school the following Monday, defiant but prepared that the authorities would return. Sunday Review, February 12 – February 18 1972, press clipping in PR91/125, ‘McClelland, Ken’, folder 7, AWM (hereafter McClelland Papers).
even let down the tyres of the police vehicles. But all to no avail. McClelland was tried and sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment.

Hawkesdale’s fourth form wrote letters to the press in solidarity with their teacher. They praised him for ‘standing up for his rights’ and they protested the government’s disregard of ‘basic moral principles’. McClelland’s devoted students also wrote to him in gaol. Their letters were intended to keep their teacher in good spirits, to make sure he did not feel ‘too lonely’. As one writer reminded him: ‘We all think of you.’ Many correspondents sought to distract McClelland with ‘gossip’ about the local football, or the miniature of school life,

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38 *Sunday Review*, February 12 – February 18 1972 and *Troll*, no.6, 2 March 1972, press clippings in McClelland Papers, folder 7; *Lot’s Wife*, vol.xii, no.6, April 17 1972.
40 Letter from Julie to Ken McClelland, 13 September 1972 and letter from Judy Grace to Ken McClelland, 27 July 1972, in McClelland Papers, folder 3.
and they assured him, ‘Everything in Hawkesdale is still the same.’ These young people admired their teacher and they opposed the scheme, and the war, that had sent him to gaol. But which inspired their support for McClelland? Is it a case of one or the other? Regardless of what drove their protests, watching their teachers’ arrests and imprisonments, the students of Hawkesdale and Denistone East learned compelling lessons about the fallout of war.

William White and Ken McClelland were politically-minded, defiant, and characteristic of the generational shift and ‘increasing politicization’ of teachers in this era. As a profession, teaching had long been reluctant to strike or ‘cause trouble’. But by the 1960s teachers had strengthened as a collective and they demanded that governments address their complaints regarding salaries and working conditions. Staff demographics were also changing. Teachers were increasingly younger. Figures from 1963 show the average teacher was aged between twenty-one and thirty years. Based on these statistics, it was noted that teaching was ‘essentially a young profession’. Besides its youth, teaching was also attracting more and more women. In 1966, fifty-six per cent of teachers were women, and by 1968, there were more than fifty per cent more women than men enrolled in teaching courses and teaching colleges. A new cohort of teachers, conscious of the political and social movements of the era, was

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41 Letter from Pam to Ken McClelland, undated, in McClelland Papers, folder 3; Letter from Julie to Ken McClelland, 23 May 1972, in McClelland Papers, folder 2.
shaping classrooms. In fact, Robin Gerster and Jan Bassett argue this generation of ‘radicalised teachers’ fostered a culture of rebellion among their students.\textsuperscript{45}

Despite individual teachers’ intentions to promote critical thinking, this was not an authorised approach. Mr Baldwin, the president of the Queensland Teachers’ Union, reproached school authorities’ attempts to restrict the topic of war. ‘They will let you put guns into the hands of school cadets,’ he lamented, ‘but you can’t give them anything which will tell them whether or not they should use these guns.’\textsuperscript{46} And to secondary school students, those guns seemed awfully close. For the National Service Scheme, once aged twenty men had to register, yet the voting age in Australia was twenty-one years until 1973. School students were old enough to be nervous about the looming draft and old enough to grasp the horror and politics of Vietnam. Although school students were too young to vote, they were not too young to protest.

**Pupil Power**

The Vietnam War is often seen as the starting point urging a generation’s turn away from Anzac. And there is good reason for thinking this. Even before Australia dispatched a team of thirty military advisors to South Vietnam in 1962, there was an increasing apathy towards Anzac. There was an intensifying hostility as well. Young people in particular demonstrated their willingness to challenge longstanding commemorative rituals and to openly defy the celebration of past wars.

The most well-known example of such a critique is Alan Seymour’s *The One Day of the Year*. This was published in 1958, first performed professionally in 1961, and shortly after became a studied text in school curricula. The play is a


\textsuperscript{46} *Canberra Times*, 24 October 1968.
searching examination of how Anzac has changed over generations. Other challenges to Anzac appeared in university student papers, such as *Honi Soit* and *Farago*, which confronted the culture of Anzac. More widely seen though was the ABC’s broadcast of a controversial *Four Corners* report into the RSL that alluded to the organisation’s taste for alcohol and scrutinised their role in politics. More and more, Australians felt that Anzac’s meaning, and its constituency, were outdated, irrelevant, or even offensive.

In Australia, just as around the world, university students were the face of the anti-war movement. They loom large in its histories too. The scholarship of Australia’s Vietnam protests has been described as ‘rudimentary’ and the nuances of gender, race, class, geography, and age are frequently overlooked in favour of concentrating on white, middle-class men at selected universities. This emphasis does not allow much opportunity to explore the other groups who fought against conscription and Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam War. One of these other groups was school students. By the end of the 1960s, Bob Bessant observes, secondary school students were ‘contributing to the style and force of the anti-war movement’.

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50 Ann Mari Jordens details the contributions of numerous protest groups, including Save Our Sons, trade unions, churches, and women’s groups, who were actively involved in the anti-war movement, in ‘Conscription and Dissent: The Genesis of Anti-War Protest’, in Greg Penberton (ed.), *Vietnam Remembered* (Sydney: Weldon, 1990), pp.60-81.

51 Bessant, *Politics of Schooling*, p.35.
Investigating young Australians’ protests against the war and their disillusionment with Anzac, a kind of radical caricature springs instantly to mind. Donald Horne observes the public image of the university protesters ‘was set by the loudest and most violent-mouthed students’. The same could be said of the secondary school student protestors. Robin Gerster and Jan Bassett describe a similar impasse in their research on Australia in the 1960s. They found the voices of protesters were more evident than those who did not participate in the era-defining movements. The authors wryly note that ‘few people want to read a sixties memoir entitled “I was Not an Anti-War Demonstrator”’.

It is impossible to arrive at an accurate figure of secondary school students’ participation in the anti-war movement. The headmaster at Melbourne Grammar School, one of Victoria’s oldest and most prestigious schools, accepted that the revolutionary spirit had affected a minority of his pupils, but that ‘about 97% of our boys are unmoved by and uninterested’. Given the privilege associated with this school, Melbourne Grammar may not offer a representative cohort. In any case, the headmaster said he would have struggled to ‘name 20 boys’ whose behaviour had been swayed by a dissident spirit. But was he the best judge of the extent of students’ activism? The secondary school student movement was underground by nature and to evade the ire of their headmasters or parents, many members carried out their protests with discretion. There was also a wide spectrum of student involvement, from the vaguely intrigued through to the devoted young socialist.

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53 Gerster and Bassett, *Seizures of Youth*, p.44.
In classrooms around Australia, student activists sat alongside peers who were completely apathetic to the war and uninterested in Anzac. There were also those young people who embraced more conservative ideals and did not approve of anti-war activism. In the lead up to the first Vietnam Moratorium, a troop of university students entered Manly Boys’ High School to distribute leaflets about the demonstration. The school’s headmaster asked them to leave, but when a few lingered a ‘band of 30 prefects’ stood ready to assist with their eviction. Jeff, one of these prefects, proudly claimed: ‘We got them by the arms and pushed them out the gate.’ Like Jeff, Jo-Ann was critical of her generation’s willingness to dissent. In her response to an Australian War Memorial essay competition, twelve-year-old Jo-Ann chastised fellow young Australians. ‘[I]t is the new generation and their many demonstrations that help create the wars,’ she wrote. Jo-Ann suggested, ‘These young people would … do well to reflect on the savage brutality of war’. Though her argument is somewhat difficult to follow, she identified protesting youths as a cause of social disharmony and a problem for the Memorial, and she distanced herself from any anti-war stance by her generation.

Jeff and Jo-Ann’s disapproval was unequivocal, but the enthusiasm of their dissenting peers was far louder. Many secondary school students organised into protest groups which campaigned against the Vietnam War and conscription. Even though there were shortcomings in their movement, the commitment and energy of these young people are impressive. Not even a cold Canberra night could deter the Secondary Students for International Tolerance and Equality Organisation from their protest. Seventeen-year-old Graham

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56 Canberra Times, 22 September 1977.
57 Other groups that attracted secondary school student membership include Students in Dissent, High School Students Against the War in Vietnam, and Secondary School Students for Democracy.
Griffiths, a spokesman for the organisation, told the press: ‘Our peace ride is quite simple, we want to show the rest of the world that even though we are students we know what the war in Vietnam is about.’\(^{58}\) The determined party of close to one hundred teenagers travelled from Sydney, taking their ‘peace ride’ via regional towns including Goulbourn and Wollongong. In the nation’s capital, the group assembled on the lawns of the United States embassy, where they sang folk songs and engaged in polite debate with some of the twenty police officers charged with monitoring the protest. The police presence seemed excessive at such a peaceful picket, these teenagers were not likely to ‘start tearing up the paving-stones in Mugga Way or … [to] bring the Cultural Revolution to’ Canberra.\(^ {59}\) The contingent also carried with them a petition of around one thousand student signatures calling for the end of the war, which they presented to Dr Jim Cairns at Parliament House. According to one press report, the protest was entirely civil and the ‘paddy wagon went back empty to the police station’.\(^ {60}\)

\(^{58}\) Canberra Times, 14 May 1968.
\(^{59}\) Outlook, June 1968.
\(^{60}\) Canberra Times, 14 May 1968; Canberra Times, 9 May 1968.
Figure 27: The students’ polite protest at the United States’ embassy. 
*Canberra Times*, 14 May 1968.

Figure 28: The young and dedicated organisers of the Peace Ride, John Hughes, Tim Robins, and Ian Bruce. 
In spite of the peaceful nature of this protest, the Australia Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) resolved to investigate the group and others like it. Lee Rhiannon, now a federal senator for the Australian Greens, was horrified to discover that her ASIO file, some seven volumes in total, included surveillance of her role in the Peace Ride. Nearly forty years later, she voiced her frustration in the New South Wales Legislative Council: ‘It is sickening to think that ASIO was spying on this group of high school students.’

Rhiannon was a leader in school student activism and one of many schoolgirls committed to the anti-war movement. Similarly dedicated was Helen Voisey from Castle Hill High School who spoke at the Sydney Moratorium in 1970. In archival footage, we see that Helen is much shorter than the men who tower around her, and despite a few nervous faults in her voice, her address is stirring. ‘The high school administration didn’t like it when we took the moratorium into the schools. It bugs them to see the kids that they are training for their society turn around and question the values of that society,’ she calls to the crowd. Undeterred by her large audience, Helen continued:

Not only did they not like it, they tried to suppress it. They tried their hardest to stop us bringing just basic democratic rights, like discussion, like wearing a Moratorium badge, into the schools. As we are here in numbers, we want to stop this rotten war in Vietnam, and we are doing our best within our schools to talk about this, to show other kids what we think is the truth about Vietnam. Support us. We

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need your support in fighting against the administration that is trying to keep discussion and debate out of the schools.62

Publication has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

As noted earlier in this chapter, university students are the enduring image of Australia’s Vietnam protests. More specifically, this image is dominated by the movement’s male leaders.63 Verity Burgmann notes that the emphasis on male


university students is a result of them being the target of conscription.\textsuperscript{64} Further to this, because so much of the movement’s momentum occurred on campus, the focus on young men might be explained by ‘the male dominated nature of universities’. In the late 1960s, less than thirty per cent of students and only ten per cent of academics were women.\textsuperscript{65}

By contrast, secondary schools were far more balanced in terms of gender. In 1967, within the age bracket thirteen to eighteen years, just over fifty per cent of students were boys.\textsuperscript{66} In the (albeit limited) public representations of school students in the anti-war movement, there is a strong female presence. By considering secondary school student responses, and by highlighting schoolgirls’ bold voices, it is possible to extend gendered interpretations of the anti-war movement.

This search for balance goes beyond gender. Throughout the Vietnam War, university was still not an option for most young Australians. In 1967 there were 63,228 secondary school students aged seventeen or eighteen years. That same year there were 24,037 new enrolments in Australian universities. Clearly, even the majority of students who completed their secondary school education were not continuing to university. The school students who took up the opportunity for further study were drawn from a limited socioeconomic range.\textsuperscript{67} Without discarding the experiences of university students, drawing

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\textsuperscript{66} In 1967, boys made up fifty-three per cent of the school student age bracket 13 to 18 years, Commonwealth Statistician, \textit{Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia}, p.514.

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., p.514, p.534. The figure of new enrolments does not identify those who were enrolling straight from secondary school, so this figure should be even lower to allow for mature-aged entrants to university. Richard Teese observes the greater success of students from privileged, private, non-Catholic schools gaining places to the University of Melbourne, Monash
\end{flushleft}
attention to secondary school protestors broadens the historiography of the anti-war movement.

A Day of Shame

For many school students, their opposition to the Vietnam War was a part of broader confrontations with power. Challenges to authority were part of a general ecology of protest captured in the period by the concept of ‘deschooling’. In this aim, students published underground papers to share ideas and to rally their peers into a stronger collective. The focus of these publications is the Vietnam War and conscription, but they also feature discussions of student rights, such as calls to end corporal punishment, suspensions, and haircuts demanded by school administrations. The papers protested against social inequalities as well. ‘Ever wondered why some kids go to Haileybury, Wesley and Firbank but your parents have to send you here?’ Tabloid Underground asked its public school audience. ‘Ever wondered why some kids live in Toorak and some kids live in Footscray? Like to go to Uni?? If you do, we hope you’ve got rich parents,’ the editors continued, reminding students that tertiary education was a privilege and likely not an opportunity available to many of its readers.

University, and La Trobe University, relative to the numbers of total applications, in For the Common Weal: The Public High School in Victoria, 1910 – 2010 (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2014), pp.128-129.


69 Some of the titles of these papers include Yellow Subterranean at Fort Street Girls’ School; Super Rat at Caringbah High School; Bleah at Castle Hill High School; The Sydney Line at Sydney Girls’ and Sydney Boys’ High Schools; Out of Apathy at Strathfield and Cheltenham Girls’ High Schools; Comment at Vaucluse Boys’ High School; Circus at Chatswood High School; Opinion at Sir Joseph Banks Picnic Point and East Hills High School; On Her Majesty’s Service in Canberra. According to Labor’s Campbell Turnbull, there were underground student papers at Camberwell, University, Caulfield, Croydon, Moonee Ponds, Canterbury Girls’, Mordialloc, and Elwood High Schools, Trinity and Mount Scopus Memorial Colleges, as listed in Victoria, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 23 October 1968 (Campbell Turnbull, Member for East Brunswick), p.1189.

The papers celebrated school student protests around the world, advertised demonstrations, and they promised to disseminate information that was not published in the mainstream media. So why did students participate in the underground press? From Hornsby Girls’ High School students offered: ‘We object to the Vietnam war and we are trying to make our apathetic colleagues aware that there is a war going on’. Distributing these papers was risky though. It could lead to severe disciplinary measures, including suspension and even expulsion.

As students analysed the politics of Vietnam, they invariably reflected on Australia’s history of war. With the approach of Anzac Day, some students wondered what this commemoration really meant. An editorial in the University High School paper posed a series of questions: ‘[T]his week we have a holiday in celebration of our noble and glorious role in World War 1 …

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72 Arguably, the most high profile example of the student underground press controversy was the expulsion of Melbourne High School student Michael Eidelson. In response to what they saw as another example of their headmaster’s arbitrary administration, Eidelson’s classmates set off nitrocellulose bombs in the locker rooms and hydrogen sulphide bombs were released in the canteen over lunch time. There were other, more peaceful, protests too, including a petition signed by two hundred Melbourne High School students. Other schools’ students united in support of Eidelson as well with further petitions and even a demonstration in Melbourne’s City Square. This case went much further though and was even raised for discussion in federal parliament, but the most scrutiny came in Victoria’s state parliament when the Leader of the Opposition Clyde Holding took up the defence of Michael Eidelson. Given the outrage surrounding the story, Holding had ‘imagined that [the student papers] were bordering on sedition, that they were designed to shake the very foundations of our democratic society’. Laying a sample of the papers out for display, Holding asked his colleagues to read them and examine them. Holding conceded that the publications were ‘badly produced’, but really that made them all the more innocuous. ‘When one examines these documents, one can only ask oneself: What is all the fuss about?’ Holding mocked the anxiety the issue was causing, ‘A seventeen-year-old boy is loose at Melbourne High School and is distributing a roneoed pamphlet. The Minister feels threatened and in danger of subversion. What poppycock!’ Victoria, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 23 October 1968, pp.1177-1193 (Clyde Holding, Leader of the Opposition). See also, The Age, 19, 21, and 22 October 1968; Meyer Eidelson and St Kilda Historical Society, Students in Dissent: The Underground High School Movement (unpublished booklet, 2008). The issue of Dr Jim Cairns’ association with secondary school students was mentioned in Commonwealth Parliament, House of Representatives, Parliamentary Debates, 22 October 1968, pp.2153-2154.
we are all supposed to feel very proud of Australia and her “freedom loving” role in world “affairs.” The authors complained about the ‘compulsory assembly in which we sing emotional songs about the thousands of glorious deaths in the defeat of Gallipoli’. They believed that these services elicited a complaisance that encouraged students to think ‘how lovely it is to belong to such a good nation, such an unselfish and heroic nation’. But the students asked themselves (and their peers), ‘are we right in remaining so proud?’ The paper’s answer was a resounding no. Its editors examined the politics of the First World War to disentangle myth from history:

Was this war a war in which we fought for freedom? In our opinion the answer is “NO!” [sic] As far as we are concerned this war was a totally inhumane war of plunder and destruction with no humanitarian overtones whatsoever. It was a war between empires, a war in which the ordinary people were exploited in a clash between two dying empires.

Some students recognised parallels between the wars of 1915 and 1969. In particular, the ‘slogans about “freedom” “duty” etc’ were ‘familiar’. In the First World War these ‘slogans’ led ‘millions of young men [to die] for the illusion that they were fighting for a freer and better world,’ the article in Uni High Underground asserted. The ‘illusion’ intoned in Anzac commemorations did not fit with these students’ reading of the past and did not appease their outrage at the current war being waged.

As far as these students were concerned neither war nor Anzac were worth celebrating. ‘Lest we forget,’ or, perhaps, these students thought it was, ‘Best we forget …?’ They went on:

We too say “lest we forget” but we mean something quite different from the normal usage. The first world war was a tragedy for the ordinary people of the world, it was a heinous massacre brought about by the greed of a small minority of ruthless capitalists … We do not say “lest we forget” because we are grateful to those people who died in the first world war … we are NOT … we are simply SORRY.

The students were not angry at the soldiers, not the ones in their history books nor the ones in Vietnam. But they were furious with governments and what they believed were Anzac’s pattern of ‘lies and deception’.74

Students at Box Hill Technical School declared Anzac Day ‘a day of shame’. ‘On Anzac Day this year, when you sit listening to the boring service in the hall, telling you about the glorious heritage,’ the editors beseeched their fellow students to ask themselves, ‘Should I be proud of Anzac Day?’ They advised their readers to question Anzac sermons: ‘If you study the facts and not swallow the “Heritage” crap, you will realize the answer is “NO!”’75 Here, we see a direct contrast with children’s responses to Anzac from Chapter Two. Certainly ‘“Heritage” crap’ is at direct odds with the ‘priceless’, ‘glorious heritage’, ‘golden’ heritage celebrated in the Anzac Festival essays.76

Needless to say, headmasters were none too pleased about the distribution of underground papers. By the seventh edition of Cremorne Girls’ The Spark, the college had had enough. The administration managed to confiscate fifty copies (from the three hundred circulating) and suspended several students for issuing

74 Ibid., pp.1-2.
76 Nancy Smith, North Sydney Girls’ High School; Denise Carey, school not noted; student and school not noted, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
them.\textsuperscript{77} Students from various schools also reported being ‘questioned and threatened and material being confiscated’\textsuperscript{78} ‘The High Schools Principals’ Association justified their discipline: ‘We can’t have this biased, very Leftist party propaganda being disseminated in schools’. They doubted if the students were even responsible for the material. Shifting the culpability, the principals admitted:

We believe that the students in our schools have not produced this underground movement from their own volition. We can only think there are adults or organisations behind it …. [Students] are getting confused, and one wonders whether the aim of these papers is to convert or subvert.\textsuperscript{79}

\textit{Publication has been removed due to copyright restrictions.}

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\textit{Figure 30: The Age, 23 October 1968.}
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\textsuperscript{77} Student Underground, no.12 (December 1969), p.4. It was noted the suspensions were not effective given it was the sixth formers’ last day of school.  
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{79} The Age, 25 October 1968.
This cartoon appeared in *The Age* and it conveys the principals’ assumption that ‘outside bodies or adults … [were] manipulat[ing] school children like puppets’. This was a gross underestimation of the students and implied that young people were not capable of formulating their own critical assessments without the influence of organisations such as Monash University’s Labor Club. It is true that these clubs worked with many of the school students’ collectives. They offered centralised organisation and support. Most important of all, they facilitated the printing of dissident materials. Even so, this alliance was a conscious choice by students. As Helen Voisey’s example suggests, many young people had thought long and carefully about their protests.

Concerns about the students’ publications went much further than newspaper editorials or anxious discussions in school administrations. In the New South Wales Legislative Assembly Peter Coleman claimed that his constituents in Fuller reported a ‘revolutionary Student Underground operation’. Coleman criticised the content of the papers, which he said ranged from the ‘ridicule of schoolteachers and headmasters to condemnation of the war in Vietnam’. Others regarded it all an overreaction. Labor’s Jack Renshaw thought there was little cause for alarm and summed up the students’ antics as just ‘Cowboys and Indians’.

Coleman and his colleagues were worried but seemed unsure how to proceed. They wanted to ensure that their response was neither ‘too permissive’ nor ‘too heavy-handed’. Ultimately, it appears no official actions were taken to curb

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80 Ibid.
82 New South Wales, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 23 September 1969, p.1105 (Member for Fuller, Peter Coleman).
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid., (Member for Castlereagh, Jack Renshaw).
85 Ibid., p.1111 (Member for Fuller, Peter Coleman).
school students in their protests and this debate was primarily an exercise in public hand-wringing.

Measuring the radical spirit of school children is no easy matter. Although it is necessary to recognise the influence that the broader protest culture had on school students, it would be wrong to dismiss the autonomy of children’s voices or marginalise their participation in the anti-war movement. It must be acknowledged that school students did craft their protest publications, they turned out at demonstrations, and they were committed enough to their causes to risk serious disciplinary consequences. For historians of children, the school students’ papers are especially valuable, because while children in the past are difficult to ‘hear’, even more hidden are their dissenting voices. Reading Student Underground or Super Rat, it is evident that some young Australians were vehemently critical of contemporary politics and disenfranchised by Anzac traditions.

**A Blueprint for Anzac Day**

Young Australians’ declining lack of faith in the Anzac story was a serious cause of anxiety for the RSL. Since its foundation, this body has claimed custodianship of Anzac and thus felt largely responsible for its future. By 1975 the RSL was sufficiently troubled by the diminishing numbers of young people at Anzac Day to make an appeal for assistance. RSL National Secretary Bill Keys was confident that most of his colleagues agreed with him. If Anzac Day was to

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86 There have always been other groups and associations shaping the character of Anzac, but none have rivalled the depth of the RSL’s influence. It is necessary to clarify too that there is not one RSL. While there is a national headquarters (which is the focus of this discussion), their sub-branches have always reflected diversity in views, politics, and interests. Martin Crotty has written of the minimal ‘historical attention’ paid to the RSL and how it is limiting that most studies of the League focus on the organisation’s conservative politics, in ‘The Anzac citizen: Towards a history of the RSL’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol.53, no.2 (2007), p.184.
be ‘preserved’ it needed to change. Keys imagined that the youth of Australia might be the ‘best guide’ of how to reshape Anzac for the future.\textsuperscript{87}

The national headquarters of the RSL proposed an essay competition. The topic was predictable: ‘The future commemoration of Anzac Day as an Australian National Day.’ Entries were invited from across the country and initially open to those aged eighteen to twenty-four years.\textsuperscript{88} A generous prize was offered - a trip for one young man and one young woman to Gallipoli via Istanbul and Athens. The League wanted to encourage quality compositions, but more than that they wanted to find answers. ‘Putting it briefly,’ Keys wrote:

\begin{quote}
what we want is a blueprint for the next ten, twenty, thirty years, and indeed from then on … we would like to see young people tell us … how we could phase in a very greatly changed method of commemorating Anzac Day in such a way that we retained the old basis of support and gathered the new.\textsuperscript{89}
\end{quote}

Despite the impressive prize, there was little interest in the competition. Some states could not even attract enough entries to submit work from both a young man and a young woman. Keys conceded that ‘the subject is not attracting a large number of entries’.\textsuperscript{90} Certainly this silence is telling. Even the lure of

\textsuperscript{87} Letter from National Secretary of the RSL, A.G.W. Keys to Miss Wilson, 19 February 1975, Records of the Returned Services League of Australia, 1916-1997, MS 6609, box 1096, Anzac Essay, 1976-88, NLA (hereafter RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76). Keys was identified as ‘one of the key figures in the updating or “liberalisation” of the RSL’, in The Canberra Times, 16 March 1968.

\textsuperscript{88} The age restrictions were relaxed after a poor response to the competition, however, it does not seem as though this made an impact on the number of responses the RSL ultimately received.

\textsuperscript{89} Letter from National Secretary of the RSL A.G.W. Keys to Miss Wilson, 30 July 1975, RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76.

\textsuperscript{90} Letter from the A/G State Secretary of the RSL, Victoria to the National Secretary of the RSL, A.G.W Keys, 22 January 1976; Letter from the State Secretary of the RSL, New South Wales to the National Secretary of the RSL, A.G.W Keys, 10 November 1975; Letter from the State
overseas travel could not entice most young Australians to take an interest in Anzac.

It was a time of reflection for the League. But a willingness to listen to frank advice was one thing, acting on it another. The RSL knew that war was not fashionable and they were eager to cast a national narrative over Anzac’s military story. At the same time it clung to the Legend as part of an enduring Australian character. ‘The Anzac spirit was not born on the beaches of Gallipoli,’ Keys explained, but it:

  gained an identity and a name there, but this was the same spirit that founded the Australian nation that opened it up by exploration that developed it. It was the same spirit that drove men and women into remote parts of the continent to open up new frontiers to carve themselves a future.

By recasting the Anzac story with more fluid historical detail, its commemorations could become more about a ‘spirit of Australia, the achievements of its people and their belief in its future’.91 This revised and optimisitic focus could eschew the uncomfortable aspects of Anzac and, Keys hoped, reenergise its traditions.

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The responses from young Australians who submitted work recommended different ways to ‘revitalise Anzac Day’. Donald was candid with the RSL: ‘Anzac Day has an image problem’. Time, he told them, had ‘blurred the intention and significance of the event.’ Given the distance of the past, Donald wondered if Anzac could survive much longer. He doubted it could because ‘the world [had] moved so far since 1915’. 

Janis agreed with Donald. The RSL, she urged, needed to be better at ‘selling’ themselves. Over the years their image had suffered and their message had been lost. Janis advised them to escape the ‘rut of conservatism’ and to adjust to ‘modern society’. Essentially, ‘“get with it” to survive’. Lois acknowledged that the contemporary politics of war had damaged Anzac, noting it had ‘been weakened by recent history’. She argued that Vietnam led youth to ‘resist, if not actually reject any celebration that seems to glorify war’. In its current form, Lois believed Anzac commemorations represented ‘a chauvinistic spirit - jingoism would not be too strong a word’.

It was not just the contemporary politics of war that troubled young Australians about Anzac. Donald complained that ‘little is said about how Australia became involved in World War I, or indeed any other war’. He conceded such detail hardly fitted into a ‘romantic image’ of conflict. But recent history had demonstrated it was ‘dangerous’ to ‘permit illusions’. Donald called for an honest discussion about the politics of the First World War. ‘[S]urely,’ he wrote, it was time to ‘look back’ and ‘realise that we entered World War I more an appendage of the British Empire than as a free people choosing to fight the evil

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93 Ibid.
95 Lois J. Essay, pp.6-7, RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76.
Donald’s essay, which ultimately won him the trip to Gallipoli, emphasised that the First World War was not ‘an act of God’. It was politics, pure and simple.97

Generally speaking, all these young Australians offered the same advice and they claimed their own ‘right’ to Anzac. Patricia argued for inclusiveness across generations and advocated that young Australians’ participation should be ‘more than just waving dad and grandad on, we … should be a part of that celebration’.98 She disputed the traditional ownership of Anzac: ‘[J]ust because you didn’t fight in the wars, or just because you don’t know any one who took part in the war fighting for Australia doesn’t mean you leave Anzac Day to the Anzacs’.99 Patricia’s insistence that Anzac was not the possession of older generations, or the RSL, is reminiscent of the assertions made by children in Chapter Two that ‘the traditions of Anzac belong to youth’.100

There were other aspects to this modernising critique. Ross recognised that the demographics of society had changed. Australia was a changing place with a ‘steady flow of immigrants to this land’ and Ross could understand why ‘foreign born people’ were hesitant to ‘accept the militaristic background to Anzac Day’.101 He observed that in ‘many cases these people have left countries previously torn by war and come to Australia to escape the agonies of the past and to make for themselves a new life’.102 War could not be glorified to those who had fled conflict-ravaged homelands. Ross

97 Ibid., p.2.
99 Ibid.
100 Margaret Christie, North Sydney Girls’ High School, Anzac Festival Essays 1950.
102 Ibid., pp.1-2.
advised the RSL that by ‘reducing the militaristic emphases [sic]’ Anzac Day would be a more accessible commemoration.\textsuperscript{103} He suggested taking counsel from committees made up of a representative and balanced cross-section of society. Diverse ethnic groups and women needed to be a part of this process.\textsuperscript{104} Nor should young Australians be excluded. They offered a conduit to carry messages between generations. ‘Young people have much to offer,’ Ross concluded, ‘especially in reflecting the contemporary needs and attitudes of the community; their presence should ensure a continual updating of part [sic] ideas.’\textsuperscript{105}

Consulting new ‘foreign born people’ was important, but it was also vital to think about what Anzac meant to Indigenous Australia. Lois thought rebranding 25 April to ‘Nationhood Day’ might ensure the day’s perpetuity and hopefully avoid the ‘tepidness’ and ‘lack of character’ that beset 26 January.\textsuperscript{106} Alan believed the fraught relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians was a problematic aspect of Anzac. He hoped that a ‘revamped’ Anzac Day would acknowledge Indigenous people ‘who were killed in the early days of white settlement, when this ancient continent was being dragged from the mists of the Dreamtime to be changed into what we now know as Australia’. The son and grandson of returned servicemen, Alan added that Anzac Day should be a ‘means of national integration’. He believed Anzac offered an opportunity to transcend the ‘running sore of hatred and divisiveness between races’.\textsuperscript{107}

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\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p.2.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., pp.2-3.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., p.3.
\textsuperscript{106} Lois J. Essay, p.8, RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76.
\textsuperscript{107} Alan M. Essay, p.2, RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76.
\end{flushleft}
Much of this advice was challenging for the RSL. Donald knew that some of his suggestions would ‘make old Anzacs turn in their graves, and hasten the departure of surviving ones’. But he was unapologetic and did not believe Anzac was the possession of veterans. ‘[T]he world is for the living, not the dead,’ Donald argued bluntly, ‘... and the old guard will have to accommodate themselves to potentially unpleasant changes’.108

Perhaps the ‘old guard’ could not bear such changes though. ‘Unhappily’ the RSL decided to hold off awarding the prize in 1975. They hoped by 1976 they could attract more entries and further suggestions.109 Ultimately, the RSL was searching for ideas that suited their traditions but improved their image and sustained their relevance. It does not appear they found the answers they were looking for.

Conclusion

After the Vietnam War, families again shouldered the burden of caring for changed men. Many veterans’ children remain deeply affected by their father’s war, and the incidence of mental illness among veterans’ children is disproportionately high. The impact was not always damaging though. Even so, most children of Vietnam veterans acknowledge the war as part of their father’s, and their own, identity.

In the public domain, the Vietnam War caused deep division in Australian society. Many young Australians objected to the war and this led to a

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108 Donald J. Essay, p.6, RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76.
109 Letter from the National Secretary of the RSL, Mr. A.G.W Keys to Miss Wilson, 19 February 1975, RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76. Entrants were not impressed that no prize was awarded in 1975. Miss Wilson wrote to the RSL complaining their decision was ‘morally wrong’ and ‘a case of misrepresentation’, Letter from Janis Wilson to the National Secretary of the RSL, Mr. A.G.W Keys 28 February 1975, pp.1-2, RSL Anzac Essay Competition 1975/76. Janis was the female recipient of the prize when it was eventually awarded in 1976.
questioning of Australia’s military past. Through the prism of Vietnam, some young people could not rationalise Anzac’s traditions. For many, a celebratory narrative could not be accommodated by the contemporary horror of another war. And the strict discipline of Anzac’s rituals and institutions were contrary to the activist mood among younger generations. Then things moved in a direction no one quite expected. By the 1980s, there was a renewed sympathy and interest in Anzac and Australian children began to wonder if it really was ‘best we forget’.
Chapter Four

**Hughie:** Because we’re sick of all the muck that’s talked about this day ... the great national day of honour, day of memory, day of salute to the fallen, day of grief ... It’s just one long grog-up ... Yeah, it’s a lot of old hasbeens getting up in the local RSL and saying, Well, boys, you all know what we’re here for, we’re here to honour our mates who didn’t come back. And they all feel sad and have another six or seven beers ... As far as I’m concerned, that’s all it is. A great big meaningless booze-up. Nothing more.¹

In 1986 the Melbourne Theatre Company staged a production of Alan Seymour’s *The One Day of the Year*. John Summer, its director, was surprised by the reaction of school student audiences when they sympathised with the ‘older characters’. Summer said they ‘applaud Alf’, ‘they love Wacka’, and they boo Hughie.² These responses allude to how a new generation of young Australians had begun to rethink Anzac.

Not all shared that particular audience’s sympathies with the ‘older characters’ of Anzac. The strident voice of young Hughie was also heard throughout the 1980s. The same year that school students cheered on Alf and Wacka at Melbourne’s Playhouse, there were protests against Anzac Day. In a suburb not far from where the play was staged, dissenting messages were spray painted

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¹ Alan Seymour, *The One Day of the Year* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson Publishers, 1962), pp.77-78.
² Alf is an angry World War Two serviceman, he is frustrated with his life but proud of his war service and Anzac Day. Wacka is a quiet character in the play, he is a Gallipoli veteran who served in the First World War with Alf’s father and the Second World War with Alf. Hughie is Alf’s son, a radical university student who challenges Anzac Day’s meaning and its traditions. John Summer’s reflections were published in *The Age*, 25 April 1986. For further analysis on *The One Day of the Year*, see Gerster, *Big-Noting*, pp.179-180.
across the local RSL clubrooms. Slogans such as ‘Anzacs are racist’, ‘Kill Anzac Day’, and ‘Oppose Anzac 1986’ shocked the citizens of Brunswick. A year later, Women against Anzac Day marched defiantly along St Kilda Road towards the Shrine of Remembrance. They chanted, ‘one, two, three, four … Anzac glorifies the war’, and a party of marchers called back, ‘kick all dykes to the floor’. Such Anzac protests persisted throughout the 1980s. Then they gradually slowed, petering out entirely in the face of an Anzac renaissance.

On 26 April 1988, the front page of The Age announced that the ‘spirit of Anzac [had] revived’. The paper put no specific date on this, but over the decade there had been shifts towards a greater interest in and renewed sympathy for Anzac. Public attitudes to what Hughie called a ‘big meaningless booze-up’ appeared to be changing. My own analysis of the contemporary media confirms a noticeable increase of press coverage of Anzac Day from 1985 onwards.

What brought about this Anzac revival? Historians have offered a catalogue of reasons: searching for the sacred in a secular society, pursuing nationalism in a globalised world, a surge of interest in family history, and the ‘memory boom’. The drivers of such change are many and varied. Politicians have promoted Anzac, the media has celebrated it, and a host of popular authors have surveyed (for the most part, sympathetically) Australia’s experience of war. At

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3 The Age, 26 April 1986.
4 The Age, 27 April 1987.
5 For further examples of Anzac protests in the 1980s, see Inglis, Sacred Places, pp.440-442.
6 The Age, 26 April 1988.
the same time, the dwindling number of returned servicemen and women meant Anzac passed from memory into history. Arguably, the sense of something being lost heightened its appeal. This is reflected in growing rituals of what might be called Anzac visitation. The cheaper cost of overseas travel and rising personal income meant it was possible to visit battlefields abroad. Finally, Anzac had escaped the controversies of its recent past. By the 1980s more Australians felt unburdened by Vietnam and its problematic legacies seemed, to some extent, resolved. Frank Bongiorno argues that the Anzac resurgence actually ‘depended on the bitterness and division engendered by the Vietnam War giving way to greater public sympathy for those Australians who participated in it’.9

As the Vietnam War faded into the past, the threat of any future war seemed remote. In 1990 (just a year before Australia deployed Defence personnel to the First Gulf War in Iraq), Luke, a student from Carey Grammar in Victoria, wrote with some relief to The Age. His generation, he declared, had ‘been sheltered from the shocking reality of war’.10 For Luke, and most Australian children, armed conflict seemed distant history. That is not to say Australia has escaped war entirely, but the nature of these engagements has changed. Modern military commitments have been limited to small, professional forces. There has

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10 The Age, 16 April, 1990.
not been the prospect of a large scale war and certainly no prospect of conscription.

Across the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s Australian children’s engagement with Anzac mirrors the changing dynamics of remembrance. School children worked with new kinds of history texts that changed the way they thought about war. And within this timeframe, Australia observed the major commemorations of the end of the Second World War, known as Australia Remembers. Children were key players in many of its events and projects. It is particularly valuable to reflect on these commemorations because they offer a telling point of comparison to the Anzac Centenary. This chapter, like previous chapters, examines the role of government, interventions by the media, and the influence of memory agents through the lens of children’s experiences.

A New Kind of History

Moving further from the lived memory of the First World War, Australia began to revaluate its Anzac past. This period marks a turning point in the historiography of war. From the 1970s, texts were being written realigning the stories of the First World War through a prism of humanity and tragedy. Carolyn Holbrook argues that where there had once been ‘hostility and apathy’ to the First World War, there was now ‘sympathy and curiosity’.11 Christina Twomey suggests that a modern focus on victims might also have something to do with the renewed interest in Anzac. From the 1980s onwards, she asserts that ‘Trauma attracted an audience back to Anzac.’12 A similar recasting of the histories of war occurred beyond Australia. Dan Todman describes a

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comparable shift in Britain from the 1970s, one that emphasised a ‘lingering and destructive traumatic memory’.\textsuperscript{13}

Two books which are often cited as leading this new type of historical thinking in Australia are Bill Gammage’s \textit{The Broken Years} and Patsy Adam-Smith’s \textit{The Anzacs}. \textit{The Broken Years}, published in 1974, recovered the private records of the First AIF through a careful examination of their diaries and letters. In this eloquent study, Gammage lends humanity to the men who fought in the First World War. The book met significant critical acclaim and has been described as ‘perhaps the most sensitive treatise on the Australian soldier in World War I’.\textsuperscript{14} This is not to suggest that \textit{The Broken Years} is a sentimental work. Even though Gammage emphasises the human tragedy of the First World War, he also portrays its soldiers as complex characters. They were not just the victims of violence, they were also its perpetrators. Gammage evokes the experiences of soldiers through their own words. One such memorable extract is Lance Corporal Francis’ description of bloodlust:

\begin{quote}
up the hill … we swarm … the lust to kill is on us, we see red. Into one trench, out of it, and into another. Oh! the bloody gorgeousness of feeling your bayonet go into soft yielding flesh – they run, we after them, no thrust one and parry, in goes the bayonet the handiest way.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14} Canberra Times, 13 September 1981.
Following a similar path to Gammage, but arriving at a less scholarly outcome, Patsy Adam-Smith published *The Anzacs* in 1978. Based on soldiers’ letters and diaries, and interviews with surviving veterans, it ‘allowed the members of her cast to tell their own stories’. As if confirming Twomey’s thesis, Adam-Smith declared that ‘every man who fights is a victim’.

Both books were a huge commercial success. To date *The Broken Years* has sold more than thirty thousand copies and *The Anzacs* was reprinted or revised eleven times between 1978 and 1991. Written in an engaging and accessible way, these books popularised the subject of the First World War to a wide readership, including children. Both texts were, and still are, considered useful resources for teachers in the classroom. Arguably, their enduring appeal lies in the fact that they offer a rich repository of voices from the past. As noted in Chapter Six, teachers in the classroom crave such resources.

Despite evident public approval, these books are not without their critics. Robin Gerster describes Bill Gammage and Patsy Adam-Smith as ‘civilian apologists’ who ‘carry on the good promotive fight’ of Anzac. Alistair Thomson takes issue with Adam-Smith’s use of personal testimony, which he considers she uses selectively to affirm her ‘overarching theme’ of ‘pathos and pride’. And Jenny Macleod, though admiring of *The Broken Years*, laments that it ‘lacks tactile and strategic explanations of events’. That, she argues, ultimately detracts from its interpretations of the war’s causes and outcomes.

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16 *Canberra Times*, 21 October 1978.
19 In their interviews, detailed later in Chapter Six, several teachers noted how they used *The Broken Years* and *The Anzacs*, both at their release in the 1970s, through to today.
Whatever the merits of such arguments, both Gammage and Adam-Smith set in motion a new type of Anzac history. Following from these works, Australian historians embarked on new topics, with new approaches, resulting in a wave of innovative research and writing on Anzac. Michael McKernan is one of the most prolific contributors to this field. Following on from Gammage and Adam-Smith, he widened the study of Australians at war and produced a series of well-researched social histories.23 As the decade progressed, other historians followed suit. This expanded the Anzac genre to encompass studies of women, nurses, the home front, and enemy aliens.24

Along with this emerging historical scholarship, teachers and students found themselves working with creative texts that fostered sympathetic readings of soldiers and emphasised the horror of war. The One Day of the Year featured in English and Drama syllabuses from the 1960s and the play continued to be an option for study in the following decades.25 David Malouf’s Fly Away Peter was first published in 1982. The novel is still a ‘frequent choice’ for senior English classes.26 For some readers, Fly Away Peter reasserts elements of an older Anzac mythology. Robin Gerster observes ‘Vestiges of the “baptism of fire” myth’ sustain in the novel.27 But is this ‘myth’ the abiding theme?

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23 McKernan, The Australian People and the Great War; McKernan, All In!; Michael McKernan, Padre: Australian Chaplains in Gallipoli and France (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1986).
27 Gerster, Big-Noting, p.240.
Malouf paints the traumatic landscape that Jim Sadler, the novel’s protagonist, confronts:

the smell of damp earthwalls and rotting planks, of mud impregnated with gas, of decaying corpses that had fallen in earlier battles and been incorporated now into the system itself, occasionally pushing out a hand or a booted foot, all ragged and black, not quite ingested; of rat-droppings, and piss, and the unwashed bodies of the men they were relieving, who also smelled like corpses.28

The revolting conditions of France are in opposition to the rugged, but beautiful, Australian environment. To great effect, Malouf strikes a contrast between the animals in the trenches and Jim’s beloved birds at home. In the mud of Armentières, Jim encounters rats ‘as big as cats and utterly fearless, skittering over your face in the dark …. Burrowing right into a man’s guts’. Whereas the wild birds of Queensland are creatures ‘of life and the air’.29 There is nothing redeeming in Jim Saddler’s wasteful death. He, and his generation, are victims of this war, just like the men in Gammage’s and Adam-Smith’s books.

Popular as Malouf’s novel is, the most influential incarnation of the new style of Anzac is through film - Peter Weir’s Gallipoli. Weir’s movie has been played (and replayed) to Australian classrooms since its release in 1981. Countless students have viewed it, often taking it as a ‘reliable interpretation of history’.30 Gallipoli offers a compelling story. It has also been dubbed a ‘sort of war

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29 Ibid.
memorial on celluloid’. In any event, the film offers young Australians one of their most formative encounters with Anzac.

The classroom is not the only place where Gallipoli is screened. Television stations dutifully broadcast the classic as part of their commemorative program, and young Australians watch Gallipoli with their family and friends. The lounge room thus becomes a site for learning Anzac. This is a reminder of a constant theme throughout this thesis: young people learn history from many sources and these stretch well beyond the classroom. Sam Wineberg observes that many people regard film as the most powerful means to transmit knowledge from one generation to the next. Wineberg recounts how one of his research subjects suggested film, specifically The Green Berets, was where one could find history and he argued that it might make his daughter ‘a little bit more aware of what was going on’. Wineberg realised the implications of such testimony: ‘It’s not to his neighbourhood library that he turns, but to his neighbourhood Blockbuster.’ But do films, like The Green Berets or Gallipoli, offer historical knowledge or are they, in fact, nurturing mythology? Whether as accurate historical knowledge, or as mythology, popular presentation of history in film yields significant impact on how students form their interpretations of the past.

33 Ibid., p.233. Perhaps a modern amendment might be that people are turning to streaming services, instead of visiting a video store. It is worthwhile extending this line of thinking to television. Michelle Arrow argues television ‘plays a crucial role in communicating and shaping public understandings of history’, in ‘“I just feel it’s important to know exactly what he went through”: In their footsteps and the role of emotions in Australian television history’, Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, vol.33, no.4 (2013), p.597.
Gallipoli continued the new kind of Anzac history that asserted the tragedy of war. This theme is captured in the film’s final frame of Archie’s body contorted in a hail of Turkish gunfire. Archie’s death is the definitive sacrifice of the film, but audiences are also distressed for Frank and his failure to save his mate. Reinforcing Frank and Archie’s victimhood, neither fire a shot on the Peninsular. They are never sullied by the act of killing. There is also the trauma inflicted on the supporting characters. At Lone Pine, ‘Barney is killed, Snowy wounded, and Billy traumatised’.

From the day of its release teachers recognised the educational potential of Gallipoli. Schools around Australia organised excursions to see the film on the big screen. As part of the interviews in Chapter Six, one senior history teacher recalled the effort of herding students onto the tram to the local cinema to see Gallipoli in 1981. Since then VHS cassettes and then DVDs have broadcast Gallipoli into the classroom. For some teachers, the film is a convenient ‘go-to’ activity around Anzac Day. It fills in time and provides entertainment. But many teachers use the resource far more creatively. Gallipoli offers a springboard to broader critical thinking about Anzac’s mythology.

Given the immediate and enthusiastic pedagogical embrace of Gallipoli, the Victorian Department of Education hurried to produce supporting resources. Peter Weir’s Film of Gallipoli: Film Study Guide (hereafter The Guide) was created for use in schools across Australia. The Guide acknowledged that the film raised

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35 It is not surprising that Gallipoli would adopt this new kind of history, given its use of The Broken Years as an informing text, as well as employing Gammage as a historical advisor.
39 ‘Michael’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 22 February 2012.
questions that warranted thoughtful reflection in the classroom. It provided teachers with military detail and background information to the campaign, as well as points of discussion to engage students. The Guide revisited some of the critiques of the late 1960s and 1970s and featured students’ opinions of the film. That raised an important point. How did students themselves respond to Gallipoli?

The discussion among a group of Year 10 students at Maribyrnong High School suggests a broad range of responses to the film. Many students were drawn to Weir’s sacrificial myth. One such affected student described the men who ‘wanted to die for their country. Even if they didn’t die they could say “I was there, and I tried”’. Other students were less seduced by the themes of redemptive sacrifice and service. As one indignant student protested: ‘You only see the Australians fighting. You feel as if the British were using the Australians.’

That last remark highlights an important element of Weir’s work – his relentless critique of Empire. In Gallipoli, the ‘enemy, insofar as there is one, is the British military establishment’.  

British officers are ‘caricaturized as monocled and moustachioed cynics’ who needlessly sacrifice innocent young Australians. This casting is most evident in the depiction of Colonel Robinson. In a clipped English accent, Colonel Robinson callously orders the attacks on Turkish trenches at the Nek to continue. In reality, such orders were issued by an Australian officer, Colonel Antill. Although Robinson is dressed in an AIF

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40 Rayner, The Films of Peter Weir, p.131.
uniform and his accent could have belonged to an Australian from the era, most viewers assume this character is British.

The response of any film is personal and subjective. What message did students take from their viewing of Gallipoli? Did the film foster anti-British sentiments or did it simply ‘socialize[] [them] into a mythic memory’? Did the film make these students (in the words of Wineberg’s research subject) ‘a little bit more aware of what was going on’? Some students, it seems, were simply left bewildered. ‘I still don’t know why it happened,’ one admitted. And some young viewers were indifferent to any historical detail the film might have offered. ‘It was boring in the beginning …. It took too long to get to the war scenes,’ declared one such impatient student.

Children’s response to film and literature is a vibrant and emerging field of study. What matters for this thesis is the way these texts have shaped that elusive thing ‘historical sensibility’. Whatever their merits (or failings) as resources in the classroom, texts like Gallipoli and Fly Away Peter have influenced how young Australians think about Anzac.

**Family History**

It was not just historians, film directors, playwrights, and novelists who told children that Anzacs were the victims of war. Families actively promoted this

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45 Louis Merryweather, Ken Berryman and Alan Mayberry (eds.), *Peter Weir’s Film of Gallipoli: Film Study Guide* (Melbourne: Education Department of Victoria and Applied Media Resources, 1981), p.50. There were no identifying features published with students’ comments.
discourse as well. From the 1980s, descendants were retelling their family’s histories of war as tragic and sympathetic narratives.

This retelling occurs against the backdrop of the ‘memory boom’. Jay Winter, and others, have identified various factors driving this phenomenon of the late twentieth century. Longer life spans mean more generations meet one another. New technology has captured historical testimony. Higher levels of education have empowered people with the skills to embark on their own historical projects. And ultimately western society’s increased affluence enables the luxury of exploring one’s past, memory, after all, is a ‘material issue’. Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton describe how this ‘boom’ manifests itself in numerous ways, including the popularity of historical films and books, the significance of historical sites such as memorials and museums, and the practice of family history.

From the 1980s onwards families were increasingly recording and publishing their Anzac stories. Descendants wrote (and often self-published) books compiled of soldiers’ diaries and letters. They reconstructed accounts, or even reimagined stories, based on historical sources, as well as family memories. Bart Ziino recognises that families ‘felt ever more acutely the impulse to capture or otherwise preserve a record of passing veterans’. The scale of these Anzac memoirs published over the last few decades indicates the extent to which Australians have placed their family history within a larger national narrative. There is no sign that this trend will slow down in the future. To the contrary,

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48 Ziino, ‘“A lasting gift to his descendants”’, p.127.
the further we move away from 1915 the more the Anzac focus on family continues to strengthen.

It is not just retired baby-boomers (indulging in history passion projects) that drive this family focus on Anzac. Children too seem eager to take on these memories. The case of Alec Campbell and his sixteen-year-old great-granddaughter Angie illustrate some of the complexities involved when remembrance is three or more generations removed.

As the last surviving Australian veteran of the Gallipoli campaign, Alec Campbell became known as ‘the last Anzac’. It was a legacy he accepted, even if it was one that he was not always entirely comfortable with. It seemed to trouble Campbell that one aspect of his life had come to define his existence. He believed he had lived a ‘rich and happy life’ and the fascination with his ‘small part’ in the fighting at Gallipoli confounded him. In 2002, Australia’s last living link to Gallipoli died. After his passing, Angie wrote to Prime Minister John Howard thanking him for her great-grandfather’s state funeral. Howard had exalted Alec Campbell and, even beyond the old digger’s lifetime, he continued to extol the last Anzac’s memory. In remembrance of her great-grandfather, Howard offered Angie ‘government support’ to make a pilgrimage to Gallipoli for Anzac Day in 2003. Enthusiastic and appreciative, Angie gratefully accepted.

Like Alec’s status as one of the last surviving Anzacs, Angie’s pilgrimage became a matter of public interest. The press admired her as a paragon of young Australia. The Age cited her as an example others might follow:

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50 Ibid., p.36.
She will turn 16 on Thursday, the day before Anzac Day. On a birthday when many Australian teenagers find good reason to party, Angie will be in north-western Turkey thinking about what it was like for her great-grandfather, who went to war there at the same age.\(^51\)

For Angie this pilgrimage was meaningful because she sensed such a strong connection to her great-grandfather. So close, in fact, that Angie talked of visualising her great-grandfather’s memories. The young woman was most affected by Alec’s account of seeing his friend killed by shrapnel fire. ‘That was his first memory of Gallipoli,’ she said, ‘And that is the first thing I think about too; I have that image in my head.’\(^52\) She articulated this scene as though the memory had been somehow transmitted to her. Her response implies that she could see what Alec had seen himself.

In reality, Angie’s perception of Alec was largely shaped by stories that had been told and retold across her extended family. Angie’s memory of her great-grandfather was also mediated by public representations. Alec held such a high profile in the later years of his life, he had become, to an extent, ‘national property’. His image had even been immortalised on postage stamps.\(^53\) It is not surprising Angie situated Alec’s war service centrally to his life story. But was it actually Alec’s left-wing politics, his economics degree, his support for trade unions, or his nine children, which wielded a greater influence on his life?\(^54\) For

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\(^{54}\) Stephens and Siewert, The Last Anzacs, p.39; The Sydney Morning Herald, 17 May 2002.
Angie, for John Howard, and for the Australian public, these aspects of Campbell’s life were largely unacknowledged. Ken Inglis draws attention to this selective memory. Campbell’s legacy, almost like John Kirkpatrick Simpson’s, had been ‘censored to make it serve national legend’.  

Alec’s own memories were not a fixed entity either. In 1996, he claimed he had not fired a weapon at Gallipoli, whereas in 2002, he said, ‘he had lost count of the number of Turks he had shot’. A writer who interviewed Alec wondered if these were the tricks of memory or if a tired old man was protesting the suffocating attention of a nation. Or perhaps Alec’s deviating accounts demonstrate the ‘social activity’ in the composure and recompose of memory for particular audiences and purposes.

Some historians are sceptical of encounters like Angie’s. Dan Todman wonders ‘how that younger generation can have a “memory” of an event in which it did not participate.’ Todman suggests that there are more worthwhile questions to ask: ‘We might do better to investigate the desire to appropriate grandparents’ or great-grandparents’ experience than to suggest cod-psychological processes for this invented phenomenon.’

Appropriating memory is clearly an issue of a concern for professional historians. What it means to families is quite another matter. For Angie, her pilgrimage to Gallipoli was all about family and the sense of responsibility it conferred. She hoped that she could serve as a channel between Alec and future generations of Campbells. ‘I was afraid that now there was no longer a living

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55 Inglis, Sacred Places, p.549.
56 Stephens, ‘Gallipoli 100 years, the last Anzac: Alec Campbell’.
57 Ibid.
58 Thomson, Anzac Memories, p.242.
59 Todman, The Great War, p.173.
link it could be lost for my generation,’ Angie worried, ‘I just wanted to make sure I didn’t forget it, so I could pass it on to my children.’

It should be noted that not all historians are as disbelieving as Todman. Some argue that via ‘postmemory’ or even ‘prosthetic memory’, it is possible that ‘that generations who did not experience particular historical events can still formulate compelling understandings of them’. Again these understandings are expressed through the narratives written by children.

They Carry the Torch

In 1987 the New South Wales branch of the RSL conducted an Anzac Essay, Poem and Art Competition for children ‘from eight to eighteen’. Several of the entries were gathered in an anthology, tellingly titled They Carry the Torch. Notwithstanding the selective process considered below, this collection offers insights to the ways young Australians were thinking about Anzac on the very cusp of its revival. As even the RSL acknowledged there ‘is so much to learn from the young’.

But who exactly were ‘the young’ being referred to? They Carry the Torch comprises eighteen submissions, most of which were awarded a first-prize place. Were these pieces reflective of the highest standard of students’ creativity or did these children provide the responses that the RSL judges were searching for? Differentiating this RSL competition, these essays were assessed by the teachers’ sub-branch of the RSL. Headed by the sub-branch’s president

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60 Darby, ‘In the footsteps of the last Anzac’.
62 RSL NSW Branch, They Carry the Torch: A Statement by Children of their Thoughts on Anzac (Sydney: RSL NSW Branch, 1988), p.3.
63 Ibid.
Geoffrey Falkenmire, a Second World War serviceman and an accomplished educator, arguably this panel included discerning adjudicators. Of these eighteen pieces, fourteen were submitted by girls. The booklet does not outline how many total entries were received, so it is not possible to tell if girls submitted more work than boys. Perhaps it was the case that these girls offered more scholarly responses or maybe they ascribed to a particular position that the judges endorsed.

While the booklet can hardly be seen as typical of an entire generation, it still indicates trends in how young people were reimagining Anzac. The judges were mindful that children’s understandings of Anzac were shaped by all kinds of influences. Anzac was a topic to study at school, but there were also lessons to be learned from family, communities, and the media. ‘Grandparents, parents, teachers and the media, particularly television, are the main sources that carry the story for them,’ the collection’s introduction acknowledged.

As seen in previous chapters, there has always been immense diversity in the ways young Australians interpret the meanings and messages of Anzac. Students described Gallipoli as an unmitigated tragedy; an opportunity for Australia to distinguish itself from Britain; as the battle that tested the mettle of the nation’s manhood; and as the moment Australia was truly united. Anzac Day elicited national celebration and mourning. Anzac Day was also an occasion to express one’s gratitude to past generations. The RSL must have warmed to Melissa’s entry as she sang the praises of ‘those brave, courageous soldiers who, in all wars this century, fought for our country’.

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65 RSL NSW Branch, They Carry the Torch, p.3.
66 Ibid., p.5, p.10.
Several students stressed the centrality of Gallipoli to the Anzac story, but most noted how its story had extended. Susan believed that the men from the First World War had ‘set a tradition for Australian soldiers to follow’, and that the troops who served in Kokoda and Tobruk, and then in Vietnam, had lived up to this legacy.\(^{(68)}\) Ian, one of the few boys who appear in this collection, agreed with Susan’s sentiment of a chronology of character. ‘The qualities of courage, strength, service and sacrifice were shown by this soldier at Anzac,’ Ian recognised, ‘In the next war, he was there again, still with a grin, although he had his hair done differently, and wore a different styled uniform.’\(^{(69)}\)

Rather like the young people in previous chapters, many of the students who submitted work to this competition believed Anzac was no longer bound by a singular war narrative. Susan consciously eschewed its militaristic overtones: ‘The great mateship and bonds that were built in wars, can now be shared with every Australian citizen.’\(^{(70)}\) Young people like Susan advocated for an Anzac unburdened by historical grounding. An Anzac without the fetters of war echoes Ross’ advice in the previous chapter, to ‘reduc[e] the militaristic emphasisms’.\(^{(71)}\)

Once again, young people viewed Anzac as a source of civic virtues, an ideal one might admire. Rebekah thought the most important lesson of Anzac was ‘that they were just normal people like you and me’. But that shared humanity stirred doubts for this schoolgirl: ‘I can’t help asking myself, if I would be able to do what they have done?’ Rebekah admitted she might not live up to this idealised Anzac character. ‘My honest answer disappoints me,’ she confessed.\(^{(72)}\)

\(^{(68)}\) Ibid., pp.9-10.
\(^{(69)}\) Ibid., p.17.
\(^{(70)}\) Ibid., p.10.
\(^{(72)}\) RSL NSW Branch, They Carry the Torch, p.14.
The legacy of Anzac, its sacred nature, and its model of virtue remained daunting to young Australians. Just as the generations before them, these children worried Anzac was ‘too good for the rest of us’.73 Rebecca, from Parkes High School, penned a poem that articulated this very concern:

But now I am wondering, could we, would we, do it all again?

And I am not just thinking of war.
I feel we may have lost the basic mateship we had then.
I wonder,
That in crucial times,
When our friends are in personal need,
Do we come to their aid?74

Valourising her forebears, Rebecca was critical of her peers and most young Australians. Given that the Anzacs were aging, wearing, and dying, who would take carriage of their legacy was a pressing question. Stacey also questioned if the legend could survive. ‘Every year we repeat this ritual of old, but what will happen when they are all gone?’ she asked herself (of perhaps she asked the RSL judges).75 Susan ventured an answer. Anzac was ‘like a glowing torch, to pass on to future generations’ and youth would take up the mantle.76 Even given the culling of entries to compile this collection, They Carry the Torch, suggests a rich and complex range of children’s responses to Anzac. The RSL was the book’s principal patron, but as the decade progressed government too was taking an active interest in the business of remembrance.

73 Malouf, Johnno, p.157.
74 RSL NSW Branch, They Carry the Torch, p.14.
75 Ibid., p.8.
76 Ibid., p.10.
Australia Remembers

In 1995 Australia embarked on an ambitious commemorative program to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Looking back at this occasion, it is necessary to acknowledge the role that the state played in engineering public memory. The Australian Government initiated, funded, and supported much of the program. But beyond the centralised government strategies and directives, many aspects of its commemorations were grounded in community. This anniversary in 1995, like in 2015, saw a groundswell of public engagement.

As will be outlined in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, education is central to the Anzac Centenary, and similarly, education was an essential part of Australia Remembers. Children were encouraged to participate in public events, they were instructed in the significance of the Second World War, and they were invited to create work and embark on projects focussed on its histories. More than just an opportunity for historical learning, Australia Remembers placed ‘Children as metaphors of the future’.  

The program took place eight years after the Anzac Essay, Poem and Art Competition discussed in the previous section of this chapter. Reading the Australia Remembers commemorations as sites of memory provides insights into the ways school students were thinking about war. It again offers the opportunity to trace the contours of Anzac’s revival.

Even if it Rained: Young Australia Remembers was produced in 1995 and is remarkably similar to the They Carry the Torch booklet. Even if it Rained recruits a similar cohort and students ranged from ten years to eighteen years. Poems,

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77 Liz Reed, Bigger than Gallipoli: War, History and Memory in Australia (Crawley: University of Western Australia, 2004), p.64.
interviews, brief histories, creative responses, drawings, paintings, even papier mâché were contributed to the competition. An important point of difference between the two collections are the participants’ place of residence and their cultural background. The entrants in the later collection were all from the City of Whittlesea in Victoria, which encompassed schools from Epping, Lalor, and Thomastown. In these suburbs, for almost fifty per cent of households, English was not their principal language. These social demographics are reflected in the Italian, Greek, and Eastern Block names threaded throughout the collection. One might compare surnames like Fazzolaci, DiPieredomenico, and Strasimisvovska from Even if it Rained to Blackhall, Fraser, and White in They Carry the Torch. Even if it Rained highlights a multicultural angle to Anzac and marks a new way that a more diverse Australia was connecting to the past.

In 1995 multicultural stories were folded into Australia’s histories of war in a way never seen before. Many students recounted their families’ struggles in the Second World War from all around the globe. Nadia’s grandfather was a Yugoslavian refugee in Switzerland; Emma’s ‘Auntie Fukaso’ survived the atomic bombing of Japan; Nicole’s grandmother was a sixteen-year-old girl when Germans occupied her Italian village; and Heide’s grandfather fought with the Greek resistance. For these children, their family stories were not in opposition to Australian history, rather they were complementary. Broadening the parameters of Anzac has allowed its meanings to become responsive to more Australians. As Ken Inglis notes, this expanded reading allows new cohorts to ‘attach themselves so comfortably to the tradition’. Fostering a connection between Anzac and multicultural communities is a modern interpretation. Prior to this point, Anzac was a cipher of Australian whiteness.

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80 Inglis, Sacred Places, p.452.
Nor, in the past, has Anzac easily extended to incorporate the story of former enemies. Emphasis on the multicultural dimensions of Anzac has consolidated in recent years, gaining further traction as a means to reinvigorate Anzac. This is a line of inquiry that will be further explored in Chapter Five.

 Appropriately, as an Australia Remembers initiative, the Second World War is the focus of this publication. This does not mean that students had forgotten about Gallipoli and the First World War though. In her study of Australia Remembers, Liz Reed repeatedly makes an assertion that the Second World War was ‘most likely the only conflict with Australian involvement about which schoolchildren in 1995 had been taught’. Unfortunately, she does not elaborate on this argument or pursue it to its logical conclusion. Aside from the focussed campaign of 1995, there appears to be no evidence that points to greater emphasis on the Second World War, at the expense of the First, in the classroom or any other setting. In fact, many historians would argue the reverse. Joan Beaumont claims that the Second World War has been ‘relegated to a secondary place in the Australian national memory of war vis-à-vis the war of 1914-18’.

 In the introduction to Even if it Rained, Harry Jenkins, the electorate’s federal member of parliament, wrote that Australia Remembers was an opportunity ‘to lead all generations to reflect on war’. He noted that its messages were intended to reach all Australians ‘from the very young, who had not experienced it, to those who could remember’. Because Australia Remembers commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, there were a reasonable number of its veterans still alive. A popular school project was to facilitate oral histories between students and those who lived through the war years. Although these oral histories were admirably ambitious, primary and

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81 Reed, Bigger than Gallipoli, p.62.
83 Pickering, Even if it Rained, p.3.
secondary school students were not trained in the practice of conducting
interviews with servicemen and women. Nonetheless, students found the
work enlightening. Nicole found interviewing Ted, who had served in New
Guinea, ‘a tremendous experience’. Ted told the St Monica’s Secondary College
schoolgirl that he tried not to remember ‘the bad times’, but admitted that
watching his commanding sergeant’s beheading was a trauma that haunted
him still. Students believed that this practical history work provided them
with insights they could otherwise never learn. Undoubtedly, Ted’s description
of the execution he witnessed was a confronting reply to Nicole’s interview
question. Mary and Georgina interviewed Jack, who served in Borneo, and they
appreciated ‘that the experiences and recollections which [he] shared with
[them] were very valuable’. The schoolgirls believed the encounter with a
returned serviceman gave them ‘a broader view of World War II’ and provided
‘a learning experience that was far more interesting than reading from
textbooks’. Gail and Wendy thought their interview with Bill (another
returned serviceman) was a ‘valuable experience that will linger in our
memories for a long time, if not forever’. These students describe their awe of
Anzac’s ambassadors. None complained of sitting down to talk with old men,
though one wonders what might have been said or thought outside the
boundaries of this anthology collection. For these students, at least in their
formal response, talking to someone who had lived this history ‘was much
better than reading books or watching videos’.

*Even if it Rained* is not entirely about history. This booklet is an example of how
a child’s present informs their readings of the past. For Belinda, a student from

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84 For discussion of school students undertaking oral history projects, see Barry Allen Lanman
and Laura Marie Wendling, *Preparing the Next Generation of Oral Historians: An Anthology of Oral
History Education* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006).
85 Pickering, *Even If It Rained*, p.42.
86 Ibid., pp.43-44.
87 Ibid., p.45.
Lalor North Secondary College, there was an unsettling parallel with history taking place. She was deeply concerned by the French Government’s decision to conduct nuclear tests in the South Pacific. Belinda wrote: ‘We believe that the French are wrong, just as Hitler was wrong when he tried to impose his false ideas.’ Belinda’s worry about nuclear testing compelled her to reflect on the complex history surrounding the bombing of Japan. Her anxieties suggest ways the present influences historical thinking. On the one hand, Belinda’s digression alludes to the malleability of modern Anzac. Of course, this slippage is historically inaccurate, but for Belinda, invoking a broad interpretation allowed her to think critically about both the past and the present.

Reading students’ testimony from the 1980s and the 1990s allows us to see, once again, that children learned lessons of war from their families, their communities, and in their classrooms. Examining children’s responses to Anzac over these decades, there are familiar readings to those presented in previous chapters. We see Anzac’s extended chronology, its malleable meanings, and the responsibility of its remembrance. But new trends also begin to emerge, like an emphasis on diversity, which have been affirmed as a part of modern understandings of Anzac.

**Marching Orders**

Six-year-old Warwick Bell was thrilled to be joining his grandfather, a soldier from the Second World War, in Melbourne’s 1996 Anzac Day march. Warwick had been practising his own march for several weeks, determined to perfect his stride and ensure he was fit enough to keep pace with the grown-ups. But then organisers decided that Melbourne’s march did not have room for such sentimentality.

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88 Ibid. p.19.
In the weeks leading up to Anzac Day, controversy erupted regarding the place of children in the march. While they had been tolerated in the past, the Chief Marshal reminded veterans that children should not be a part of the procession as they undermined the march’s main purpose to reunite comrades. The Chief Marshal admitted he would not ‘send in the police to get them out’, but he hoped to discourage descendants from marching.\textsuperscript{89}

Bruce Ruxton, Victoria’s RSL President, had little time for the symbolism of children in the march. For Ruxton, it was entirely impractical. ‘[I]f everyone took a kid to the march, it would go for seven hours,’ he grouched.\textsuperscript{90} He did concede that children would be able to take part when the ranks of soldiers had thinned, but in the meantime, they were not welcome.

Here, rather contradictory messages were imparted to young Australians. On the one hand, children were told they were the inheritors of this tradition, asked to rise to the occasion and take ‘the torch’. On the other hand, they were told to be patient and to rein in their enthusiasm until the old men were dead. Ruxton even outlined a timeline. He suggested at ‘the turn of the century there will be a rethink about Anzac Day all together’.\textsuperscript{91} By then there would be a need to strengthen the dwindling numbers, and children and descendants would be not just welcome, but arguably necessary to ensure the life of the march.

The outrage about barring children from the march played out alongside another controversy. A Super League test match between Australia and New

\textsuperscript{89} The Age, 18 March 1997. This was not the first case of trying to restrict the marchers to only veterans, similar controversies occurred in other years, see for example The Age, 26 April 1988. For further detail on children in the Anzac Day march, see Inglis, Sacred Places, pp.404-405. Children are not the only controversial marchers, for another contentious group, see Corinne Manning, ‘Rebellion and remembrance: The Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club rides into history’, Journal of Australian Studies, vol.30, no.89 (2006), pp.53-63.

\textsuperscript{90} The Age, 18 March 1997.

\textsuperscript{91} The Age, 19 March 1997.
Zealand was promoted with advertisements featuring Ruxton’s declaration: ‘Mark my words, Australia is still in grave danger from one of our so-called neighbours. The Kiwis were once our allies and now they’re on the other side – at least for 80 minutes.’ Ruxton and the RSL received $5000 for the sponsorship, and after the public furore escalated, they received a further $20,000 from the Super League. The Super League defended their association as an attempt to attract young Australians to engage with Anzac Day. They claimed their match could ‘contribute through our young audience so that young people should realise the great history and traditions of some of our servicemen [who] have gone away and given their life for their country’.92 The public was not convinced. Community outcry lamented that Anzac had been sold for ‘30 pieces of silver’.93

The Super League’s promotion is far from the first example of Anzac’s commodification. Jo Hawkins’ research shows how Anzac’s ‘potential to be commercialised is almost as old as the mythology itself’.94 The Australian Government has long taken steps to control how the term Anzac is used, as early as 1916 regulations were introduced, and from 1921 legislation was enacted. But given that they approved the Super League’s use of the term, the government’s provisions have not always met the public’s standard of protecting Anzac’s integrity.

Many had difficulty reconciling Ruxton’s defence of Anzac’s tradition with a willingness to sell a product for profit. But how did young Australians respond to their exclusion from the march? Their reactions ranged from deflated disappointment to vocal resentment. Some descendants believed they served a

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practical purpose on the day, offering a support role for frail old men. Ten-year-old Hayden worried: ‘I think it’s important to march just in case Pa collapses in a heap.’

Some, like fifteen-year-old Daniel, were defiant and undeterred by protocols. Daniel was forthright:

This decision makes me a bit angry and a bit sad. I think it’s wrong. Anzac Day is a way to show respect for the Diggers who fought for our country. I march to carry on the tradition and it should be carried on until the dying days of the Earth. I’m going to march if Grandpa and his friends want me there and I don’t care what anyone says.

Descendants, in any significant number, have only recently begun marching on Anzac Day. In previous decades, there were ample veterans and the occasion was their reserved space. Just as Ruxton had gruffly predicted, as the number of returned men has dwindled, descendants have stepped into the march. Children parade in veterans’ places, their medals jingling, sometimes they are even dressed in replica costumes. For many, this performance of replacing old men with children endears Anzac with the public. Catriona Elder argues that children in the Anzac Day march ‘reinforces the idea of the innocence of the original Anzacs, and by association all Australian military personnel’. This innocence sustains the renewed, and sympathetic, readings of Anzac discussed earlier in this chapter.

The RSL was urged to rethink their stance, after all, excluding young Australians could ultimately threaten the endurance of Anzac Day. Seventeen-year-old Michelle, who marched with her Vietnam veteran father, responded

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95 The Age, 23 March 1997.
96 The Age, 23 March 1997.
angrily to Ruxton. ‘I think the ban is pathetic,’ she warned, ‘If they are not going to let kids be involved, there’s not going to be an Anzac Day.’ Michelle’s indignant advice is similar to the recommendations from the RSL essay competition in Chapter Three. If traditional stakeholders of Anzac refused to engage with young people, then Anzac was likely to fade into irrelevance. Michelle also echoes children’s claim to Anzac, as articulated by Margaret in Chapter Two, that ‘the traditions of Anzac belong to youth’.

Returned servicemen were not canvassed to the same extent as children for their opinions on the ban. In one of the few public responses, John, ‘a Second World War digger’, seemed agitated by what he regarded as the diversifying of Anzac, while his grandchildren were excluded. He put this case to the Herald Sun: ‘If our grandchildren are not allowed to march with us fellows, we should stop all the children of ethnic groups from marching. In fact, Anzac Day is becoming like Moomba.’ John’s letter suggests he was disgruntled by the new emphasis on Anzac’s multicultural dimensions. This response, from a traditional stakeholder of Anzac, is particularly intriguing given how the ‘children of ethnic groups’ have come to figure so significantly in Anzac commemorations. Is John’s response telling of who exercises the greatest influence on modern remembrance? Have Anzac’s conventional stakeholders lost a sense of authority over their tradition? Perhaps this was why, in addition to controlling unmanageable numbers, Ruxton and the RSL sought to exclude children from the procession.

The presence of children and descendants in Anzac Day marches unquestionably alters the character of remembrance. It also highlights the tensions of Anzac as a porous ritual. Now composed mostly of descendants and...

98 The Age, 23 March 1997.
100 The Age, 27 April 1988.
current-day military personnel, the march is no longer an occasion for frail old men dressed in their best suits. Proud descendants beam, they smile, and wave to the crowds; the march is celebratory in nature. Not everybody is comfortable with this change. Once the march was about mourning, not celebration. The march has evolved considerably since the 1980s, and will continue to change in the future as Australia renegotiates who is the focus of Anzac Day.

Conclusion

Across the later decades of the twentieth century and the beginning of the next century, young Australians encountered a different kind of Anzac. For these generations of children, war was presented as a human tragedy, its conditions and its legacies were defined by horror and heartbreak. But war was also a distant reality, regrettable events in the past, not a real threat in the present. Students studied a new school of thinking in history books, novels, plays, and films. But as always, young Australians learned beyond educational resources, they gleaned powerful Anzac history lessons from their families and their communities too. This distance from the past enabled new ways of thinking about Anzac. In particular, the cultural diversity of modern Australia inspired some young people to reinvigorate Anzac by emphasising multicultural dimensions. In this way, more Australians discovered a way to access this tradition. This adaptability of Anzac continues today and leads to this thesis’ examination of the contemporary relationship between young Australians and Anzac.
Chapter Five
Young Australians and Anzac in Contemporary Australia

Adelaide’s National War Memorial is an elaborate marble and bronze structure. At its centre are statues of a student in academic dress, a young farmer holding a plough, and a girl brought to her knees, each gazing up at the Spirit of Duty. Given that these figures symbolise the youth of an entire generation dragged into war, it seems fitting that young Australians gathered here on Anzac Eve in 2015. Throughout the night, from six o’clock in the evening until the dawn service the following morning, hundreds of children stood as sentries, watching over the memorial.

Figure 3: Adelaide’s National War Memorial. The statue of a girl looks up at the Spirit of Duty. Photograph courtesy Bruce Scates.

1 For a brief history of South Australia’s national war memorial, see Inglis, Sacred Places, pp.278-283.
This ritual began in 2000 in response to an incidence of vandalism in the darkness of Anzac Eve the year before. More than a decade on, thousands of young people have taken part in the Youth Vigil at the centre of Adelaide. It is a growing tradition and similar ceremonies are now held at sixteen sites across the state, attracting participants from the Army, Air Force, and Navy cadets, Girl Guides, Scouts, the Boys’ and Girls’ Brigades, St John Ambulance, and Surf Lifesaving. A military air to the night-long service and the organisations involved (replete with uniforms and determined discipline) evoke order and ceremony. As an ‘invented tradition’, the Vigil ‘implies continuity with the past’. But the Vigil is very much about the future of Anzac Day in South Australia. The RSL has come to regard this tribute as an essential part of its commemorations, for some it is as important as the dawn service and the march.

This act of remembrance upholds aspects of a traditional commemoration, but at the same time, it conveys the malleability of Anzac. To an extent, it challenges convention. Ken Inglis notes that for all the Vigil’s ‘military ritual’, there is none of the ‘old RSL bellicosity’. Mindful of the multicultural character of South Australia, organisers invite all the state’s children to take part. At the 2015 Youth Vigil, children from more than ten different cultural backgrounds, some dressed in national costume, placed tributes at the foot of the memorial. A young girl from the Turkish community read (in English and Turkish) Atatürk’s famous ‘Johnnies and Mehmets’ quote. The descendants of an Indigenous Gallipoli soldier, a Ramindjeri man from Goolwa, placed a wreath in his memory. Emphasising diversity within Anzac is an increasingly popular

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4 Inglis, Sacred Places, p.548.
approach. It celebrates inclusion and speaks to a progressive interpretation of history. Still, it is worth asking are these kind of integrations sincere? Was the Vigil genuinely trying to broaden Anzac’s appeal or were organisers simply meeting a checklist of modern Anzac requirements? Did the Vigil preserve a reverent spirit of commemoration or did it become ‘like Moomba’, as John the Second World War veteran complained in the previous chapter?

Official services, such as the Youth Vigil, are one way children encounter Anzac. As explored in previous chapters, many social and individual experiences shape young Australians’ perceptions of Anzac. This chapter will examine how classroom lessons impact students and investigate how remembrance often figures as education. This chapter will also consider wider influences and ask how children experience Anzac outside the school environment. As one schoolgirl in regional Victoria noted, ‘it’s hard to ignore’ Anzac. Her classmate Dean extended this point. He thought Anzac seemed always present, for instance, it was impossible to ‘go down High Street without walking past the statue’. Australian cities, suburbs, and towns are dotted with war memorials, they were built to be seen and, evidently, to some they remain a striking feature in the landscape. Dean might have noticed the memorial, but perhaps for others the granite obelisk was simply part of the town’s streetscape, its original meaning lost with the passage of time. Even so, it was not only the memorial Dean noticed, he also heard a great deal about Anzac in the media. ‘It’s all over the news, the radio,’ he remarked. More than these kinds of public encounters, many young people engage with Anzac through the prism of family. Its histories are woven through their ancestry which offers a means of situating family narratives within a larger story of nationhood.

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5 ‘Maggie’ and ‘Dean’, interview with students, regional Victoria, 20 September 2012. For a detailed survey of Australian war memorials, see Inglis, Sacred Places.
From my fieldwork, I found that it is not the case that young people are mindlessly conscripted to a simple tradition. Now, more than ever, Anzac represents different things to different people, both in reference to its historical detail and the expansive set of values it embodies. Many young people grapple with Anzac’s complexities and some even raise doubts about its meaning in modern Australia. There is also an important silence. While many young Australians are a part of Anzac, there are others who feel disconnected and are not interested in engaging with its memory.

**Old and New History Wars**

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, fierce debates raged about Australian history. While some argued that the past was being rewritten with an undue emphasis on the nation’s failings, others were concerned that history had become more about cheering on the country, rather than rigorous study. These ‘history wars’ were fought in universities, cultural institutions, and in newspapers and publications, but arguably, the most emotive battleground was the school classroom.

The ‘history wars’ saw a campaign waged to teach young Australians a celebratory national story. Conservative crusaders expressed their concern that many students were burdened by shame. They argued a sense of guilt for the wrongs of the past was being placed on young Australians. From the other side

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of the political spectrum, others demanded greater attention needed to be paid to the injustices faced by Indigenous Australians. These advocates insisted that history lessons were not a medium to instil unthinking nationalism. The conversation about how to best teach Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian histories is far from over, but there is a growing trend to frame school history debates through the topic of Anzac.8

On the one hand, there are urgent calls for children to study detailed versions of Australia’s military past and learn value-laden messages of an associated national story. Any perception of faltering in young Australians’ remembrance prompts public anxiety, even anger. This kind of response was demonstrated in 2014 when some Victorian schools moved their Remembrance Day commemorations from the traditional 11 o’clock to alternative times to ensure that students taking their VCE chemistry exam would not be interrupted. ‘VCE exam continues as nation pauses to remember veterans’, one newspaper reported (with an evident tone of outrage). Talkback callers and online commentators seethed about young Australians’ disregard for ‘honour’ and ‘history’. Many criticised an education system that did not teach the necessary respect for the nation’s war dead.9

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On the other hand, some agonise that Australia’s youth is hypnotised by nationalist and glorious sentiments. Marilyn Lake is one of the most prominent of these critics. She bemoans the ‘veritable tidal wave of military history [that] has engulfed the nation’. While Lake’s work raises pressing questions about the ‘endless supply’ of funds DVA expends on Anzac education kits, activities, and events, she does not interrogate the teaching resources at length and draws only on anecdotal evidence to support her claims. Lake’s arguments imply children are passive readers of an Anzac mythology, spellbound by the sentimental and unable, or unwilling, to question its histories. As seen throughout this thesis, young people do not consume the past without question, rather they are active in reshaping its meanings.

Both of these anxieties are based on ‘top down’ approaches that privilege government and educational authorities. But in an exploration of how children encounter Anzac, they also have to be ‘heard’. This chapter seeks to address the imbalance and introduce the voices of young Australians to the discourse.

Research Methodologies

Timothy Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper have made a major contribution to the academic inquiry into war, commemoration, and memory. They argue that scholars have often evoked a set of binary opposites focussing either on the actions of the state or the subjective realm of the personal. For these authors, the ‘politics of war memory and commemoration always has to engage with mourning and with attempts to make good the psychological and physical damage of war; and wherever people undertake the tasks of mourning

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10 Marilyn Lake, ‘How do schoolchildren learn about the spirit of Anzac?’, in Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds with Mark McKenna and Joy Damousi (eds.), What’s Wrong with Anzac?: The Militarisation of Australian History (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), p.135.
and reparation, a politics is *always* at work*. A combined approach is an asset, and these authors argue that politics and people need not be ‘in terms of one another’. In Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, I will explore numerous ways that young Australians encounter Anzac, how individual teachers work with the subject in their classrooms, and what the Australian public expects from children at Anzac’s centenary. I will also examine governments’ and educational authorities’ official priorities about how young Australians learn, and take carriage, of Anzac.

In 2012 to 2013 I conducted a series of interviews with secondary school students. I asked them their opinions on Anzac’s meanings in modern Australia, how they had (or had not) learned and commemorated its histories, and sought their predictions on its future. Every effort was made to consult as large and diverse a sample group as possible. I do not claim to have achieved a completely representative study, instead my aim was to articulate aspects of a broad range of children’s views and experiences. In total, I spoke with almost seventy students at eight schools located in Victoria and South Australia. The schools were based in inner and outer suburbs and regional areas, and students came from a broad range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Students were in year levels 9 to 11, so ranging from fourteen to seventeen years of age. Of the eight, five were government schools and three were non-government schools. Approximately forty per cent of the participants were girls and sixty per cent were boys, so there was a slight variance. At three of the schools I visited there were students who had travelled or were preparing to travel.

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13 Ibid., p.7.
14 Ethics applications for undertaking research in schools was sought and approved by: ‘Teaching Anzac Day’, Human Ethics Certificate of Approval, CF11/3403 – 2011001818, Monash University; Victoria, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2012_001426); Catholic Education Melbourne (GE12/0009); South Australia, Department for Education and Child Development (DECD CS/12/25-2.11). I acknowledge the assistance and cooperation of each of these organisations during my research.
overseas to the sites of the First World War, either as part of a school or
government organised journey. These students’ insights feature towards the
end of this chapter. In the following discussions students are de-identified, but
some relevant (if indistinct) features are acknowledged.

On occasion, I sensed that some students were slightly nervous. Was this
because the subject matter was Anzac or simply because the interview process
was unfamiliar? Discussions were conducted in small focus groups, generally
ranging from at least three and up to ten students. This approach was designed
to lessen the intensity of the process. After all, as Graham Smith notes in his
study of group oral history, the ‘one-to-one interview is a rather odd social
arrangement’. Invariably, some discussions were more fruitful than others, but
overall, the focus group conditions appeared to work successfully. Hugo Slim,
Paul Thompson, Olivia Bennett, and Nigel Cross recognise the benefits to
interviewees in the group setting because of a ‘focus on individuals’ and
participants feel ‘less inhibited’. My interviews confirmed this collective ease.
Frequently, I noticed once one student showed a willingness to speak, others
were encouraged to participate. A related adverse effect may occur though.
Slim and his colleagues warn: ‘A group may subtly pressurise people towards a
socially acceptable testimony or a mythical representation of the past or of a
current issue which everyone feels is “safe” to share and which may be in some
sense idealised.’ Sometimes students seemed to seek affirmation from their
peers, or from myself, but mostly, I observed students’ willingness to extend
one another’s testimony, to build on ideas, even offer divergence and counter

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15 In addition to speaking with these students, I also had access to some of the students’ written
reflections on their pilgrimage experience.
16 Graham Smith, ‘Remembering in groups: Negotiating between “individual” and “collective”
memories’, in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds.), The Oral History Reader, 3rd edition
17 Hugo Slim, Paul Thompson Olivia Bennett, and Nigel Cross, Listening for Change: Oral
perspectives. This points to another strength of the group interview methodology; they offer insights into the act of remembering in a group.\textsuperscript{18}

Given the administration required for students’ participation, interviewees had been provided with an explanatory statement about my research. Further to this, upon meeting students, teachers often related a brief summary of who I was, where I was from, and my thesis. I also offered details about myself and my work. I was careful to emphasise that my study did not have a predetermined conclusion in mind. There was no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answer. I also assured students this was not a test of their academic knowledge. It was important they did not treat this exercise as a test. The interviews took a fairly open format. There was not a set trajectory to the conversation. Aside from beginning most discussions by asking students what they did on Anzac Day, the dialogue took very different tangents depending on the interests of the students. Generally the setting determined the length of discussions, so if the interview took place during a lesson or lunchtime. Interviews also ended when students seemed to have had enough.

In addition to these interviews, I have undertaken ethnographic research. Over three years, I attended Anzac Day commemorations at different secondary schools. And in 2015 I accompanied the Victorian Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize as the Tour Historian.\textsuperscript{19} This fieldwork provided valuable opportunities to observe, as Jay Winter describes, the ‘performance of memory’.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} Smith, ‘Remembering in groups’, p.207.

\textsuperscript{19} The three school Anzac Day services I attended were all in Melbourne and its surrounding suburbs, and included one government and two non-government schools. For more information on the Victorian Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize Tour, see their website, Department of Premier and Cabinet, ‘Victorian Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize Tour’, accessed 20 June 2015, www.dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/veterans/premiers-spirit-of-anzac-prize.

Finally, this chapter also draws on the 2013, 2014, and 2015 responses to an RSL sub-branch essay competition. Each April this sub-branch invites primary schools from nearby suburbs to submit short compositions, writing to a topic that varies each year to suit relevant themes or anniversaries. The responses reflect a vast range of ability and interest in the assignment, and their variety is reminiscent of the leaves on the Lowther Hall Grammar School wreath featured at the beginning of this thesis. Comprised of one hundred and thirty-eight essays from public, Islamic, Christian, and Catholic schools, this particular archive, like many others in this thesis, is rich in its diversity.

Analysing students’ discussions, commemorations, and their written work, it is possible to explore young Australians’ historical consciousness of Anzac. It is not the purpose of this chapter to undertake an examination of the Anzac facts that students know or can recite. There were numerous mistakes across the material, some more glaring than others. One student explained the aim of 25 April 1915 was to ‘gain control of the Gallipoli Peninsula which is located in Germany’. Others suggested that Australia commemorates Anzac Day ‘every year on 25th of March’ alongside ‘New Zealand’. Recounting any more of these kinds of errors, or ‘history horror stories’ as Tony Taylor describes them, offers little to the understanding of young Australians’ historical sensibilities. Studies that stress what students do not know are recurrent and although they catch the public’s attention and provide inspiration for indignant headlines, they are not overly helpful. Reflecting on such studies, Sam Wineberg questions whether it is possible ‘we have spent so much time discovering (only to

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21 For anonymity, I have not identified the particular RSL sub-branch which administers the competition, however, it is based in a capital city. Hereafter the essays will be referenced as RSL essay competition, year, de-identified student name.


rediscover over and over and over …) what students don’t know that we have neglected more useful questions about young people’s historical knowledge’.

Quiz-like surveys only serve to assert a conclusion that when students do not know what the public wants them to know, they know nothing. Although older generations appear to enjoy fretting about youths’ appalling historical knowledge, it does nothing to illuminate understandings of children’s engagement with historical topics.

What Did You Do On Anzac Day?

To initiate discussion, I asked students what they had done on the most recent Anzac Day. Ultimately, my interviews did not yield a definitive result about young Australians’ participation in modern Anzac rituals. Among those interviewed there were students who attended commemorations, a few had themselves marched, and two students had even performed The Last Post at dawn services. However, the vast majority of students did not appear committed to participating in traditional observance practices. Students’ responses about their Anzac Days were often vague. They frequently mentioned school assemblies, but given that Anzac Day is a public holiday, these did not take place on 25 April. Despite my previously noted assurances that there was no right answer or any expectation on my part, it was not unusual for students to offer nervous glances, to feign forgetting, or to remain silent. Those who admitted they had slept in, done ‘nothing’, or watched Collingwood versus Essendon on television were, on occasion, visibly embarrassed or even apologetic. This is an important point, because in spite of claims that young Australians are swept up in an Anzac fervour, I observed that many are not seeking an active engagement in its traditions. This is not to say that these students were indifferent to Anzac or hostile to its

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commemoration, but it does suggest that the celebrated affection that young Australians feel for Anzac might well be overstated.

In both the interviews with students and the responses to the RSL essay competition, it was once again demonstrated that young Australians think about Anzac in very different ways. Some students were convinced that Anzac was fixed in the First World War, even at times confined to the beaches of Gallipoli. For others, Anzac bleeds into the Second World War. Most often though, young Australians recognised Anzac went further than these conflicts. At a Melbourne public school, Samantha articulated this extended chronology as Anzac ‘fighting in the Vietnam War, they’re fighting with the Americans, they’re fighting so many battles, including today’.25

Samantha’s assessment is typical of how many Australians understand Anzac today. It reflects a national military timeline and encompasses involvement in all wars, military operations, and peacekeeping missions. Samantha’s interpretation also aligns with the Australian Government. They champion ‘a clear lineage’ of Anzac from the First World War ‘running through the subsequent conflicts that Australians have been involved in during the past 100 years’.26 As part of the Anzac Centenary, the government encourages Australians to:

remember not only the Anzacs who served at Gallipoli and on the Western Front, but all Australian servicemen and women, including those who fought along the Kokoda Track and at Tobruk; those who were held as prisoners of war; those who fought on the seas and in

the skies; and those who served in conflicts from Korea and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{27}

The wars collapse into one another and the timeline extends well beyond one hundred years. Arguably, many Australians see Anzac’s meaning as even broader than this definition suggests given recent moves to integrate non-military services, such as the police, fire brigade, and ambulance. This is a modern shift, one at odds with traditional readings that required overseas military service to claim a part in Anzac.\textsuperscript{28}

Samantha was not alone among her peers conflating Australia’s histories of war. Many argued that this was appropriate because they shared a similar defence of Australia and its ideals. One student explained that Australia ‘would not have the freedom or rights that we are granted with today because they fought for us’. Another thanked ‘the ANZACs [who] fought for freedom and democracy’.\textsuperscript{29} Were these children referring to the men who stormed the beaches at Gallipoli? If so, there has now been more than one hundred years of debate surrounding the causes of the First World War and the justification of Australia’s involvement. While some contend that the First World War was fought to defend democracy and the rights of small nations, there is no easy consensus.\textsuperscript{30} Even if historians accept that Britain and her Empire were attempting to halt German militarism, it is ‘hard to see,’ as Bill Gammage observes, ‘that in 1914 the Allies thought the war was about preserving democracy’ or a ‘fairer and more equal society’.\textsuperscript{31} Most children are unaware of

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p.1.
\textsuperscript{29} RSL essay competition, 2015, ‘Leigh’; RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Katrina’.
\textsuperscript{30} For discussion of why Australia was involved in the First World War, see Craig Wilcox (ed.), The Great War: Gains and Losses – Anzac and Empire (Canberra: Australian National University, 1995).
\textsuperscript{31} Gammage, ‘Was the Great War Australia’s War?’, p.10, p.9.
the intricacies of these arguments, but the ‘big words’ – ‘freedom’, ‘rights’, ‘democracy’ – slipped easily into the conversation.

Some students argued that specific details and accuracy were not the most meaningful part of Anzac anyway. It was more worthwhile to mine this history for its moral aspects. One schoolgirl, Stephanie argued, ‘it’s easier to learn about the values, and it’s more important to learn about the values, than the dates and numbers … Numbers are important to learn, but they’re not the most important thing to remember.’

Emphasising values over ‘the dates and numbers’ and disregarding the distinct set of circumstances surrounding each war or military engagement is deeply ahistorical. It leads to simplified readings of the past and distortions of the historical account. Jeff Sparrow, among others, has raised concerns that as part of Australia’s remembrance, the public seems willing to forget the politics of conflict. When explanations of Australia’s involvement in the First World War are presented as ‘palatable’, rather than factual, Anzac becomes ‘stripped of all context’. Similarly, Mark McKenna sees that the ‘Anzac story is now being emptied of its historical context and turned into a sacred parable, a hymn of national praise.’

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32 ‘Stephanie’, interview with students, Adelaide, 3 April 2013.
Certainly some students I spoke with sang from this hymn book. Like Stephanie, many others defined Anzac as an embodiment of virtues. Samantha explained that Anzac ‘represent[s] so many brilliant things’, specifically she noted Anzac’s ‘bravery, resilience, respect, honour’.35 Graeme Davison identifies readings like Stephanie’s and Samantha’s as a modern interpretation of Anzac as something ‘universal, rather tribal, a focus for a generalised sense of goodwill rather than something grounded in specific history’.36

But is this admiration so different from previous generations? The Anzac Festival essays examined in Chapter Two recounted a similarly broad list of Anzac qualities to those identified by students more than sixty years later. And those children in the 1950s also believed that Anzac had transcended history. Arguably Anzac’s evolution as a malleable tradition was underway far earlier than historians have often assumed. Perhaps there is now, as Ken Inglis suggests, a greater inclination for this kind of ‘humble, even awe-struck, admiration’. Inglis supposes this might be the case because war is not a lurking threat to young Australians. They can more freely celebrate Anzac since they will not be asked to pay ‘the supreme sacrifice’.37

When young Australians are ‘awe-struck’, Anzac histories risk seeming beyond critique. Ben, a serious young man from a private boys’ school in Melbourne, stressed to me the need to ‘respect’ Anzac. He added: ‘You don’t make fun of it.’38 A hesitancy to interrogate (not make fun of) Anzac because it is so revered can compromise the integrity of its histories. If Australians, young or otherwise,

35 Student interview, ‘Samantha’.
feel too nervous to question Anzac, as though analysis equals disrespect of a sacred institution, then Anzac is only mythology.

Having said that, the range of students’ responses belies every attempt at generalisation and there were certainly students who were wary of virtuous Anzac and its didactic messages. At a private school in Melbourne, Steven noted, ‘They kinda say like [Anzac is] celebrating the courage or the um endurance, or something like that’. He paused before qualifying his comments, ‘Well, that’s what they say on the footy.’ Steven’s additional remark suggests that some young Australians are not entirely convinced by the moral tale of Anzac.

At a school in Adelaide, Trent was also cautious. He described Australians’ emotionally-charged responses to Anzac as ‘a bit superficial’. Trent believed mourning men who died so long ago was contrived. ‘Like they don’t know the person,’ he said, ‘they don’t know what it was like for them … so to say “Oh he was so good, he was so brave, oh wow” – you can’t, it just sounds very, very plastic and artificial’. Trent’s classmate David agreed that there was a tendency to view Anzacs only as ‘so good’ and ‘so brave’. David thought, ‘saying all these other things about how they were perfect and so great … it just feels like Australians are almost going a bit, a bit too emotional in that regard. Almost.’ The dynamic of the interview reflected a reluctance to engage further with a disruptive narrative. Perhaps David worried he might have offended someone (perhaps myself), so he quickly added, ‘Which sounds really horrible’. These schoolboys suggest how some young people are conscious, and critical, of Anzac’s mythologising in modern Australia.

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39 ‘Steven’, interview with students, Melbourne, 13 November 2012.
40 ‘Trent’, interview with students, Adelaide, 4 April 2013.
41 ‘David’, interview with students, Adelaide, 4 April 2013.
National Day: National Identity

The revived interest in Anzac over the past three decades has transformed 25 April into ‘the closest Australia … comes to having a “national day”’.\(^42\) In their research project, *Australians and the Past*, Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton’s survey of Australian people found that Anzac Day was decidedly more popular as a national day than 26 January.\(^43\)

Even though many students were confident Anzac Day was Australia’s national day, most were unable to explain why. For Adam, it was because national identity was the very essence of Anzac Day and he summed up the occasion as ‘just being Australian’.\(^44\) There was a kind of circulatory nature to these arguments. What was Anzac? It was being Australian. And what was being an Australian? It was defined by the embrace of Anzac.

In this embrace, students most often cited mateship as the quintessential Anzac (and Australian) value. James Page notes mateship is inextricably linked with Anzac and he observes it is ‘rare that there is any public commentary on the ANZAC experience without a concomitant reference to the value of mateship’.\(^45\) Often it is much more than just one ‘concomitant reference’. In his essay, Henry mentioned ‘mates’ and ‘mateship’ no fewer than five times. Even for an RSL judge, it was going too far. Henry’s essay (in the judge’s opinion) was ‘perhaps

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\(^{42}\) Bruce Scates, Rae Frances, Keir Reeves, Frank Bongiorno, Martin Crotty, Gareth Knapman, Graham Seal, Annette Becker, Andrew Reeves, Tim Southommasane, Kevin Blackburn, Stephen Clarke, Peter Stanley, Andrew Hoskins, Jay Winter, Carl Bridge, Laura James, Rebecca Wheatley, Leah Riches, Alexandra McCosker and Simon Sleight, ‘Anzac Day at home and abroad: Towards a history of Australia’s national day’, *History Compass*, vol.10, no.7 (2012), p.523.

\(^{43}\) The authors reported 9.64% respondents (of a sample of 350) identified Australia Day ‘as a public anniversary with historical meaning of association [to] them’, whereas around 18% cited Anzac Day, in Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads*, p.152.

\(^{44}\) ‘Adam’, interview with students, Melbourne, 13 November 2012.

a bit too much hyperbole’. Having said that, Henry could cite a precedent. The promiscuous use of terms like mateship has been a feature of Anzac commemorations in recent years. John Howard’s Anzac Day address at Kanchanaburi War Cemetery in 1998 made ‘seven references to mateship in a speech of less than 550 words’. But for historians (or any informed critic for that matter) an eagerness to exalt ‘mateship’ as peculiarly Australian is deeply problematic. Firstly, it is incorrect to claim this trait as uniquely Australian. After all, Jock Phillips observes ‘mateship’ as an essential part of New Zealand’s First World War narrative. Aside from disregarding New Zealand’s claim to mateship, what implication does privileging this value have on Australian women and girls’ ability to engage with Anzac and possibly thereby a national identity or occasion? Despite mateship’s modern meaning conceivably extending to include women, it is impossible to deny its fundamental code of masculinity. Some have criticised mateship’s more toxic influence. Eva Cox, for instance, describes mateship (somewhat colloquially) as the ‘smell of spew in the pubs, about mates going gang bang with some sheila. It’s about not dobbing anyone else in. It’s testosterone poisoning’. Imposing Anzac values, like mateship, to a national identity raises questions about historical accuracy and poses uncertainties for inclusion.

Despite these risks for exclusion, some students argued that Anzac Day offered more inclusiveness than Australia’s current official national day. They suggested that the history of Indigenous dispossession made 26 January problematic as a national celebration. In discussion at a private boys’ school in Melbourne, Daniel thought that Anzac Day was ‘more national than Australia

46 RSL essay competition 2013, ‘Henry’.
Day, cos, like, you hear people, like Aboriginals, that’s pretty much the day their country got stolen off them ... [Anzac Day] is more like a day of everyone’. Adam, his classmate, added that Anzac Day was ‘a celebration of just Australia as an identity’, but Daniel pressed his point, it was just a day about ‘not stealing Australia’. 

Given the grief and bitterness that surrounds 26 January and the unfinished business of Indigenous dispossession, Anzac Day appears to meet more of the conditions of a national day. But again there was no clear consensus among the students surveyed. Some resisted casting Anzac Day as Australia’s national day. They worried it was a misrepresentation of its original meaning. Carl was bothered that Anzac Day had ‘sort of become more of a nationalist ... day, which almost celebrates being Australian, gives us sort of a symbol to cling to as a country’. He argued Anzac Day ‘should be focussed on more of a day of remembrance of the horrors of war’. 

Further to the concerns of straying too far from Anzac’s original meaning, framing 25 April as Australia’s national day can contract its broader historical context. Fixing on a national story of war is often limiting and many historians encourage a transnational approach to its study. Australia’s tendency to focus inwards is hardly unique. As Catherine Shortell and Troy Paddock observe, ‘war is remembered as a national rather than a global event’. Ultimately though, a narrow perspective on the First World War, or any war, is a lesser

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51 ‘Carl’, interview with students, Adelaide, 4 April 2013.
history. Jay Winter, an advocate for a transnational approach, emphasises the First World War was a ‘transnational catastrophe’.  

Young Australians are also intrigued by this transnational approach to armed conflict. Asking the boys at a private school in Melbourne what they would change about the way they studied the history of the First World War, their swift advice was to expand its ambit. ‘I reckon we only do Australia,’ Simon complained, ‘… when we did Gallipoli, I have not learned one thing about the Turks’. It seemed to these boys an obvious failing. In many cases, students called for a historical corrective and longed to ‘see the other side of the story’.  

A Popular History?

Many historians, politicians, and educationalists have commented on the unpopularity of Australian history in schools. The students I spoke with were forthright on this point and proved vocal critics of the subject. Trent was very direct. ‘Australian history is horrifically boring,’ he complained, ‘Not a fan.’ But it seems that Australia’s war histories, to an extent, stand apart and there is an eagerness for Anzac that does not exist for other subjects.

Some deemed Anzac the only interesting Australian history they were likely to encounter. Matthew was not sure why war history was more interesting, ‘Just is’. Compared to other topics, Anzac was clearly a preferred option. War

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54 ‘Simon’ and ‘Nick’, interview with students, Melbourne, 13 November 2012.


56 Student interview, ‘Trent’.

57 ‘Matthew’, interview with students, Melbourne, 6 June 2012.
draws students into a world of human drama that supersedes Lalor’s Eureka or Parkes’ Tenterfield oration.

Matthew was intrigued by the topic, but Anzac was not just a boy’s thing. Within the group interviews, the most enthusiastic students of this history were girls. Was this because schoolgirls were more intellectually drawn to the subject or were they intrigued by its commemoration? Jay Winter observes: ‘Women are now at the heart of acts of remembrance because war has moved out of the battlefield and into every corner of civilian life … women as well as men now construct the story, disseminate it, and consume it.’ 58 This is similarly the case for young people. Despite the male players of this subject, girls do not feel excluded from this story. Perhaps this is because girls are told they are a part of the modern day military. As of 2014, women made up only fifteen per cent of the ADF’s full-time serving members. However, in light of sex scandals and cases of bullying and harassment of women, the ADF’s public relations campaigns portray a far more balanced workplace than its reality. 59 And possibly the inclusion of women’s stories, as nurses and on the home front, within the broader Anzac genre has legitimised girls’ claim to its histories as well.

War seems able to charm some students into learning history and Anna Clark’s work warns of the ‘allure of Anzac’. 60 While there is attraction to Anzac as a topic, there is hardly unqualified enthusiasm. Millie complained that war histories were repeated again and again: ‘It was always the subject to do, like in SOSE, it was the one main topic. By the end of it, you got sick of it.’ 61 Similarly,

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58 Winter, Remembering War, p.6
60 Clark, History’s Children, p.46.
61 ‘Millie’, interview with students, regional Victoria, 17 October 2012.
Adam confessed ‘there’s only enough trench stories that we can handle’. I visited one school close to the end of a term-long detailed study of Australia’s war history. The timing of this interview may well have conditioned the students’ responses. Unanimously they were tired of Anzac. ‘I guess we just did a lot on it all in once,’ reasoned one student. Her classmate added that ‘Everyone got very sick of it by the end. Very monotonous.’ And at the suggestion of more work on the subject there was a resounding groan.

The classroom is a significant site of learning, but children are surrounded by history and it is necessary to explore how else children’s historical thinking is developed and what exactly shapes their understanding of Anzac.

**A Family Story**

Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton observe: ‘In terms of the passing on of meaningful histories, it seems that the family is the site where most people feel at home with the past.’ Analysis of their data revealed that the connections drawn with Anzac were most profoundly influenced by family and personal relationship associations, rather than national ones.

As Anzac histories recede further into the past, their power within families seems only to strengthen. The life of family memory is not finite. Once scholars suggested its span lasted perhaps one hundred years, but given increased life expectancies, family memory might extend one hundred and thirty years.

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62 Student interview, ‘Adam’.
63 Interview with students, regional Victoria, 20 September 2012.
64 Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, ‘Facing facts?: History wars in Australian high schools’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.31, no.91 (2007), p.56. For discussion of how family is a key site for learning, see Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, ‘At home with the past: Background and initial findings from the national survey’, *Australian Cultural History*, no.22 (2003), p.27. This was the larger *Australians and the Past* survey, as well as a smaller study administered to sixty secondary school students.
65 Richard White, ‘National days and the national past in Australia’, *Australian Cultural History*, no.23, p.57.
Without putting a figure on it, Christopher Clausen suggests family memory will prevail ‘as long as its inheritors consider it important’.66

Children are versed in family stories of war and they are keenly aware of its place in their ancestry. ‘Gallipoli to my family is important because a relative of mine died during Gallipoli,’ Mia wrote in her essay. She summarised: ‘His name was George … In my family George’s story is famous. His story is that he wrote letters to relatives about how he knew he was going to die but he was being brave and courageous.’67 Mia was not quite sure of the exact detail of her relationship to this ‘famous’ relative, but she sensed his Gallipoli legend was an impressive branch of her family tree.

Tim Soutphommasane argues that today Anzac is often ‘reduced to its ancestral dimensions’.68 So for all the classroom lessons, school assemblies, and DVA posters, many young Australians learn about war histories through family storytelling. These young Australians feel connected to Anzac often through grandparents or great-grandparents. This relationship can be a particularly strong link, one that, as Jay Winter notes, can step over the ‘troublesome generation of parents in the middle’.69 At a far enough remove from the past, young people can challenge conventional modes of remembering, offering space for ‘fresh imaginative responses from the grandchild generation’.70 The ability to challenge or reimagine traditions is arguably emboldened as further removed generations approach remembrance.

67 RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Mia’.
70 Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, ‘The politics of war memory and commemoration’, p.4.
In his essay, Mitchell explained this transmission of family memory through the metaphor of a memento. He wrote about how his grandparents had passed on to him a hat that belonged to his great-grandfather Sidney. Mitchell wrote that the hat ‘belonged to someone I don’t know’. But Mitchell did know that Sidney fought in France and believed his hat represented ‘the people that have fought for Australia and New Zealand’ and his great-grandfather’s ‘adventures’. Mitchell took on board the responsibility of this family relic and its story, and he pledged, ‘one day I will give the hat to my children so they too will know what it represents’.71 His commitment is reminiscent of Angie’s promise in Chapter Four, to ensure her great-grandfather’s story endures within her family.

The family stories of war told, and retold, are not always the heroic tales of the battlefield, like George in Gallipoli or Sidney in France. This thesis has demonstrated how central family is to the story of repatriation and this is a history that is also being passed down through generations. Hannah’s grandmother told her about her own father leaving for war when she was just a little girl: ‘[S]he said when he returned he was coughing all the time because he was exposed to the gasses. Eventually he died from being exposed to these horrible elements … Not long after he came home he sadly passed away’.72 On Anzac Day, Rye thought of his great-great grandfather and the consequences of war on his family. He wrote: ‘Nanni says that he and his family sacrificed a lot because he got shell shock’.73 Despite the sanitised messages of many officially-sponsored narratives, young Australians are aware of the lasting scars of conflict because this is the family story of war.74

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71 RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Mitchell’.
72 RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Hannah’.
73 RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Rye’.
74 Teachers have access to many resources which extend the focus of the war into the experience of coming home. See for example, Bruce Scates, Rebecca Wheatley and Laura James, ‘Teaching guide to the 100 Stories’, Monash University, accessed 16 April 2018,
These children did not have a lived memory of these relatives, let alone their war experiences, but many children considered they possessed a type of memory. As discussed in Chapter Four, some historians discount any notion of memory claimed by younger generations as an ‘invented phenomenon’. Often the children surveyed articulated that they understood this was not a memory in the conventional sense, it was something quite different. In his essay, Elijah was particularly frank as he acknowledged the limitations of these ‘memories’. He was unable to ask the questions of his soldier relative because ‘he is dead’. Even so, Elijah believed he could ‘still remember him by doing this essay’. Family storytelling is not unaffected by external influences. In Mitchell’s essay about his great-grandfather’s hat, he appears to paint a scene informed by imagery and knowledge he has gathered of this history. Mitchell describes a young man who ‘joined because it was an honour to fight for your country’, how the war would have been an ‘adventure’ but after living in the trenches, ‘he would’ve regretted his choice’. Mitchell’s speculation about his great-grandfather’s war reflects Bart Ziino’s assessment that ‘as family remembering is drawn more obviously into a relationship with national, collective memory of affirmation and honour’ we are seeing ‘the appropriation of private stories within the rubric of national myth’.

Looking at fading family photographs of her forebear in his ‘woollen uniform’, Harper noticed, ‘his eyes that are similar to mine’. For this little girl, a perceived shared physical trait provided a means of accessing this unfamiliar relative and


75 Todman, The Great War, p.173.
76 RSL essay competition 2013, ‘Elijah’.
77 RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Mitchell’.
his story. ‘What inerasable horrors they saw and what gratitude they saw that made him keep on running to save others,’ she wondered.79 Reading Harper’s account, one is reminded of Mel Gibson ‘running to save others’. Perhaps Gallipoli influenced her reading of this image and its story? As several scholars have argued, family photographs do not exist in a vacuum. Jo Spence and Patricia Holland make this point eloquently: ‘Our memory is never fully “ours”, nor are the pictures ever unmediated representations of our past.’80

Looking at Anzac histories from the perspective of family, some students, like Harper, believed there was the opportunity for insight and empathy. But historians also warn that reducing the story of war to an individual narrative can advance a restrictive understanding, one void of meaningful context.81

Family history also prompted some children to claim a greater stake in Anzac. At a boys’ school in Melbourne, Ryan assured me: ‘Anyone can really, sort of remember their past generations’. But then Ryan provided conditions. ‘It’s just whether you have a deeper connection than others,’ he reasoned, ‘… so, like, if you had your grandparents or whatever involved in a war then you have a little bit more connection to it than if you just heard about it and heard the terrible things or good things that happen there.’82 George’s impression extended Ryan’s suggestion of a ‘deeper connection’:

79 RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Harper’.
82 ‘Ryan’, interview with students, Melbourne, 13 November.
It’s like, my grandpa’s pretty proud cos his dad fought in it and he’s always wearing his medals on Anzac Day and he does the march and everything. And I guess it’s a little more special to like our family cos of my great grandpa. So, yeah it’s a little bit more special.83

**Multicultural Anzac**

If Anzac is ‘a little bit more special’ to some, then there will always be an element of exclusion at play. Artist Huo Leong created a photographic series titled *An Australian* which presented iconic Australian images with his own Chinese face imposed on one of the central figures. With a subversive kind of humour, Leong’s photographs confront Australia’s exclusion of diversity from its national identity.84 One such image is of Leong posing as a soldier on horseback at an Anzac Day service and he is meant to look just as out of place here as when he assumes the role of Paul Hogan’s Crocodile Dundee or dressed in a Driza-Bone with a blue heeler in the ‘I’m as Australian as Ampol’ advertisement. Leong, like many Australians of non-Anglo-Saxon decent, does not feel at ease within Anzac. Given how culturally diverse modern Australia is, Leong’s, and others’, awkwardness with Anzac needs to be acknowledged.

In 2010 the Australian Government commissioned Colmar Brunton, a market research company, to report on the public’s expectations and anticipations of the Anzac Centenary. Their report suggested that the Centenary might be ‘something of a double-edged sword’ for multicultural Australia and a ‘potential area of divisiveness’.85 The media coverage of this counsel gave many

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83 ‘George’, interview with students, Melbourne, 13 November 2012. Joy Damousi has also written about a similar ‘special authority’ of Anzac ancestry in ‘Why do we get so emotional about Anzac?’, in Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds with Mark McKenna and Joy Damousi (eds.), *What’s Wrong with Anzac?: The Militarisation of Australian History* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), p.97.

84 Melissa Chiu, *Paradox* (Canberra: Canberra Contemporary Art Space, 1997).

85 Colmar Brunton for the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, *A Century of Service: Community Research Phase I*, p.5.
an impression that non-Anglo Saxon Australians were offended by Anzac. This was not what the research said and extracted from its context, the report’s findings gave way to controversy.

Another report was commissioned to respond to the ‘double-edged sword’. This time consultants spoke with migrants and first-generation Australians from Greece, Turkey, Italy, India, Sudan, Lebanon, Afghanistan, China, Vietnam, Germany, and Japan. This research found that these groups were ‘universally respectful of Australian Anzac commemorations’, even if they were ‘often disengaged’. That was hardly unique to this group though, as the report reminded its readers, many ‘mainstream Australians’ were also ‘disengaged’ from Anzac commemorations.86 The majority of the research’s participants did not feel excluded from Anzac commemorations, because, as one member of the ‘Multicultural Youth’ focus group reasoned: ‘In order to feel excluded I would have to want to be included.’87

In my discussions with students who were born overseas or who were first-generation Australian, a similar sentiment was expressed. They were not worried about being excluded from Anzac, they just felt no need or desire to be a part of this tradition. ‘I don’t really have any personal relations to any people in the World War One,’ Anthony, a student of Chinese descent acknowledged, ‘but yeah I guess I can still like appreciate what they did for Australia and, like, their heroics. But I don’t really have, like, a connection with Anzac Days much.’88 Sam, another Chinese-Australian student, agreed with his classmate: ‘I’m not really connected to Anzac in any way, but I find it, like, difficult to sort

87 Ibid., p.10.
of connect with what they were doing and stuff. But I still, like, respect them and what they did, but not in a big way.” Both boys stressed their ‘respect’ for Anzac despite a lack of a ‘connection’ and they were careful that their comments did not translate to disrespect of Anzac.

Regardless of not sharing a cultural background or having familial links to Anzac, some Australians feel able to assert a place in its rituals. The government’s report found that those from Sudanese and Turkish backgrounds were the most interested in participating in Anzac commemorations. The Turkish connection to Anzac is obvious, but the report explains that those from the Sudanese community thought it was ‘a right, and even a duty, to participate in the significant cultural events of their adopted country’. As they saw it, Anzac was a means to demonstrate their willingness to be a part of an Australian community.

A recent emphasis on Anzac’s plurality might be a reason some communities feel comfortable taking a place in its traditions. A steady output of research has highlighted points of diversity in Australia’s military past and this perspective speaks to a contemporary multicultural society. Elena Govor’s *Russian Anzacs in Australian History* and John Hamilton’s biography of Billy Sing, *Gallipoli Sniper* are two examples of this genre. *World War I: A History in 100 Stories* also includes accounts of First AIF soldiers of Indian, Russian, Chinese, German, Greek, and Italian backgrounds. Not everyone recognises the merits of this work within historical scholarship. Eleanor Hancock describes these types of

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89 ‘Sam’, interview with students, Melbourne, 13 November 2012.
studies as the ‘“they also served” phenomenon’.\textsuperscript{92} For some, seeking out these links is a tenuous connection at best, at worst they are superficial. Arguably though, more than history books, these assertions of Anzac’s diversity are strengthened when they are fostered at a more grassroots level. Laura James’ study of remembrance in regional Australia highlights how multicultural connections to Anzac are most convincing when they are grounded in local communities.\textsuperscript{93}

In the interviews, students elaborated on ways that Anzac might accommodate this reading of pluralism. Louie’s dad was ‘not even born in Australia’ but he saw that his father ‘really connect[ed] with’ Anzac because he ‘had family, Maltese family, in the wars’. Louie supposed Anzac Day was ‘a day for everyone I guess, who’s lost their family, to remember’.\textsuperscript{94} Louie’s father’s feelings on Anzac Day transcended the limitations of nationality, drawing Anzac Day back to a day of commemoration, but expanding its parameters to encompass a global reach.

It was particularly interesting to listen to Maria’s reflection on how her background could fit within Anzac. Maria, a student who attended a Melbourne public school, came from South America and her family had fled a dictatorship and made a new home in Australia. ‘It’s heavy,’ she said, ‘Cos you think, okay, so this happened about a century ago … it’s really, like, emotional … to me it hits close and I don’t even have any family here. It’s weird … We went through a dictatorship’. Maria felt she could draw a connection to Anzac through this experience. Her family’s endurance of such

\textsuperscript{92} Eleanor Hancock, ‘“They also served”: Exaggerating women’s role in Australia’s wars’, in Craig Stockings (ed.), Anzac’s Dirty Dozen: 12 Myths of Australian Military History (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2012), p.100.
\textsuperscript{94} ‘Louie’, interview with students, Melbourne, 6 June 2012.
turbulent times gave her an access point to Anzac, a shared experience of hardship and unrest that made Anzac a relatable history. Another student listening to Maria endorsed her classmate’s thinking. ‘That makes sense,’ she said.\textsuperscript{95} Maria did not think she was alone in this either. She told me:

I think also, like, people who come from another country also like think of their experience with stuff like that, so it keeps going, like for Australians, but for other people who live here it keeps like a reality of what is going on.\textsuperscript{96}

Bruce Scates describes a similar response from a young boy from ‘war-torn Africa’ finding a ‘therapeutic quality’ at Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance.\textsuperscript{97} The Shrine was not built for this boy’s war. In spite of the permanency of the grand stone structure, like Anzac, the memorial’s meaning is constantly evolving.

Some believe that the only way that Anzac will continue to thrive, or even survive, is to encourage this approach. Inga Clendinnen’s work engages with just this issue. ‘Can the layered histories contained in Anzac Day commemorations be inserted into the awareness of recent migrants to this country?’ she asks. She answers unequivocally in the affirmative: ‘They have their own wars to remember. But the loss of young men dead in battle is a universal grief, and their mourning a universal practice. I think Anzac Day will expand to include them. It will certainly die without them.’\textsuperscript{98}

\textsuperscript{95} ‘Maria’, interview with students, Melbourne, 15 November 2012.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{97} Scates, \textit{A Place to Remember}, pp.218-220.
The Colmar Brunton report warned the government that Clendinnen’s and Maria’s kind of approach might ‘antagonise[] those who see [Anzac] as a strong national reference point’.99 Frank Bongiorno observes how a related tension might emerge: ‘If everyone is invited to participate in a national ritual – even if the terms of that inclusion remain unequal – it becomes easier to criticize as ungrateful those who remain aloof’.100

Perhaps it is unfair to read the dialogue this way, but on occasion, traces of this resentment were evident. At a regional Victorian school, Millie seemed bewildered, even indignant, that anyone might feel excluded from Anzac: ‘I don’t know, understand, if anyone could feel alienated.’101 At another school, Erin suggested that a willingness to build a connection to Anzac ‘depends on, like, [someone’s] religion and whether they like embrace the Australian culture’.102 Millie’s and Erin’s responses appear to echo the DVA report’s warning about possible ‘divisiveness’.

**Building Connections**

Some young Australians do not feel able to connect to Anzac through the threads of ancestry or they are uninspired by the traces of pluralism in its histories. Nonetheless, this does not deter some young people from forging a connection with this past. Here it is helpful to consider the work of Alison Landsberg. Her notion of ‘prosthetic memory’ can illuminate the ways some young Australians respond to Anzac, particularly following an experience like visiting a memorial or as part of a pilgrimage to the First World War’s battlefields and cemeteries.

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101 Student interview, ‘Millie’.

Landsberg proposes that ‘prosthetic memory’ is ‘a new form of public cultural memory’.\(^{103}\) She explores how people might be affected by experiences that they did not live through and how they might be touched by stories to which they are not traditionally bound. At this new interface ‘the person does not simply apprehend a historical narrative but takes on a more personal, deeply felt memory of a past even through which he or she did not live’.\(^{104}\) Taking on these types of ‘memory’ might occur via modern technology or perhaps via place.

On Anzac Day, rising in the early morning, moving with the crowds across dark cities, suburbs, and towns, Australians make their way to memorials for the dawn service. Inspired by myriad reasons, some are seeking out a connection to the past through the performance of remembrance. In her essay, Harper expressed this desire: ‘every year I walk to the dawn service. We all walk together in silence. Searching to be connected to those who fought.’\(^{105}\)

Other students spoke of similar longings, albeit in less polished expression. Millie, who noted that she had a cousin in Afghanistan, talked about travelling the long distance to Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance. She admitted it ‘was a pain in the butt getting up that early’, but beyond the inconvenience, Millie found it a deeply moving experience. Millie described: ‘40,000 other people there and you saw how much it meant to so many people and, like, it’s a pain in the arse getting up in the morning, but when you get there, it’s you just feel so much different, so much better’.\(^{106}\) Millie’s kind of catharsis evokes Ken Inglis’ description of Anzac offering a ‘nourishment for the spirit’.\(^{107}\) Also at the Shrine, Patrick had ‘sort of a good feeling, of what, sort of, Anzac Day was about and

\(^{103}\) Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, p.2.
\(^{104}\) Ibid.
\(^{105}\) RSL essay competition 2015, ‘Harper’.
\(^{106}\) Student interview, ‘Millie’.
\(^{107}\) Inglis, *Sacred Places*, p.572.
about how people sort of feel about the people who fought’.\textsuperscript{108} Presumably, their lack of sleep provided them with, as Ken Inglis once suggested, a ‘mild metaphorical identification with the men they have assembled to honour’.\textsuperscript{109}

The experiences of Anzac remembrance go beyond the sites of memory of memorials and commemorative anniversaries in the Australian landscape. Over the last decade, thousands of young Australians have visited Anzac memorials, cemeteries, and battlefields as part of government-funded awards, RSL-sponsored programs, and privately organised school tours. As noted earlier in this chapter, at three schools I spoke with students who had embarked on tours to First World War sites or who were preparing for this travel. These journeys were a topic of discussion in the interviews, and further to this, one of the schools provided written reflections by students on their pilgrimage.

Some historians have been quick to underestimate the knowledge and understanding that Australian visitors take to the sites of the First World War. Stuart Ward and Mark McKenna’s critique of Bruce Scates’ \textit{Return to Gallipoli} is largely dismissive of the participants of such journeys and their fall for the ‘lure of Gallipoli’.\textsuperscript{110} And Joy Damousi argues that ‘Few who attend these pilgrimages had much knowledge of the military campaigns or political history of the [sic] World War I.’\textsuperscript{111} Perhaps this a point where the differentiation of pilgrimages is so necessary, an example of why all those who travel to these sites should not be consolidated and treated as one homogenous group.

\textsuperscript{108} ‘Patrick’, interview with students, Melbourne, 15 November 2012.
\textsuperscript{109} Inglis, \textit{Sacred Places}, p.402.
\textsuperscript{110} Stuart Ward and Mark McKenna, ‘“It was really moving, mate”: The Gallipoli pilgrimage and sentimental nationalism in Australia’, \textit{Australian Historical Studies}, vol.38, no.129 (2007), p.144. See also, Bruce Scates, ‘The first casualty of war: A reply to McKenna’s and Ward’s “Gallipoli pilgrimage and sentimental nationalism”’, \textit{Australian Historical Studies}, vol.38, no.130 (2008), pp.312-321.
schools that conducted these overseas tours committed significant time and energy into organising (and in some cases, fundraising for) these tours. Students had a great sense of investment in their pilgrimage as a project and they embarked on extensive historical research. Rather than examine their factual knowledge of the battlefields, students’ personal responses to their journeys offer the most valuable insights to their historical consciousness across this experience.

From a boys’ school in Melbourne, Hugh insisted ‘one could not simply label our experience as a mere “study” tour’. ‘Ours,’ he declared, ‘was truly a pilgrimage’. Just as the Young Australia League boys valued the difficulty of their pilgrimage - sleeping in the barracks, the awful weather, negotiating a devastated landscape - these students craved an experience of hardship to legitimise their journey. Hugh’s classmate Lewis emphasised the testing moments they encountered: the physical toll of walking ‘several hours a day in the heat and often on beaten tracks’ and the exhaustion of ‘dealing with some quite heavy themes’.

Given these ‘heavy themes’, it is not surprising that for many students pilgrimage provoked emotion. Millie described how when she was standing onsite, all her ‘senses were heightened’. She was unprepared for her reaction. ‘I’d read [my] speech and all that beforehand … and I hadn’t cried reading it before, but I got there and I was a mess,’ she admitted. Others, who were confident they could resist the impact of ‘being there’, were sometimes surprised by their reaction. Lachlan described himself as ‘quite a non-emotional country boy’ who had ‘no room for softness’, but he was taken aback by the overpowering sadness he felt on his journey.

113 Student interview, ‘Millie’.
Some of the students felt that emotion was appropriate, indeed, expected of them. In his examination of the Connecting Spirits school tours, Romain Fathi concluded, ‘crying was an important pattern of the commemorative journey’. As the Tour Historian with the 2015 Victorian Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize, I observed the same. Of the twelve students on the tour, half broke down in tears when we visited the cemeteries and memorials in France, Belgium, and Turkey. Students fostered an anticipation of crying that appeared to validate an authenticity in their connection to the places and experiences of pilgrimage. It would be easy to dismiss these responses, after all, at times such intense feelings appear disproportionate. But these emotions are felt and it is necessary to acknowledge them, but also interrogate them.

It is understandable why students think that this kind of reaction to Anzac is fitting. It is entirely acceptable, even desirable, for adults to become overwhelmed at similar occasions. One of the teacher chaperones on the Spirit of Anzac tour recalled how he was ‘brought to tears as the students began to tell the often tragic stories of their diggers’. This teacher’s reaction conveys an intimacy that often develops within pilgrimage groups, but emotion is also an official response. Prime Minister Hawke’s voice quivered at Gallipoli; Paul Keating kissed the ground at Kokoda; and at Anzac, John Howard’s voice ‘cracked’ and the Opposition Leader Kim Beasley ‘wip[ed] away tears’. Children take their cues from adults and adults have demonstrated that emotion is the appropriate response to Anzac. Comparing students’ emotionally-charged journeys with the Young Australia League pilgrimages in the 1920s, evidently a shift has occurred which permits, even encourages

displays of ‘expressive grief’. Although the League boys reacted with solemnity, there were no descriptions of their tearful outbursts - sombre reverence, yes, not crying though. However, for modern Australians, men included, there appears to be no restrictions on emotion when it comes to Anzac.

Sometimes students’ emotion resulted from descendants who, even a century on, were affected by visiting the graves of their forebears or memorials to their memory. Young people, five or six generations on, conveyed a sense of relief that they could visit a site so many of their relatives, living and dead, longed to see. It was as though they were the final step of a long family journey. The anticipation could be overwhelming. ‘[C]ould I actually relate to a man who I’d never met,’ one student asked himself, ‘and what would I feel when I found the plaque that bore my ancestor’s name?’

Not all of the students had so tactile a connection with a family past. As part of his pilgrimage, Bart researched one of his school’s ‘old boys’ and he was struck by what he saw as their shared identity. That soldier had ‘walked through the same gates,’ he explained, ‘... it’s weird to think about like that’. These ‘same gates’ are a reminder that pilgrimages are often placed firmly within school and local communities. Reminiscent of the obligations of the League boys, students like Bart felt their journey entailed a sense of responsibility - to their school, their local area, even their country. Like Bart, students without the bond of family assumed custody of a local individual, someone from their home town or an alumnus from their school. Calling to mind George’s assessment earlier in this chapter, that family makes Anzac a ‘little bit more special’, was there a kind

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120 ‘Bart’, interview with students, Melbourne, 6 June 2012.
of tiered system among groups?¹²¹ Were some individuals’ connection with an imagined Anzac past more genuine than others? Belinda did not think so. She strongly believed that while family links were powerful, they were not necessary. Belinda argued that by researching any individual you could build an intimacy: ‘You get to know the person … [and] It doesn’t really matter if it’s a family member, it’s just how well you get to know them … it still hits home’.¹²²

How is it possible to ‘get to know’ these strangers in the past? Students can access a veritable treasure trove of records online to animate this story. Readily available sources from the First World War include the Red Cross Wounded and Missing files, embarkation and honour rolls, and unit diaries on the Australian War Memorial website. However, the most drawn-on archival resource is the service dossier collection. As part of their research, students can type in the name of any member of the First AIF and discover their record. Many items might be included in a file, such as detailed notes on the individual’s movements during the war; correspondence with the subject or their family (during the war and after); descriptions of burials, medical notes detailing sickness, injury, even venereal disease; citations for awards; reports of indiscipline; and an outline of the person’s physical appearance. Students remarked how these sources somehow made the past ‘real’ to them. Laura, a student who had virtually flicked through the pages of the service dossiers, explained how examining the archival record confirmed ‘this is a real person, it really happened’.¹²³

¹²¹ Student interview, ‘George’. Joy Damousi has also written about a similar ‘special authority’ of Anzac ancestry in ‘Why do we get so emotional about Anzac?’, in Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds with Mark McKenna and Joy Damousi (eds.), What’s Wrong with Anzac?: The Militarisation of Australian History (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), p.97.
¹²³ ‘Laura’, interview with students, regional Victoria, 20 September 2012. The National Archives of Australia provides an instructional video navigating the First AIF service dossiers, ‘Unlocking World War I service records: Investigating records’, accessed 16 April 2018,
Catriona Pennell’s analysis of British school students on Western Front educational tours suggests that those without family links often appreciate being able to assert a connection to this history via an individual or from a local level. She notes students’ reactions to visiting an ‘adopted’ soldiers’ grave was often emotional. Possibly this process of ‘adoption’ is appealing, and so commonly employed in pilgrimages, because then all children (not just descendants) are permitted to have a moving experience.

Reading their travel diaries and reflections, young people described how they were moved by their pilgrimage experience. They claimed that the effects of their journey were long-lasting too. Lachlan was moved by his own personal transformation. Beyond historical detail, he believed he had ‘learnt something a bit closer to home’. Imagining his mother and father’s reaction to his own death was likely distressing, but Lachlan also thought it gave him ‘a new determination in caring and loving [his] parents, more than ever before’. Perhaps it was also because he was a little homesick, but Lachlan suggested his realisation came as a result of reading heartbreaking epitaphs like: ‘A painful shock, a blow severe to part with one so dear, mother.’ Chris, who travelled alongside Lachlan, believed his reading of history was also reshaped by the emotional impact of his journey. He wrote: ‘Before, if you had asked me what my understanding of the First World War was, I would most likely have attempted to recount campaigns and battles, forgoing any mention of the men that fought and were consumed in them’. But now Chris’ attention had shifted to ‘the men missing from their families and the loss of such potential, faith and

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idealism’. Lachlan’s and Chris’ emotional renewal are examples of Landsberg’s suggestion that ‘prosthetic memory teaches ethical thinking by fostering empathy’. Students respond to Anzac pilgrimages in diverse ways and they are influenced by the groups they travel with (their fellow students and the teachers who guide them), the stories they learn, as well as the expectations they bring from home. The intensity of some students’ reactions might seem disproportionate, but they are still felt emotions and should not be disregarded. In any case, students’ experiences go beyond tears. As a result of their pilgrimage, many young Australians forge powerful links with the past and take away deeply personal lessons.

**Conclusion**

Historian Inga Clendinnen is not fond of some of the new characteristics of Anzac. As she observes (with no small trace of regret), ‘every generation will take the old legends and make them real,’ in doing so, ‘Anzac Day is no longer mine, but theirs’. Clendinnen’s is a practical, if reluctant, acceptance. Inevitably, today’s young Australians will shape and reshape Anzac just as previous generations did the same before them. At this point, rather than criticise their reading of Anzac, it is a far more useful approach to ask young Australians what they want from this tradition. Considering young Australians’ connection to Anzac, it is essential to maintain a broad perspective. The students I surveyed often evoked the spirituality of (to use Ken Inglis’ phrase) ‘a sort of civil religion’ or the enthusiastic nationalism associated with the occasion. Still, it was certainly not the case that these young people were

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127 Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, p.149.
129 Inglis, ‘They Shall Not Grow Old’.
mindlessly conscripted to a simple or singular narrative. Students spoke about Anzac through the prism family, articulating its histories through their ancestry. Others attempted to reinvigorate Anzac by actively seeking out multicultural dimensions. Some raised doubts and a few even challenged Anzac’s meaning in modern Australia. There was also an important silence. Although many young Australians are fascinated by Anzac’s histories or proud of its significance, arguably, many more do not feel strongly connected to its meanings or its commemorations. Though they respectfully acknowledge the value of an Anzac tradition, they are not compelled to pursue anything further than polite annual attention. This indifference, or at least more casual interest, in Anzac contrasts with the impression that young Australians are captivated by this history.
Chapter Six
Teaching Anzac: Teachers and Today’s Classroom

Teaching Anzac can prove a challenging task. Teachers are asked to craft programs that captivate students without glorifying war, instruct lessons that encourage inquiry, stimulate debate without diminishing the appalling loss of human life and the trauma that follows war, all the while, training their charges in best history practice. Beside these expectations, many teachers also take charge of commemoration within their school communities, they are, as Jay Winter defines, ‘agents of remembrance’, at work in the ‘borderlands linking families, civil society, and the state’.

Although this thesis is focussed on presenting children’s encounters with Anzac, invariably, adults’ actions, ideas, and politics impact children. The previous chapter gave young people the opportunity to voice their experiences and reflect on their relationship to Anzac in modern Australia. This chapter will turn to teachers to seek their assessments of how young Australians think about Anzac and to discover their insights into the continuities and changes of teaching this topic.

From the outset of this chapter, it is necessary to acknowledge the vast range of students that teachers work with in the classroom. Tony Taylor notes that this is a professional issue frequently overlooked by university academics in their advice to teachers. Those working outside school environments often disregard the challenging dynamics of a school history classroom, compared to university student cohorts of (generally) more engaged young adults. The

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diversity of school students is relevant to my argument that lessons taught in
the classroom are received in different ways by individual students.

ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority)
provides examples of work that model varying standards of student ability in
history. Examining two of these examples within the Year 9 depth study of the
First World War highlights the broad scope of students’ historical sensibilities
and their capabilities in the classroom.

In the ‘above satisfactory’ example, students present a radio broadcast on
conscription. The group conducts an interview with Prime Minister Billy
Hughes, ‘fresh from the cryogenics lab’. Students ask inquiring questions,
demonstrate a breadth of research that encompasses the social, military, and
political repercussions of conscription, and they articulate the divisive legacy of
the referenda. ‘Billy Hughes’ responds to the interviewer with confident
answers detailing the chronology of falling recruitment numbers, the
dissemination of propaganda, the split in the Labor Party, and the sectarian
divide in Australian society. The students display numerous objectives of the
Year 9 history standards. They ‘analyse[d] the causes and effects of events and
developments and [made] judgments about their importance’, they explained
‘the motives and actions of people at the time’, and compared different points
of view.3

In ACARA’s example of ‘below satisfactory’ work, ‘Frank’ and ‘Andy’,
otherwise known by their nicknames ‘Beef’ and ‘Tank’ (after all, he had killed
fifty-four people), speak with pronounced Southern drawls which disappear
halfway through the podcast. Other than offering a list of motivations for

June 2015,
enlistment, the students’ recording is a deeply flawed response and their chronology is utterly confused, beginning as a recollection from home and ending with a reprimand from a commanding officer as they march across the battlefield.  

Beyond the scope of students’ abilities, teachers also confront a range of student engagement. In an interview with Phillip, who teaches at a private boys’ school in Melbourne, he suggested that many of his results-driven students were ‘passive learners’. These boys were uninterested in developing historical skills and unconvinced about the subject’s intrinsic value. Phillip’s students wanted to know how to best meet the criteria of assessment to achieve the highest possible marks. Phillip’s ‘passive learners’ were motivated by academic success, but disengaged students also sit at the other end of the scale. Teachers often have to work with students who are not motivated to be in a history classroom, let alone those students who have little interest even being at school. In classrooms around Australia, teachers encounter students with a range of capabilities and differing levels of motivation, making it impossible to discover a neat, summary conclusion about the impact of any lesson on students.

Peter Stearns, Peter Seixas, and Sam Wineburg suggest that history teaching has received relatively little scholarly attention, despite its essential role in the development of historical thinking. These experts argue that schools are the ‘major site for the construction of collective memory in contemporary society’, yet far more attention has focussed on other sites, like museums and

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5 ‘Phillip’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 6 June 2012.
memorials. While classroom experiences must be placed within a broader understanding of historical thinking, teachers and their students warrant closer, more nuanced, examination. Stearns, Seixas, and Wineburg are imaginative in their analysis, they survey teaching materials, observe classrooms, and they engage in dialogue with teachers and students. Although their subjects are based in North America, the model of their resourceful research illustrates what is required for a developed understanding of teaching history. Their scholarship also confirms my argument that it is necessary to consider students’ learning experiences beyond reading their textbooks.

**Research Methodology**

This chapter is based on three avenues of research in order to present an informed account of teaching Anzac in contemporary classrooms. The foundational research for this chapter is teachers’ testimony and, ultimately, their interviews guided its structure. In 2012 to 2013, I conducted a series of interviews with secondary school teachers. Just as with the students, every effort was made to include as diverse a sample group as possible. In total, I spoke with fourteen teachers from Victoria and South Australia. Schools were located in inner and outer suburbs and in regional areas, and their student cohorts reflected a broad spectrum of socio-economic levels. Eight teachers taught at government schools and six taught at non-government schools. The sample group included ten female and four male teachers. In 2011, almost sixty per cent of secondary school teachers were female, thus speaking with more women than men was fitting given the dynamics of the profession. The teachers invited to participate in this research had a public profile either as an

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accomplished history teacher or as a teacher with a particular interest in Anzac histories. Following from the initial interviews, some teachers referred colleagues who they thought might be willing to participate as well. I also spoke with one university history educationalist, a teacher to future history teachers, which offered a complementary layer to the main sample of interviews.

Not all the teachers I interviewed were professionally history trained, a small number had been placed in the history classroom because their humanities background was regarded sufficient preparation. This is a common issue particularly in under-resourced and under-staffed schools. Lila was trained in sociology and psychology, but found herself teaching history at her school on the fringe on Melbourne’s suburban sprawl. It was enough that ‘sociology kind of comes under humanities,’ she told me. Teaching ‘out of field’ is not limited to history, rather it is part of a broader educational problem in Australia which needs to be taken into account in this thesis. As Diane Ravitch notes in her American study: ‘There appears to be a presumption that teaching history requires no special skills beyond the ability to stay a few pages ahead of the students in the textbook.’ Those interviewed were mostly highly motivated teachers and engaged with their students, school community, and professional networks, but they recognised not all history teachers were as enthusiastic as themselves.

The interviews with teachers were one-on-one and their duration varied from twenty to sixty minutes. A list of suggested questions was offered beforehand,

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though most teachers chose not to read through this guide, preferring to speak candidly and perhaps also limiting the time commitment of this exercise.

The other avenues of research used to construct an informed representation of modern secondary school history classrooms are the resources available to teachers. These materials are developed by professional organisations, including the official curriculum body ACARA, as well as textbook publishers, educational networks, and external, but invested, organisations. This chapter will examine a DVA secondary school resource booklet distributed to schools around the country in 2014. I will also analyse a sample of six Year 9 history textbooks designed to meet the requirements of the Australian Curriculum. Evaluating these resources, it is necessary to acknowledge that it is not possible to know the diverse readings and applications each teacher and classroom will make with the same materials.

Although teachers influence children’s historical thinking, they are not necessarily a particularly trusted authority. Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton found that teachers ranked only seventh out of eleven options of reliable sources of history.\(^\text{10}\) Despite this reasonably poor placing, teachers, and their educational resources, are the public representation of how the past is relayed to another generation. As such, teachers, as ‘agents of remembrance’, and educational materials, as ‘sites of memory’, are worthy subjects of interrogation.\(^\text{11}\)

\(^{10}\) Hamilto and Ashton, ‘At Home with the Past’, p.17.
\(^{11}\) Winter, ‘Forms of kinship and remembrance in the aftermath of the Great War’, pp.40-60; Winter, Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning.
Teaching Anzac Histories

‘Anzac has always been popular,’ Ellen assured me.\textsuperscript{12} She is certainly qualified to speak with authority, she has taught for decades and has long been a stalwart in professional history teacher organisations. The other teachers agreed with Ellen’s assessment, war histories were the most popular subjects within Australian history and there seemed to be an enduring appeal. As discussed in Chapter Five, Anzac histories possess an essential fascination to students compared to other chapters of Australian history. Ellen conceded that she and her colleagues ‘struggle to build excitement about Federation’. She continued: ‘When you do “Gold” [students] will say, “I’ve done this in Grade Five, or I did this in Grade Six”’.\textsuperscript{13} Even though Anzac is appealing, the teachers noted time and again that Australian history, as an overarching subject, struggled against other histories offered to students. Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton pose this as ‘The extent to which Gallipoli and governors can compete with gladiators and goddesses is a perennial challenge for the professional history teacher.’\textsuperscript{14}

While its popularity might have been steady for some time, some things were new in the subject of Anzac. The senior teachers I interviewed had all noticed the marked increase in educational materials available for studying war histories, even if none thought they were teaching the topic any more frequently than they had in the past. These materials, produced by textbook publishers, professional networks, and external parties, will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{12} ‘Ellen’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 28 February 2012.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Ashton and Hamilton, ‘Facing facts?’, p.50. For further reading on students’ apathy for Australian history, see Clark, History’s Children, in particular, pp.20-42; Zarmati, ‘A lesson for Christopher Pyne’.
In their interviews, teachers expressed a careful and thoughtful approach towards Anzac histories, aware they were treading in precarious historical terrain and working with a subject imbued with public expectations. Historians and teachers alike understand that Anzac can be a particularly ‘difficult’ and ‘emotive’ subject.15 Regardless of its complexities, teachers gave no indication that Anzac’s more challenging questions should be avoided, instead, these questions provided an opportunity to engage students with the contestability of the past.

At a private boys’ school in Melbourne’s outer suburbs, Garry believed his students grasped the often fraught nature of Anzac as a historical subject. Garry was not worried though. ‘I don’t think they get to a point where [the students] are fearful in any particular way,’ he said confidently. Garry reflected his students’ uninhibited approach to the subject.16 However, some teachers did sense external pressures on which histories should be covered in the classroom and how they ought to be taught. Michael lamented that some elements of his private school’s administration were ‘terrified of parental complaints’, which he suggested compelled a ‘drive for conformity’ in classrooms.17

At times, teachers recognised ‘conformity’ in the public veneration of Anzac and they regarded this as one of the ‘difficult’ aspects of the topic. Lorraine, who was finishing her career at a private girls’ school in Melbourne, admitted she had ‘a little anxiety about the glorification of it all’, but this was always something she had tried to explore with her students.18 Lila did not want her history classes to be about glorifying Anzac either. ‘We think of them as heroes,’

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16 ‘Garry’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 29 February 2012.
17 Teacher interview, ‘Michael’.
18 ‘Lorraine’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 2 February 2012.
she said, ‘but some of them weren’t heroes at all.’\textsuperscript{19} Both Lorraine and Lila wanted to convey the complexities of Anzac histories to their students, not shield them from uncomfortable questions.

At a government school in suburban Melbourne, Bridget remarked on the willingness of some education resources, and even some of her colleagues, to simplify Anzac’s messages. A young and passionate teacher, Bridget was ‘keen to avoid’ an emphasis on the redemptive stories of war. She believed that moments of friendship among enemies, celebrated scenes like the Christmas truce and Turkish and Anzac meetings in no-man’s-land, distorted the reality of the battlefield. Bridget argued that if you just ‘pick out those episodes and teach them to kids you do find that kids get an impression that …. those sorts of things happened all the time. That we loved the Turks … It’s completely unfair to say the Turks and the Australians loved each other. They were “besties” but they just happened to be in a war … It simplifies it’.\textsuperscript{20} Like Lorraine and Lila, Bridget believed her students were capable of working with challenging readings of the past.

Bridget’s willingness to confront romanticised Anzac imagery also points to the individual agency that teachers bring to the classroom. Bridget was young and still relatively early in her classroom career. She also recalled how her own history teachers had celebrated Anzac, and she was keen to avoid a similar interpretation. She referred to her undergraduate studies and emphasised the need to interrogate the complexities of war, stressing how important it was to ‘cast a critical eye over [history]’. How did this differ to Michelle, a teacher at a government school on the outskirts of Melbourne? Michelle was middle-aged, she was a member of her local RSL, and her father had served in Vietnam and

\textsuperscript{19} Teacher interview, ‘Lila’.

\textsuperscript{20} ‘Bridget’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 19 September 2012.
her grandfather in the Second World War. Michelle felt as though Anzac was, in a way, part of her identity and her classroom lessons reflected this. She drew on her personal experiences, her family’s stories, and her own journeys to Gallipoli and the Western Front as teaching resources.\textsuperscript{21} Just like the individual influences that condition every student’s response to Anzac, teachers’ ongoing readings of history are shaped and reshaped by a personal set of circumstances.\textsuperscript{22}

The problematising, or simplifying, of history is a priority of this chapter, but when I asked teachers the professional concerns they faced teaching Anzac, their response was based neither in pedagogy nor in content. Teachers are time poor. The teachers felt as though professional expectations constantly increased, while quality time with students seemed only to diminish. Michelle was ‘very anxious’ about the time she was allocated to teach Australia’s war histories:

My worry is that I don’t want to teach things superficially. But you kind of have to because otherwise you can’t get through everything … How the hell do you cram it all into a semester and do it justice … I just feel that I’m not doing the students justice because I just have to gloss over things so much … It will be a case of I’m just using it as a token effort, we’ll just quickly talk about women for half an hour and then we’ll go on and do something else, and that doesn’t seem fair.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{21} ‘Michelle’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 21 February 2012. Michelle is not alone in drawing on her own family history as a teaching resource. Catherine Hainstock, a teacher at Scotch College Senior School, describes how her own family history investigations could be similarly applied in the classroom, in ‘A family history mystery’, \textit{Agora}, vol.50, no.2 (August 2015), pp.41-46.

\textsuperscript{22} Catronia Pennell’s survey of British history teachers similarly highlights how variables such as a teacher’s age, their location, and their own cultural background would influence their approach to teaching the First World War, in ‘Learning lessons from war?’, pp.36-70.

\textsuperscript{23} Teacher interview, ‘Michelle’.
Teachers were also frustrated that essential lessons were sacrificed to a litany of school activities – class photographs, sports days, public holidays, VET commitments, were just a few mentioned.

I interviewed teachers in the early stages of the Australian Curriculum roll out and many schools were already implementing its new structures. History was one of four subjects, along with English, Mathematics, and Science, in the first phase of the Australian Curriculum’s introduction into schools, reflecting the value the public confers on these fields of study. Discussions between politicians and teachers in the design of the Australian Curriculum created a relationship that Robert Guyver describes as ‘fully tested and strained’. The teachers I spoke with had mixed feelings about the new curriculum. Ellen was displeased with the changes it would mean to her history program. Her school, a private boys’ school, offered a rich array of elective subjects and Ellen worried she would ‘lose that flexibility’. It was enough to make her question her career. ‘I might retrain as a Librarian!’ she despaired. Michael, from a similarly privileged school, recognised the benefits of change though. He believed that this was a ‘once in a generation attempt to rewrite the curriculum’. Michael was less optimistic about its application. He predicted that teachers would ‘weave [their] way around the national curriculum and just keep going with the status quo’. Michael noted this was ‘really disappointing’.

26 Teacher interview, ‘Michael’.
As part of the Australian Curriculum, the First and Second World Wars are part of compulsory detailed study in Years 9 and 10. This chapter will focus on the Year 9 required depth study of the First World War. As part of this course, students work through the following questions of inquiry:

- An overview of the causes of World War I and the reasons why men enlisted to fight in the war;
- The places where Australians fought and the nature of warfare during World War I, including the Gallipoli campaign;
- The impact of World War I, with a particular emphasis on Australia including the changing role of women;
- The commemoration of World War I, including debates about the nature and significance of the Anzac Legend.

Alongside other subjects within the time period 1750 to 1918, teachers guide students through three distinct depth studies to develop an understanding of the chronology of this era and the links that bind significant global events and movements. Students spend as long as twelve weeks studying the First World War.
War, as each depth study is equally weighted to make up thirty per cent of the course, with ten per cent allocated to an overview of units and key themes.  

Beyond its historical content, the Australian Curriculum includes a focus on historical concepts as well. British educationalist Peter Lee distinguishes between the kinds of concepts introduced to school students in the history classroom, describing them as first and second order. First order concepts are ‘historical phenomena’ and for the study of the First World War might include familiarising students with terms such as militarism, imperialism, alliances, and empires. Second order concepts are the ‘organizing ideas’ that ‘give meaning and structure to our ideas of the discipline of history’. The Australian Curriculum includes seven such concepts in its overarching aims; evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, empathy, and contestability. The Australian Curriculum is designed with consideration beyond content and seeks to develop students’ historical thinking across their entire school learning experience.

Historical thinking can be a difficult task for students. Sam Wineburg’s research demonstrates how it is an ‘unnatural’ instinct and how historical thinking is a trained skill. Teaching these second order concepts also challenges the fact-focussed histories which are designed to enhance a collective identity. Advocates of such an approach argue that concentrating on second order concepts is ‘a distraction at best and a threat to the efficacy of the project at

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32 Australian Curriculum, ‘Year 9 level description’.

33 Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*. 251
It is commendable that the Australian Curriculum has persevered with a commitment to developing students’ historical thinking through second order concepts, instead of stagnating in the false dichotomy of historical skills versus historical facts.

Returning to the specific discussion of how Anzac histories are placed within the Australian Curriculum, it is worth investigating if the Curriculum provides the appropriate scaffolding to teach Australia’s war histories. Stuart Macintyre, one of the historians who advised ACARA on its course development, is not convinced of the final results for Anzac. He lamented that ‘ACARA judged that a curriculum that did not tell of Lone Pine and Pozières would bring headlines in The Australian and incite Alan Jones, so they reinstated the Anzac story in its familiar current form’. This ‘familiar’ history, Macintyre complains, ‘treats that story as unproblematic’ and he is further troubled by the continuing ‘solipsism’ of Anzac.

Macintyre’s concerns of ‘solipsism’ are discernible in the distinct Australian emphasis of the Year 9 First World War depth study, especially when compared to the Year 10 Second World War depth study, where a world history focus is more evident. In the Second World War depth study, students are asked to consider a range of global sites, experiences, and impacts, grounding Australia in a transnational history. In the First World War depth study, ‘Australia’ is emphasised in three of the four course questions and the fourth question emphasises ‘Anzac’. It is understandable that in Australian classrooms

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34 Peter Seixas, ‘Schweigen! Die kinder! Or, does postmodern history have a place in the schools?’, in Peter Stearns, Peter Seixas and Sam Wineburg (eds.), Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives (New York: New York University Press, 2000), p.25.

Australia is positioned as the focal point for exploration, however, it seems as though this unit’s framework does not encourage ‘the world’ in the First World War. Even if teachers wanted to depart from this rigid outline, given the competing demands to cover all the requisite questions in the Curriculum, there is arguably little opportunity.

Australia’s eternal fixation with Gallipoli is confirmed in this depth study. The course’s second key question requires students to explore the ‘places where Australians fought and the nature of warfare during World War I, including the Gallipoli campaign’.

Referencing Gallipoli specifically, and the implied anxiety that it might be omitted, underscores this site’s continued bias in Australia’s war histories. The Anzac landing on the Turkish Peninsula has long been read as the birth of the nation, and represented, as Sarah Mitford terms, as a ‘militaristic origin myth’. This can be a difficult idea to explore because, as Peter Stanley notes, ‘no one ever actually explains what “the birth of a nation” actually means’.

Trying to find out what this mythology ‘actually means’ would be a worthy area of historical exploration for students within the depth study’s fourth inquiry question: ‘The commemoration of World War I, including debates about the nature and significance of the Anzac legend.’

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36 Australian Curriculum, ‘Year 9 depth studies’.
question is plainly intended to explore the battlefields, ensuring that Gallipoli is studied. Beyond Gallipoli’s cultural impacts, many military historians question the campaign’s strategic significance. Robin Prior describes the legacy of Gallipoli as a ‘great missed opportunity … [a] decisive masterstroke that could have ended the war in half the time with half the cost’ as erroneous.40 Prior, and others including Peter Hart and Nigel Steel, argue that Gallipoli had far less military consequence than is widely perceived.41 Prior makes the ‘unwelcome conclusion’ that, in the end, Gallipoli was ‘fought in vain’ and offered neither victory to the Allies nor advantage to the ‘deadly contest being played out on the Western Front’.42

Elevating Australia’s Gallipoli experience pushes this campaign outside of its context and presents it as though it is not part of a bigger story – the bigger story of the Turkish Peninsula and the bigger story of the First World War. The particular course question raises concerns that if the Australian Curriculum was supposed to work towards a world history approach, why does this depth study seem so narrowly Australian and this question so parochially fixated on Gallipoli? Further to this, Gallipoli is not just an Australian story. It is a New Zealand, British, Irish, French, Newfoundland, Indian, Senegalese, and of course a German and Turkish story too. The Year 9 First World War depth study stands apart from the wider Australian Curriculum’s rationale for Year 7 to Year 10 history, claiming it ‘generally takes a world history approach within

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which the history of Australia is taught’. This is because, as Macintyre explains: ‘We will understand history better if we understand it through a world history perspective – it’s that way that we’re able to understand the experience of others and equally we can use that to illuminate and enrich our understanding of our own history.’ Within the field of military history there is advocacy for more diverse studies of the battlefields. Historians, such as Stephen Badsey, demonstrate how readings of Gallipoli are all the more informative when situated within the campaign’s transnational and imperial actuality. Arguably, it is also necessary that Australia places itself within a world history context in a study of the First World War battlefields, otherwise there is a tendency to ‘aggrandise’ our nation’s role.


44 Ibid. According to Ross E. Dunn, world history allows teachers to ‘adopt a more elastic and situation-centered sense of historical space, they position themselves to prove the meaning of events more comprehensively, introduce data that reveal new patterns, and open up fresh lines of large-scale or comparative analysis’. In his work, Dunn explores the different interpretations of ‘world history’, after all, this approach to history is multifarious and teachers will employ its paradigm in different ways, in ‘Constructing world history in the classroom’, in Peter Stearns, Peter Seixas and Sam Wineburg (eds.), Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives (New York: New York University Press, 2000), p.129, pp.121-142. For further reading on world history, see Ross E. Dunn (ed.), The New World History: A Teacher’s Companion (Boston: St Martin’s Press, 2000); Heidi Roupp (ed.), Teaching World History in the Twenty-First Century: A Resource Book (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2010). For world history in the Australian Curriculum, see Tracy Sullivan, ‘World history v historical inquiry and historical understandings: It’s not one or the other’, Teaching History, vol.44, no.2 (June 2010), pp.27-29; Deborah Henderson, ‘A situated approach to historical thinking in the Australian Curriculum: History’, Agora, vol.47, no.3 (2012), pp.4-11.


Aside from the First World War depth study’s initial question about the outbreak of the conflict, little space is available to consider other nations’ experiences. As discussed in Chapter Five though, students are calling out for this kind of interrogation. This appears to be an example where students have ‘little sway’ in such matters. Though, it seems historians and history teachers have equally ‘little sway’ when it comes to Anzac.47

**Educational Resources**

The teachers I spoke with did not feel restricted by a lack of Anzac resources. Lorraine was somewhat overwhelmed by the materials available now. She described, ‘tonnes … in fact, it’s almost … mind-boggling’.48 One of the most prolific producers of these ‘tonnes’ of resources is DVA.

The widespread dissemination of DVA education resources has caused consternation that a government department can be so influential and so present in the classroom.49 DVA has certainly produced an extraordinary number of resources to distribute in schools. In 2014-2015, this department generated more than half a million items of ‘community awareness and education resources’, including teaching kits, brochures, posters, and calendars.50 With these figures, it is clear why James Brown describes education as the Anzac ‘arms race’.51 The abundance of these kinds of materials also leads

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47 Clark, History’s Children, p.18.
48 Teacher interview, ‘Lorraine’.
49 Lake, ‘How do schoolchildren learn about the spirit of Anzac?’, pp.135-156.
many to wonder whether such expenditure is the most effective use of public funds.\textsuperscript{52}

Although the RSL remains the leading symbolic stakeholder organisation of
Anzac, in contemporary Australia their influence is arguably secondary to DVA
as the cultural authority shaping public readings of Anzac. This department is
no longer only about taking care of returned servicemen and women. In their
2014-2015 \textit{Annual Report}, DVA described how its ‘investments in educational
facilities and content will contribute to the long-term legacy of the Anzac
Centenary, delivering benefits across Australia long after the end of the
Centenary period’.\textsuperscript{53}

To gain insights into DVA education materials, this chapter will examine one of
their publications, the secondary school resource \textit{We Remember Anzac}.
Distributed to all schools in November 2014, the booklet was supplemented
with a CD of the Last Post, Rouse, and national anthems.\textsuperscript{54} \textit{We Remember Anzac}
states that it is ‘aligned with the Australian Curriculum’ and that while it can be
adapted to a variety of subjects and year levels, it has a ‘particular relevance’ to
the Year 9 history depth study of the First World War.\textsuperscript{55}

The pedagogy of \textit{We Remember Anzac} is categorised as inquiry approach with
the aim: ‘to engage students in a learning journey as they construct their own
understandings about the contribution and commemoration of Australian
servicemen and women’. The resource further suggests: ‘Teachers should

\textsuperscript{52} See, for example, Brown, \textit{Anzac’s Long Shadow}.
\textsuperscript{53} Department of Veterans’ Affairs, \textit{Department of Veterans’ Affairs Annual Report 2014-2015}, p.4.
\textsuperscript{54} Department of Veterans’ Affairs, \textit{We Remember Anzac: Secondary Resource} (Canberra:
Department of Veterans’ Affairs, 2014). As well as its hardcopy, \textit{We Remember Anzac} is available
secondary-resource.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., p.4.
encourage students to reflect on the inquiries and draw their own conclusions.’56 Such a statement of intention articulates a balanced and thoughtful methodology.

Generally, the teachers I interviewed were impressed by, or at least satisfied with, the pedagogy of the DVA materials. Alannah, the university history educationalist I spoke with, noted approvingly that their resources ‘model excellent inquiry methodology’.57 Teaching via inquiry goes far beyond the dreary instruction by rote and memorisation characteristic of bygone classrooms. Colin Marsh describes inquiry as ‘a way of teaching whereby teachers harness the natural curiosities of students into ways of thinking that are logical, rational and sustainable’. This pedagogy can be practically implemented by ‘a pattern of instruction whereby students decide what information they need; they use the teacher as a resource person, gather data individually or in small groups, and proceed to develop solutions to specific problems or issues’.58 Inquiry is at the very centre of historical study, as Rosalie Triolo emphasises ‘inquiry methodology is the study of history’.59 The purpose of inquiry is that rather than tell students the ‘right’ answers, students will arrive at their own conclusions through an empowering and rewarding learning experience. Of course, some educators have apprehensions about inquiry. They worry that it fosters an ‘abbreviated, shallow, decontextualised’ history that is unsupported by a strong narrative.60 Inquiry lessons are also particularly time-consuming for teachers to prepare and can make it difficult to

56 Ibid., p.5.
60 Ibid., p.54.
assess student achievements.\textsuperscript{61} Alannah outlined that as an approach it requires ‘a wise choice of what’s put in front of the students’ and ‘a knowledgeable and skilled teacher that will help students arrive at their own interpretation’.\textsuperscript{62}

Lorraine similarly thought that inquiry methodology required an attentive teacher. ‘It is not just throw it all out to them and see what happens,’ she explained, ‘You’ve got to still guide them through the steps … otherwise I’m not sure that they learn things that are that useful or productive.’\textsuperscript{63}

In terms of meeting the requirements of the Australian Curriculum, \textit{We Remember Anzac} addresses two key questions of the First World War depth study: ‘The places where Australians fought and the nature of warfare during World War I, including the Gallipoli campaign’ and ‘The commemoration of World War I, including debates about the nature and significance of the Anzac legend.’\textsuperscript{64}

\textit{We Remember Anzac} begins with an informative précis of Anzac Day’s evolution across nearly one hundred years, taking into account many influences including subsequent wars, academic study, gender, labour, and politics. The summary is an orientating point and would prove helpful to both students and teachers. Immediately following is an instructional guide to holding a commemorative service, a reminder of the perceived affinity between education and remembrance. This guide advises that when planning a service the most ‘important consideration’ is that students, staff, and the school community ‘feel

\textsuperscript{61} Marsh, \textit{Studies of Society and Environment}, p.195.
\textsuperscript{62} Teacher interview, ‘Alannah’.
\textsuperscript{63} Teacher interview, ‘Lorraine’.
\textsuperscript{64} \textit{We Remember Anzac} makes little or no reference to the questions of ‘An overview of the causes of World War I and the reasons why men enlisted to fight in the war’ and ‘The impact of World War I, with a particular emphasis on Australia including the changing role of women.’ This in itself is not a criticism because \textit{We Remember Anzac} does not claim to be a comprehensive or specific guide to this year level and topic, only that it has a ‘particular relevance’ to the Year 9 history course.
engaged with the event’ and that teachers should not be inhibited by ‘any fear that there is “one right way”’ to commemorate.\textsuperscript{65} We Remember Anzac lists the traditional acts of remembrance, such as wreaths, speeches, and marches, but it goes on to describe rather creative commemorations too, ‘an innovative dance performance’ and multimedia presentation, for example.\textsuperscript{66} Here, we see Anzac as a product of its contemporary setting. Its new dimensions of youth, multiculturalism, and diversity sit alongside its longing for older trappings of remembrance.

The sixteen student classroom activities in We Remember Anzac are similar to those that appear in the Year 9 history textbooks I will examine shortly. These exercises ask students to interrogate images, interpret written passages, and engage in creative and reflective tasks. The worksheets are easily extractable and could be used within existing lesson plans without difficulty. We Remember Anzac features a repeated design that sets out a sequence of images or quotes and asks students to complete an accompanying table with questions such as: ‘How do you think the people in this image might feel?’, ‘How does this image make you feel?’, ‘What form does the memorial take?’, and ‘Who does the memorial commemorate?’\textsuperscript{67} In total, six similarly styled exercises appear in the booklet. Possibly, the duplication of this lesson design is an indicator that We Remember Anzac is not intended to be taught from beginning through to end, because repetition of this activity hardly makes for an engaging history classroom.

Teachers would likely find We Remember Anzac a useful resource. Still, traces throughout the booklet remind readers this is a DVA production and it promotes particular messages. One of these messages is to make the Anzac

\textsuperscript{65} We Remember Anzac, p.10.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., p.11.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., p.22, p.38.
connection across a century, encouraging readers to collapse more than one hundred years of wars into one another. Page two of the booklet states that the Anzac Centenary ‘provides an opportunity for Australians to commemorate all those who have served in the last century’.\textsuperscript{68} Another page on, a timeline of Australia’s military involvement outlines more than a century of wars. These clear demarcations of history contrast with the fluid message that Anzac might begin with the First World War, but it continues to the present day.\textsuperscript{69}

Overall, \textit{We Remember Anzac} includes more content on Gallipoli compared to the Middle East or Western Front theatres of war. Given the Curriculum’s emphasis on ‘including Gallipoli’, it hardly seems fair to criticise an education resource for attempting to meet the implications of the syllabus’ requirements. It is also worth acknowledging how this teaching kit deals, in remarkable detail, with the mythologising of Gallipoli and asks \textit{why} it has taken such a prominent place in Australia’s national consciousness.\textsuperscript{70}

Addressing the battlefields and nature of warfare question, \textit{We Remember Anzac} includes powerful excerpts from soldiers’ diaries and letters. Private Cecil McAnulty’s testimony is a feature extract and in his last entry, he writes:

\begin{quote}
We were right out in the open and all the Turkish machine guns and rifles seemed to be playing on us and shrapnel bursting right over us. I yelled out to the other 4 chaps, “This is only suicide boys, I’m going to make a jump for it.” I thought they said alright we’ll follow. I sprang to my feet in one jump.\textsuperscript{71}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., p.2.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p.3. This timeline actually begins in 1899 with the Boer War and extends to modern peacekeeping operations.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., pp.58-61.
\textsuperscript{71} Private Cecil McAnulty Diary, August 1915, Gallipoli, IDRL/422, Australian War Memorial, cited in \textit{We Remember Anzac}, p.48.
This is an example of the most admired feature of the DVA materials. Most teachers admitted they actually use the DVA resources to cherry pick out the primary sources gathered within the packs. The diary extracts, letters, photographs, and similar items are essentially what make the DVA educational packs so appealing. ‘The first hand source material they offer is really good,’ Ellen told me. So rather than using the kits as they are set out, Ellen elaborated, ‘You dip in and out of what you want.’ \(^{72}\) This ‘dip[ping] in and out’ is a reminder of the agency and discretion of individual teachers. They shape their lessons with particular priorities and preferences. Alannah also argued that ‘voices’ from the past are the most affecting resource in the classroom. ‘To let the real people speak for themselves,’ she said, ‘that is so powerful in the teaching of history.’ \(^{73}\)

Time and again teachers echoed this point and stressed the importance of animating the past with the personal. Teachers believe that their classes respond best to ‘real’ people in history and, like teachers, as Bruce Scates observes, students have a ‘thirst for primary sources’. \(^{74}\) Still, evidence like diaries and letters from the battlefield cannot be left to students without guidance of how to interrogate sources. Effective examination of primary sources goes beyond mining an item for historical detail, and ultimately, learning to read these sources is a historical skill that teachers need to develop among their students. \(^{75}\) After all, as Peter Lee notes, ‘without an understanding

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\(^{72}\) Teacher interview, ‘Ellen’.

\(^{73}\) Teacher interview, ‘Alannah’.

\(^{74}\) Scates, ‘Encountering children’s history’, p.8.

of what makes an account historical, there is nothing to distinguish such an 
ability from the ability to recite sagas, legends, myths or poems’. 76

Often, animating history with personal accounts of the First World War is a 
means to provoke empathy, one of the second order concepts highlighted by 
the Australian Curriculum and an objective of many history lessons. Imagining 
the experiences of those from another time and another place can be an 
affecting learning experience, but empathy goes beyond pitying those in the 
past and further than imagining oneself in a historical scene. Peter Lee and 
Denis Shemilt argue that empathy’s extension is outside just ‘sympathy and 
identification with striving and suffering’. 77 Peter Seixas details how empathy is 
part of students’ capacity ‘to see and understand the world from a perspective 
not our own’. 78 Teachers need to be rigorous to anchor such lessons firmly in 
history, carefully scaffolding students’ exploration so they do not fall into 
inaccurate imaginings. This seems particularly relevant given that many 
historians argue that regardless of the sources available, it is not possible to 
portray the reality of the First World War or any war. 79

From my interviews, it was clear that not all teachers integrate DVA education 
resources into their lessons and Marilyn Lake is mistaken when she describes a 
‘dependence’ on these materials. 80 While almost all the teachers I interviewed 
were familiar with the DVA materials, there was a limited application of them. 
Bridget did not want to appear ungrateful. ‘I appreciate [the resources] because 
they’re free and they’re a great, great thing,’ but she was not going to sacrifice

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79 Winter, War Beyond Words, p.7.
80 Lake, ‘How do schoolchildren learn about the spirit of Anzac?’, pp.155-156.
autonomy of her lessons for convenient worksheets and she made sure she was ‘judicious’ about anything she selected from the teaching kits. Other teachers seemed less principled about their use, or lack thereof. Garry admitted that he did not always get the DVA commemorative posters hung around the school. It ‘often depends upon how organised’ he was, confessing it was not a high priority.\textsuperscript{81}

Lila was one teacher who missed out on the DVA deliveries. Perhaps Lila’s colleagues were reluctant to share or maybe her position as a non-history trained teacher suggests that those on the perimeters of the speciality are not as aware of all the material available. Lila told me: ‘If anything, I felt like I’ve had to go and find my own resources’. However, she did not think this inhibited her lessons, she went on to explain how she shared resources with a network of interstate teachers.\textsuperscript{82}

Lila’s experience draws attention to one of the most valuable aspects of the teaching profession: sharing. Resources, lesson plans, and websites devoted to Anzac histories are created by and for teachers and shared within their professional communities and personal networks. Some of this material is available on the Curriculum Sharing Project. This platform provides teachers with the online space to share Anzac history units they have created with their peers. Teachers and academics designed these lesson plans and the content will be available on this ‘Anzac Portal’ throughout the Centenary years and beyond. The materials are watermarked by a photograph of the 29\textsuperscript{th} Battalion on the French battlefield, and the DVA and History Teachers’ Association of Australia logos are positioned in the bottom corners, as DVA hosts the website and the

\textsuperscript{81} Teacher interview, ‘Garry’.
\textsuperscript{82} Teacher interview, ‘Lila’.
HTAA administers the project.\textsuperscript{83} Although these resources are created by a diverse range of educational professionals, it is possible that some teachers might feel exasperated trying to maintain a distance from the department. It could be seen that DVA strives to monopolise this teaching space.

Perhaps this is why teaching organisations have also created resources that assert a space from the authority of DVA. For instance, the HTAV (History Teachers’ Association of Victoria), in partnership with the Medical Association for the Prevention of War and the organisation, Act for Peace, created ‘The Enduring Effects of War’ education kit.\textsuperscript{84} HTAV was motivated by a professional anxiety about teaching this topic and the risks that students might ‘glorify [war] or brush over its consequences’.\textsuperscript{85} The detailed content of the program offers a medical and scientific perspective of war and the HTAV aimed to shape a resource that demonstrated effective pedagogy and spoke to the necessities of curriculum requirements.

Other organisations, aside from DVA, also provide educational materials to teachers for Anzac histories, such as the Australian War Memorial and the National Museum of Australia. Internationally, institutions, including the Imperial War Museum, Auckland Museum, and In Flanders Field Museum offer resources that could work successfully in Australian classrooms.\textsuperscript{86}

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\textsuperscript{83} Several of the units were crafted by universities including the University of Melbourne, RMIT, La Trobe University, and Australian Catholic University. All the resources can be viewed at Department of Veterans’ Affairs, ‘Anzac Portal’, accessed 28 July 2015, www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au/teachers/resources.


\end{flushleft}
Some teachers have also independently made their lesson designs available online. Lucy Marshall, a teacher at East Doncaster Secondary College, hosts a website called ‘Images of War’ based on her own experiences visiting the sites of the First World War. Her website employs the ‘principles of artefact inquiry’, offering teachers photographs and worksheets to use and adapt for their classroom.87 Marshall’s website demonstrates the imagination and resourcefulness of teachers, as well as the informal ways they distribute their ideas and successful strategies among their colleagues.

Fostering Connections

In the interviews with teachers, many spoke about the ways they sought to foster a ‘connection’ between their students and the past. Sam Wineburg argues that ‘We need to feel kinship with the people we study, for this is exactly what engages our interest and makes us feel connected.’88 This desire to ‘feel kinship with the people we study’ is an intrinsic motivator of studying history and it ‘engages our interest and makes us feel connected’.89

Ellen used the history of her school to teach Anzac and she felt her students shared a bond with the ‘old boys’ who fought in the First World War. She expanded on her approach:

There’s a sense that this was a [school name] boy, a [school name] old boy, he was here and he went off to war and there is his name, so it’s the [school name] connection but it’s also the very personal

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88 Wineburg, Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts, p.6.
89 Ibid.
connection, so we’re making it as personal as possible … and you know this is his story, he was here, he was school captain, he was interested in cricket, he liked to play football, he lived in [the same suburb]. So all those little connections build up to a broader connection.

Just as Belinda, a student from Chapter Five, insisted, it was a matter of ‘get[ting] to know’ these people from the past and Ellen believed that her students could be ‘equally moved’ by connecting with alumni, as with a family member. But Ellen’s was a school with a long history and its community was bound by a strong culture. So perhaps the privilege of certain schools extends beyond their financial resources. Compared to schools in Melbourne’s new urban sprawl, there appears to be an inequality of history too.

Kate worked at a government school in a particularly multicultural suburb in Melbourne where more than a third of the students speak a language other than English. Undeterred by the lack of ancestral ties to Anzac, Kate, similarly to Ellen, tried to build a connection through the local community. Using the school’s honour roll, Kate helped her students discover shared experiences. Students discovered they lived in streets ‘named after [a soldier]’ and they ‘worked out - “Oh, that local park up the road is named after that guy”’. Kate thought, as a result, ‘it becomes a little bit more significant to them because they can actually see the connection’. Kate asked her students to research these men on the National Archives of Australia website to piece together more of this history and follow their local story through the century. ‘So it’s more about them than the whole fighting, lives lost, what battles, what strategies, who was in charge, who was at fault,’ Kate explained. Echoing my earlier discussion on the richness of personal accounts, Kate found that the stories about individuals

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90 Student interview, ‘Belinda’; Teacher interview, ‘Ellen’.
had the most resonance among her students. ‘The stuff that stays with them is the stuff about the reality,’ she said.  

Teachers like Ellen and Kate are eager to build ‘kinship’ between students and those from the past, but it is an exercise that must be approached with caution. Historians have long been aware of the delicate balance between connecting with the past while recognising its distance. David Lowenthal describes this professional obstacle as ‘our hardest task as teachers’ and acknowledges it is difficult, albeit essential, to make ‘antiquity accessible while stressing its ineffable strangeness’.  

As discussed earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Five, considerable efforts are made by students, schools, and local communities towards asserting links that go beyond the threads of Anzac ancestry. Many teachers are excited that a deeper historical appreciation can be sparked through imagination and empathy, but teachers must proceed with caution.

**History Textbooks**

O.L. Davis observes that ‘textbooks are powerful because they contain the information that society expects students to know’. Australian schools have access to a selection of textbooks and, as stated earlier in this chapter, each aims to closely translate the Australian Curriculum through engaging teaching.

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91 ‘Kate’, interview with teacher, Melbourne, 1 May 2012.
techniques. While there are limitations to what we can know about students’ historical thinking or the reality of the history classroom from textbooks, they are worth exploring, as long as we are careful not to interpret a comprehensive teaching and learning experience from them.

Students place faith in their textbooks; they are perceived to be above the emotion and messy debates of history and they read as trustworthy sources for their presentation of facts. 94 Despite the appearance of textbooks’ neutrality, Michael Apple contends that politics and specific interests are always at play in their development and application. He writes that textbooks are ‘at once the results of political, economic and cultural activities, battles and compromises. They are conceived, designed and authored by real people with real interests. They are published within the political and economic constraints of markets, resources, and power’. 95 History textbooks are always disputed territory and already those produced for the Australian Curriculum have sparked debate. 96

Textbooks are often classed in a ‘low status as a literary genre’ and derided as encouraging a ‘passive learning style’. However, many of these criticisms come from those who experienced a very different style of textbook, from an entirely different age. 97 Contemporary Australian history textbooks, produced by

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94 Wineburg, Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts, p.68.
96 For an example of this debate, see the scathing article by Stephanie Forrest, ‘The rubbish history textbooks?: Of the national curriculum’, Quadrant, vol.58, no.5 (May 2014), pp.6-11. Forrest’s review seems unnecessarily polemical and incites the contention that the Australian Curriculum is a plaything of left-wing politics, accusing the textbooks of ‘appearing to cater to an environmentalist, socialist and sometimes almost Marxist agenda’, p.10.
reputable publishing houses, offer material with intriguing primary sources, informative and readable analysis, as well as helpful pedagogical guides, even if they ultimately vary in their overall quality.

Textbooks are a constant of school book lists and their worn pages reflect that they are a reality of the classroom, so it is essential that they are considered in a study of children’s encounters with Anzac. Textbooks are also able to further clarify the Australian Curriculum, after all, publishers want their books to sell and if they closely address learning requirements and empower teachers in the classroom, they are more likely to be commercially successful.

Although it is possible to analyse the content of textbooks, it is not possible to know what aspects teachers might emphasise or dismiss, how they might, as Ellen described earlier, ‘dip in and out’. How students read these books will vary too. Marytn Lyons and Lucy Taksa argue: ‘Reading is an active process. The reader is not a mere receptacle, passively registering the “imprint” of what he or she reads. On the contrary, the act of reading is creative and inventive.’ The agency of teachers and students is a reminder that the study of textbooks is not merely a ‘top down’ history, rather textbooks are constantly reworked and reinterpreted in classrooms.

This chapter has acknowledged marked differences in the approaches between trained and untrained history teachers. Teachers who lack specialisation in the field will affect how Anzac is taught and must be taken into consideration alongside expert history teachers. The consequences of untrained history teachers are why an analysis of textbooks is necessary. Trained and experienced history teachers are more inclined to be bold and imaginative in their

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98 Teacher interview, ‘Ellen’.
classrooms. It is likely that untrained teachers, lacking confidence or interest in history, will reach for the textbook and employ a less selective approach with the resources on offer.

This chapter evaluates some of the history textbooks for the Year 9 Australian Curriculum. My aim is to extract detail and ideas that taught – and not taught - and to find out if the textbooks lend themselves to rigorous historical study. Examining six of these publications, through qualitative analysis of specific sections, it is possible to gain understandings of how textbooks have interpreted the Australian Curriculum and where teachers might be led by these materials.\textsuperscript{100} Realistically, a textbook can only include so much. But what is selected, and otherwise excluded, can be a telling interpretation of how the public expects Anzac to be taught. It is also important to assess how these books interpret ACARA’s standards and how they may strive to differently address the Curriculum’s requirements. At first glance, the design of these textbooks is similar and, broadly, each includes comparable content, however critical variances differentiate the sample.

To begin this discussion, we will return to the depth study question asking students to explore, ‘The places where Australians fought’, and consider how the topic is investigated in the textbooks. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Curriculum’s specific reference to ‘including the Gallipoli campaign’

indicates the ongoing fixation on this theatre of war. In their interviews, some teachers expressed weariness from such a narrow focus on the Turkish Peninsula. ‘We’re kind of stuck a little bit on Gallipoli,’ complained Linda, who had a particular interest in the Western Front. Given that Gallipoli must be included in their study, it is dependent on teachers’ initiative to extend their lessons to include other battlefields. If teachers rely on their textbook for guidance, it is likely that Gallipoli will be studied at the expense of other campaigns. Two textbooks from my sample, Cambridge University Press’ *History for the Australian Curriculum 9* and *Pearson History Student Book 9*, allotted reasonable shared space for each Gallipoli, the Western Front, and the fighting in the Middle East and North Africa. More often though, the textbooks devoted far greater space to Australia’s war on the Turkish Peninsula. The most disproportionate weighting in favour of Gallipoli is in *Connect with History for the Australian Curriculum* and *The Making of the Modern World*, the latter looks solely at the Gallipoli battlefields. While *Retroactive 9’s* consideration of Gallipoli and the Western Front was almost equal, no detail at all about the Middle East and North Africa campaigns is included.

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The third question in the First World War depth study asks students to consider ‘the changing role of women’ in Australia throughout 1914 to 1918. Here is a topic that could easily lend itself to the textbook process of ‘mentioning’. Michael Apple defines this as when ‘limited and isolated elements of the history and culture of less powerful groups are included in the texts … but without any substantive elaboration of the view of the world as seen from their perspectives’.\textsuperscript{102} None of the six textbooks fall into this trap and each works through women’s role in the workforce, politics, their communities, and homes. \textit{The Making of the Modern World} and \textit{Retroactive 9} are particularly strong examples of surveying both the paid and unpaid contributions of women, noting their emotional labour and patriotic work during the war. These textbooks introduce students to the spectrum of women’s mobilisation and their work for organisations like the Red Cross, the Women’s Peace Army, and the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{102} Apple, \textit{Official Knowledge}, p.56.}
Australian Women’s Service Corps. As part of their inquiry, students are asked to analyse a range of primary source extracts, as well as photographs, cartoons, and artwork.\textsuperscript{103} The Australian Curriculum places the discussion of women within the question of the home front, subsequently, there is no push to specifically discuss the contribution of Australian nurses in the First World War. In these six textbooks very little space is dedicated to Australia’s nurses; four of the textbooks include short paragraphs in either the sections looking at women’s experiences or in the section exploring the ‘nature of warfare’. \textit{Retroactive 9} includes no information on nurses. More inconsistent, \textit{The Making of the Modern World} features a photograph of two Australian nurses on the chapter’s front page, as well as another photograph of nurses in the discussion of the ‘nature of warfare’, but no text is provided to explore these images.

The textbooks demonstrate that they are not completely determined by the Australian Curriculum. Nowhere in the depth study questions is it required to examine the experience of Indigenous Australians in the First World War and yet five of the six textbooks include items on this topic.\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Pearson History Student Book 9} contains six pages of case studies, outlining stories of an Indigenous soldier from each Australian state. This book also includes discussion of Indigenous Australians’ unsettling return, when ‘they took off their uniforms and medals, [and] they found nothing had changed’.\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Connect with History} features three pages to Indigenous servicemen’s contributions, including a photograph of Daniel Cooper’s service dossier and links to the same on the National Archives of Australia website. Daniel is the son of William Cooper, an Indigenous rights campaigner, and Daniel’s dossier acknowledges his


\textsuperscript{104} In Easton, Carrodus, Delaney, McArthur and Smith, \textit{Oxford Big Ideas} there is a paragraph included within the discussion of Australia’s commitment to the war, see p.241.

\textsuperscript{105} Van Tol, Ottery and Keith, \textit{Pearson History Student Book 9}, p.288.
Aboriginality. The textbook suggests students will find examining this online source ‘very moving’.106

The feature pieces on Indigenous Australians’ service present students with a relatively new area of study of the First World War. Showcasing this recent scholarship highlights the absence of more ‘traditional’ Anzac items. Long considered a compulsory component of Anzac lessons, somewhat surprisingly, Simpson and his donkey appear in just three of the textbooks. In one, Simpson’s story is merely a sixty-five word ‘historical fact’ at the bottom of the page.107 In Retroactive 9 and Oxford Big Ideas, Simpson is ‘mentioned’ in a breakout box. Retroactive 9 highlights the complex mythology of Simpson and the debates that surround his legacy. Whereas Oxford Big Ideas asserts Simpson’s place as ‘a hero of Gallipoli’, describing a man who ‘tirelessly and cheerfully’ worked with his ‘sure-footed and steady donkey’.108 Overall, given the greater focus on Indigenous Australians, and the deferring of Simpson, it appears that teachers are encouraged to explore new lines of enquiry.

Of the six textbooks in this sample group, only three go into any detail of the aftermath of the war. Pearson History Student Book 9 reviews the long process of repatriation, from demobilisation to the struggles of returning home. This book asks students to consider obstacles faced by disabled and damaged men; the trying resumption into family life; and the stresses of unemployment and pensions.109 Only Cambridge University Press’ History for the Australian Curriculum 9 acknowledges the Spanish influenza pandemic, which killed at

106 Greer, Bowman, Cameron, Fieldon, Gates, Phillips and Southee, Nelson Connect with History for the Australian Curriculum Year 9, p.352.
107 Woollacott, History for the Australian Curriculum 9, p.256.
108 Anderson, Keese, Low and Harvey, Retroactive 9, p.312; Easton, Carrodus, Delaney, McArthur and Smith, Oxford Big Ideas, p.252.
109 Van Tol, Ottery and Keith, Pearson History Student Book 9, pp.310-312.
least tens of millions of people.\textsuperscript{10} History for the Australian Curriculum 9 also accepts that the cost of war went well beyond the end of the battles, writing: ‘the casualties of war continued mounting after the guns ceased firing’.\textsuperscript{111} Connect with History advises readers of the rise of a ‘new world order’ and the political turmoil that followed the war in Europe.\textsuperscript{112} The other textbooks deal with the ‘end of the war’ in brief summary statistics, but otherwise course content on the First World War ends abruptly. Given that ACARA has not specified the aftermath of the First World War as a necessary part of this depth study, it is not altogether surprising that half of this sample omitted the topic for consideration.

The textbooks designed for the Australian Curriculum reflect the challenging task of including competing lines of inquiry into Anzac histories. There will always be contentious inclusions and controversial omissions in history textbook design. This chapter has discussed several of the Year 9 history textbooks’ strengths and weaknesses, but overall each would seem to offer valuable content and activities to a history classroom. Once again, it is essential to note that ultimately the impact of these textbooks is defined by how teachers use these sources and how students engage with their lessons.

**Conclusion**

Leading students in commemoration, steering them through diverse topics, and nurturing their historical thinking, teachers make an impression that can shape young Australians’ understandings of Anzac’s past, present, and future. But

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{Woollacott, History for the Australian Curriculum 9, p.280.}
\footnote{Greer, Bowman, Cameron, Fieldon, Gates, Phillips, and Southee, Nelson Connect with History for the Australian Curriculum Year 9, pp.368-369.}
\end{footnotesize}
teaching Anzac can be a complicated task, fraught with controversy and layered with intricacies.

Examination of the Year 9 First World War depth study reveals how the Australian Curriculum fosters a somewhat narrow approach. Such a version of Anzac is welcomed by many, a response that will be explored in more detail in Chapter Seven. But the Australian Curriculum was intended to recalibrate school history and situate Australia within a global context – something that seems especially appropriate for the study of the First World War. This is not to say that teachers are unable to position their lessons within transnational discussions, but the Curriculum’s depth study does encourage a particularly strong emphasis on Australia.

There is no shortage of Anzac teaching materials available. Textbooks, government and cultural organisations, and professional and personal networks offer detailed content and an extensive range of lesson designs. While some misgivings exist about these materials, in particular DVA’s influence in this educational space, teachers indicate that they are mostly selective in how they use their resources.

This chapter has explored the way teachers respond to working with Anzac histories and analysed resources they might use in the classroom. While this chapter is based on official documents and adult testimony, it is a necessary inclusion to more thoroughly consider how young Australians engage with Anzac. In Chapter Seven, I will go beyond the school gates, to explore how broader Australian society feels invested in teaching Anzac and children’s remembrance.
Chapter Seven
How Should Young People Commemorate the Anzac Centenary?
Public and Political Responses

Trenches could be constructed, threaded through the sand dunes across a stretch of beach near Cobbitty, New South Wales. Children would be ‘bussed in’ and live along this makeshift front line, camped out for a week in a reproduction of the Gallipoli battlefields. This ‘immersive experience’ would give young Australians a taste of ‘the humor, horror and the boredom’ of war. And this ‘extreme history’ would make entertaining television, so a camera crew could film it all as part of a curious commemorative reality program.¹

This suggestion for re-enactment, and its recording, came from Graham B. and his First World War living history group. Graham B.’s recommendation was one of more than six hundred responses tendered to the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary (hereafter the Commission) as part of their public consultation of how to observe this anniversary. Among the submissions, composed by individuals as well as organisations, were some 1500

¹ Submission to the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary, Graham B. The submissions were available on the DVA website during the period of public consultation (2010-2012). At the request of the Department, I have protected the anonymity of respondents, referencing submissions by their first name and the first letter of their surname. Hereafter submissions will be referenced as Submission, first name, surname initial. For further reading on the Anzac Centenary public submissions, see Damien Williams, Bruce Scates, Laura James and Rebecca Wheatley, ‘The anxious Anzac: Suggestions for a metric moment in late modern Australia’, Matériaux pour L’Histoire de Notre Temps, no.113-114 (January 2014), pp.142-151. Iain McCalman refers to ‘extreme history’ reflecting on his experience of the historical re-enactment of Captain Cook’s first passage up the east coast of Australia, in ‘Endeavouring reality’, Meanjin, vol.62, no.4 (2003), p.33. Iain McCalman and Paul Pickering also refer to the type of television program suggested by Graham B. in his submission. They write it is a ““bastard” genre called “historical reality television””, and they also note it is ‘attracting vast viewing audiences as well as waves of disquiet from scholarly historical quarters’, in ‘From realism to the affective turn: An agenda’, in Iain McCalman and Paul A. Pickering (eds.), Historical Reenactment: From Realism to the Affective Turn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.3.
ideas. Attracting the greatest interest, more than 350 of those ideas addressed the theme of education. As the Commission concluded: ‘Education was a key link in many submissions.’ Clearly many people were concerned about what kind of Anzac lessons children were learning as Australia approached the Centenary.

Admittedly, the submissions are a self-selective sample and the participants were all sufficiently interested in this subject that they took the time (and energy) to contribute to the process. While they may not be entirely representative of broader society, the submissions offer remarkable and varied insights into the ways Australians thought about Anzac on the cusp of its centenary. In any case, examining individual responses is necessary because any attempt to generalise community readings of Anzac is fraught with inconsistencies. Like the children studied throughout this thesis, adults’ personal readings of Anzac seem bound to vary. Anna Clark’s recent research confirms this diversity. In her survey of Australians’ historical consciousness, Clark found that even ‘within the same community groups, respondents frequently presented vastly different interpretations of Anzac’. Despite their expansive set of ideas, the public submissions shared a similar emotional investment in the remembrance of war. Indeed, elsewhere I, and others, have argued that these submissions are an ‘emotional community’. Authors ‘adhere[d] to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue -

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2 The National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary, How Australia May Commemorate the Anzac Centenary, p.xiii. For details of the public submission process, see pp.2-6 and pp.67-70.
3 Ibid., p.8. DVA (who administered the submission process) requested that submissions were categorised into specific fields (A Century of Service; community engagement; infrastructure and capital works; education, public awareness and community access; commemorative services; international relations and cooperation).
4 Ibid., p.5.
6 Williams et al., ‘The anxious Anzac’, p.144.
the same or related emotions’, they evoked similar themes, and sought to influence the shape of the Centenary program. This chapter will discuss a selection of themes that emerged from the submissions related to children, including teaching materials and approaches and the shaping of the Australian Curriculum.

The Submissions

Before discussing the submissions more closely and reflecting on what they can tell us about Australians’ priorities for (and anxieties about) Anzac and young people, it is necessary to outline their frame of reference. In 2010 the Commission invited the public to contribute ideas of how Australia might observe the centenaries of the First World War. The Commission was structured so that the Anzac Centenary Advisory Board (hereafter the Board) would counsel the Australian Government on how to proceed with commemorations. From 2011 the Board was supported by a range of consultative working groups in the fields of education and curriculum; military and cultural history; business; ceremonial and commemorations; youth; and engagement with state, territory, and local government. The Board later established a creative advisory group, a funding partnerships committee (which then included the business working group), and a multicultural group.

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8 In 2010 (when the call for submissions was made to the public) Prime Minister Kevin Rudd established the Anzac Centenary Advisory Board which was composed of two former prime ministers, Malcolm Fraser and Bob Hawke; the RSL national president Rear Admiral Ken Doolan (Retired); a former peacekeeper, Major Matina Jewell (Retired); veterans’ advocate, Kylie Russell (whose husband was killed in service in Afghanistan); and cartoonist (and son of a Second World War airman), Warren Brown. Subsequently, the Board was revised and from July 2011 (when the submissions were still being assessed) was chaired by Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, AK, AFC (Retired), with a membership of twenty others from a variety of backgrounds. For further information on the membership, see Anzac Centenary Advisory Board, *Anzac Centenary Advisory Board Report to Government*, pp.vii-viii and pp.79-80.
Some submissions demonstrate lengthy, thoughtful preparation, whereas others were hastily compiled to ensure their acceptance. They came from the length and breadth of Australia, women and men responded in almost equal numbers, and they reflected broad generational involvement. There are even traces of children in this collection. Two submissions were based on classroom discussions about the Centenary, however, ultimately the insights they offer are limited. One submission is based on the suggested commemorations brainstormed by a grade six class, but composed by their teacher, an adult voice severely mediates the students’ testimony. A second submission includes twenty-three letters written by children from a grade four class in New South Wales. The children propose commemorative memorabilia and re-enactment (among other ideas) for the Centenary, but they appear more concerned with the overarching aim of their lesson - how to write a letter.

Authors often placed themselves at the centre of their submission and an associated pattern of declaring familial links to Australia’s war histories emerges. Marilyn Lake observes similar behaviour in her introductory chapter to What’s Wrong With Anzac? Online commenters were at pains to assert their Anzac ancestry, as though this lineage awarded a greater authority on the topic. This thinking echoes the claim from Chapter Five that Anzac is ‘a little bit more special’ to those with a family connection to its histories. These connections also lead to some examples of unconcealed self-interest among the submissions. James C. thought it would be a moving gesture if Gallipoli veterans’ grandsons were involved in the service at Anzac Cove in 2015.

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10 The original deadline for the public submissions was September 2010, however the closing date was extended and submissions were accepted until the end of that year.

11 Submission, Leonie M.; Submission, Karen, K.

12 Marilyn Lake, ‘Introduction: What have you done for your country?’, in Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds with Mark McKenna and Joy Damousi (eds.), What’s Wrong with Anzac?: The Militarisation of Australian History (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), pp.1-23.

13 Student interview, ‘George’.
Conveniently, he was one. Involvement in the Gallipoli commemoration could be extended to ‘great nephews and now to great grandsons’, but James C. stopped short at including female descendants. This was not really his decision to make, he conceded, but gender (he thought) was an issue for the Commission.14

In a way, the government’s extensive public consultation - the submission process as well as the forums and market research reports discussed in Chapter Five - could be interpreted as a political paralysis. The Australian Government was worried that any misstep would mean inevitable electoral fallout. One such example of this anxiety was in the development of the Anzac Centenary program. The Board was presented with Monash University’s One Hundred Stories project. This project set out to uncover some of the more difficult legacies of the First World War, as a correction to heroic and sanitised versions of Anzac. Upon viewing one particular story, that of Frank Wilkinson, a shell-shocked war hero who murdered his wife and three-year-old daughter and then committed suicide, the Board declined to proceed in a partnership. Such a story ran counter to the ‘warm fuzzy feeling’ they hoped to foster in its Centenary program.15

Though strident in their support of Anzac commemorations, the Opposition was eager to criticise Labor’s management of the Centenary. They deemed the federal government’s exhaustive consultation process ineffective.16 Stuart Robert, the Member for Fadden and who served in the Army for twelve years, despaired of Labor’s waste. What was really achieved, he wondered, from ‘one

14 Submission, James C.
15 Scates, Wheatley and James, World War One: A History in 100 Stories, p.viii
16 For information on the consultation process, see The National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary, How Australia May Commemorate the Anzac Centenary, pp.70-73.
forum in Sydney [that] cost in excess of $15,000 and there were just 15 attendees including three DVA staff and two paid consultants'. Michael Ronaldson, the Shadow Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader of the Opposition on the Centenary of ANZAC, condemned Labor’s ‘track record’ of ‘general administrative incompetence’. He suggested Labor’s ‘lack of leadership and direction and perceived disinterest in the centenary of Anzac’ was a cause of distress to the public and particularly hurtful to the veteran community. Building on a theme of Labor mismanagement, Rowan Ramsey, Ronaldson and Robert’s Liberal colleague, declared a consultative process unnecessary anyway, because Australians, and the government, ‘should know [how to commemorate the Anzac Centenary] as a matter of instinct’. 

Ramsey did not define his notion of an ‘instinct’ for Anzac, but for many of the submissions their ‘instinct’ for the Centenary was to focus on children. Andrew C. implored the Commission ‘to keep the ANZAC spirit [sic] alive in our schools our young need to know what sacrifices have been made and are been [sic] made today’. Keeping Anzac ‘alive’ speaks to how education was perceived (as it has been so often) as key to the longevity of Anzac. The Commission itself agreed with this line of thinking: ‘Through education, our knowledge, understanding and experiences of war can be passed from one generation to another and shared within society.’

18 Commonwealth of Australian, Parliamentary Debates, the Senate, 28 November 2012, p.10037 (Michael Ronaldson, Shadow Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader of the Opposition on the Centenary of ANZAC).
19 Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 6 February 2013, p.181 (Rowan Ramsey, Member for Grey).
20 Submission, Andrew C.
21 The National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary, How Australia May Commemorate the Anzac Centenary, p.8.
James and Diane A. praised the Commission’s focus and told them they had “hit the nail on the head” … School children are the future of Anzac’.\textsuperscript{22} Time and again, submissions stressed the importance of encouraging new generations to connect with Anzac histories. There was a need, they insisted, to place emphasis on Anzac’s enduring story. That emphasis might come through new educational resources and frameworks, historical re-enactments, or even commemorative memorabilia.

**Anzac Lessons**

Garry D. wrote with considerable anxiety in his submission: ‘Now that the [sic] WWI has passed from living memory there is a risk that the events and personal sacrifice of ordinary (yet extraordinary) Australians will be lost’.\textsuperscript{23} Concerns, like Garry D.’s, that Anzac histories were slipping from memory or losing their resonance appear throughout the submissions. The solution, many suggested, was for young Australians to learn remembrance of Anzac. But how to best teach this lesson?

Alexandra S. called for packs of educational materials to be provided to teachers and Neville C. hoped that ‘eye catching’ posters would be sent to schools for display.\textsuperscript{24} Such ideas were not exceptional and calls for similar resourcing are repeated often. As demonstrated in Chapter Six, this is just the kind of undertaking already fulfilled by DVA. With such frequent suggestions for investment in teaching materials across the submissions, it is not surprising why DVA do what they do. Despite their educational resources being possibly somewhat under-utilised, as well as the criticisms of the department’s determined interest in classrooms, DVA is responding to a public expectation that they are responsible for education.

\textsuperscript{22} Submission, James and Dianne A.  
\textsuperscript{23} Submission, Garry D.  
\textsuperscript{24} Submission, Alexandra S.; Submission, Neville C.
Some authors expressed a very low opinion of how Anzac was being taught in schools. One disparaging submission thought the nation’s collective knowledge of Australia’s war histories was lamentable. But the solution was simple. Make Les Carlyon’s *The Great War* a compulsory text for senior school students.25 Carlyon’s book has enjoyed long commercial success and is very popular among a general Australian readership. John Howard celebrated *The Great War* as ‘a masterpiece by a wonderful Australian writer’ and it won the Prime Minister’s Prize for Australian History in 2007.26 Some are less admiring of this work though. Peter Stanley calls Carlyon Howard’s ‘court historian’ and criticises that *The Great War* was an ‘even more otiose effort’ than his earlier work *Gallipoli*.27 Martin Crotty describes *The Great War* an ‘intellectually average but myth-supporting door-stopper’.28 Crotty’s assessment alludes to the bulk of this book. It is unlikely many students would be able to (or want to) read some seven hundred pages of text on the First World War. Those who disapprove of Carlyon’s work would almost certainly be unimpressed by Patrick M.’s submission. He proposed a ‘book to be written by Peter Fitsimons [sic] on the centenary … be taught at all schools’. It is reasonable to question the scholarly merit of this imagined textbook, after all, even FitzSimons does not consider himself a historian.29

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25 Submission, E.M.P.
27 Peter Stanley, “‘He was black, he was a white man, and a dinkum Aussie’: Race and Empire in revisiting the Anzac Legend”, in Santanu Das (ed.), *Race, Empire and First World War Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.218.
Books were not the only recommended teaching tool. Frequently the submissions called on technology to speak to a younger generation. Often there is a kind of awkwardness in this advice. Bill H.’s proposal to ‘Engage younger persons in the history of Australian participation in all wars – via the Internet’ is an example of including the vague idea of technology to ensure that an idea spoke to young Australians.\(^{30}\) It is as if ‘technology’ is incorporated into an educational strategy, it will reach a young audience. Not just submissions struggled with how to use technology though. The Commission’s report advised that ‘new communications technologies … should be utilised to communicate, create, disseminate, store and manage information’ in the aim of education. More specifically, the report suggested using ‘SMS messaging, Facebook, Myspace and Twitter’.\(^{31}\) Detail of how these platforms might be harnessed is not expanded on, instead, the list comes across as the Commission’s effort to appear well-versed in what young people ‘do’ and ‘like’. It is an arguably out of touch plan too given Myspace’s declared ‘un-cool’ factor four years before this report was even written.\(^{32}\) ‘Technology’ was a favourite catchphrase from the public and the Commission, but how they would actually implement it into learning practices was unclear.

While submissions assumed technology could work miracles, others rejected modern approaches and looked back at how children had engaged with other national anniversaries. If these respondents had their way, Australian children would be lavished in similar kitsch to that of the Bicentenary. Elaine M. thought stationery, such as rulers, pens, or pencils, was a practical option for school

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\(^{30}\) Submission, Bill H.


students. Robert L. imagined young Australians wearing a lapel pin throughout the Centenary years. Other proposals included a specially designed commemorative flag for schools to fly, and all manner of medallions, coins, and stamps to be distributed to children.\(^\text{33}\) It is worth speculating how long (if at all) these items would retain their novelty. Similar objects from 1988 now fetch just a few dollars (if they sell) on eBay.

**‘Experiencing’ History**

Would Twitter or another textbook actually make an impression on Australia’s youth? Some submissions did not think so and they called for unconventional teaching methods. Graham B., who suggested school students live in Gallipoli-inspired trenches on Cobbitty Beach, was far from a lone voice recommending that young Australians ‘experience’ history. Calls for re-enactment, or living history, or historical performances were repeated time and again. Its advocates claimed this educational approach offered the most effective way to teach history to young Australians.\(^\text{34}\) Clearly many Australians were not just concerned about *what* Anzac histories were taught to school children, but also *how* that history was taught.

One submission, tendered on behalf of a living history group, proposed visiting schools in their replica costumes as a sort of ‘show and tell to help grow the ANZAC spirit’. Elaborating on these lessons, Chris H. suggested they were designed ‘to enlighten the youth of today of the valuable service that our men and women provided and endured, and to remember those that did not come

\(^{33}\) Submission, Elaine M.; Submission, Alexandra S.; Submission, Robert L.; Submission, Maree M.; Submission, Les C.

\(^{34}\) ‘Re-enactment’ is a broad term. For the purpose of this discussion, I acknowledge each of the areas Vanessa Agnew cites: ‘living history museums, technical reconstructions and ‘nostalgia’ toys (e.g. tin figures, dioramas and architectural models) to literature, film, photography, video games, television shows, pageants, parades and, reenactment’s most ubiquitous instantiation, social and cyber groups devoted to historical performance’, in ‘History’s affective turn: Historical reenactment and its work in the present’, *Rethinking History*, vol.11, no.3 (2007), p.300.
home’. Chris H. took historical detail very seriously. After all, it is in the detail that a re-enactor’s commitment and quality are measured. He believed that costumes should be ‘vetted’ by the Department of Defence and a historian ‘to ensure that rightfully True Respect and Honour is paid to the Service Men and Women of Australia’. He acknowledged this might ‘sound hard’, but he pressed his case, ‘this is an important 100th ceremony of ANZAC and people should step up to meet these requirements’. Re-enactors strive to be meticulous, but Chris H. regretted: ‘Too often we see groups out there, dressed [in] incorrect attire and the public think that’s how [they] dressed when its [sic] not. So we should step up to help educate our people of our great nation by being [as] near correct as possible.’

Peter P. had similar criticisms of lax re-enactors. He hastened to reassure the Commission: ‘I accept nothing short of perfect in portraying the A.I.F “Digger”. This includes all paperwork, period coinage, and authentic underwear.’

Chris H. and Peter P.’s fastidiousness calls to mind Greg Denning’s remark that re-enactment is ‘merely the present in funny dress’. In spite of the reflex to dismiss Chris H.’s and Peter P.’s historical thinking, Iain McCalman and Paul Pickering advise that recent scholarship suggests ‘taking reenactment seriously as a methodology is worth the risk’. Similarly willing to take this ‘risk’, Jerome de Groot argues that belittling re-enactment is ‘elitist and problematic’. Seeking a fulfilling personal experience is a motivator of re-enactment, but de Groot suggests there is more at play. He acknowledges an essential ‘public, educational element which desires simply to teach’.

35 Submission, Chris H.
36 Submission, Peter P.
37 Greg Denning, Mr Bligh’s Bad Language: Passion, Power and the Theatre of the Bounty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.4
In line with this advice, let us take Chris H.’s and Peter P.’s re-enactments seriously. How did their plans for re-enactment function as a ‘pedagogical tool’? Bruce N. was convinced that the tacticity of history would appeal to the young. His re-enactment expertise told him that ‘both high school and primary school students take a lot away from the experience of seeing, touching and smelling the items that have been explained to them’. Bruce N. conceded that their troop horses also delighted children. Nevertheless, he considered that participation was the most effective way to attract, and sustain, young audiences. As part of their incursions, students:

join troop members in partaking in a meal comprised of the military rations of the period. The menu being bully beef (canned corned beef), hard tack (biscuits made to original recipe) canned cheese and, strong sweet tea with evaporated canned milk.

See, for example, Benjamin Knowles, ‘Re-enacting the Second World War: History, memory and the UK homefront’ (PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 2016), in particular, pp.67-106.
Figure 33: Light Horse reenactors march on Anzac Day 2012 in Adelaide. Horses, it was noted in the submissions, attracted students’ interest to re-enactment.

For the purpose of performance even can labels were substituted with period replicas. Bruce N. believed that students actually enjoyed the meal: ‘After their first shock and a few giggles most found the meal bland but filling. Eating around the tents and horses, off tin plates with enamel mugs, and using old cutlery does add to the atmosphere of the event.’\(^{41}\) Perhaps this unappetising meal offered a kind of discomfort to school students, an often sought-after aspect to re-enactment.\(^{42}\) Similarly to pilgrimage, as discussed in Chapters One and Five, an element of hardship adds to the authenticity that participants crave.

Bruce N.’s anecdotal evidence is one thing, but do those outside re-enactment circles agree that this ‘genre’ offers benefits to teaching history? Anthony Jackson and Helen Rees Leahy tracked school students’ experiences as they

\(^{41}\) Submission, Bruce N.
toured the Imperial War Museum and People’s History Museum. They found that performance, ‘when well designed and sufficiently integrated’, can reinforce students’ learning. Jackson and Leahy’s research suggests that children respond enthusiastically to those playing a historical role and these encounters foster strong empathetic connections. But these researchers observed limitations as well. Students were often reluctant to make broader links with the past and they were frequently unclear about what was ‘real’ and what was ‘now’ and ‘then’. It is striking that Jackson and Leahy’s findings echo many of the benefits and challenges associated with focussing on an individual serviceman or woman, as discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

Bully beef and biscuits did not exhaust re-enactment suggestions. Similar to Graham B. who marshalled children in the trenches, Alexandra L. proposed a kind of re-enactment Rock Eisteddfod where students would compete for a prize of at least $1000. She suggested that the winning re-enactment could be performed in front of Parliament House. Along with the necessary official elements, like the national anthem, Alexandra L. also favoured a dramatic ‘volley of Gunfire’. She added for reassurance, ‘of course, [students] will use blanks’. Graham B. and Alexandra L’s suggestion that children ‘perform’ history points to the public desire to situate children centrally to commemorations. This, according to Joan Beaumont, ‘testifies] to the supposed cross-generational transmission of the ANZAC legend’.

Graham B., Peter P., Chris H., Bruce N., Alexandra L., and their peers consider that re-enactment is both entertaining and a way to highlight the conditions of

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44 Submission, Alexandra L.
war. Still, there are legitimate concerns for historians. What kind of authenticity might be achieved at Cobbitty or by eating canned corn beef? These questions go beyond how faithfully First AIF costume, underwear included, is replicated. Undermining or possibly trivialising histories so that the resulting impression ‘downplay[s] war’s brutality’ and affirms the sentimental is the most troubling aspect of re-enactment. This returns to Jay Winter’s emphatic point, noted in Chapter Six, that it is simply impossible to reproduce the reality of war.

Moved by a similar aim to the re-enactor advocates, some submissions envisioned children playing a key role in overseas commemorations, particularly at Gallipoli. These proposals imagined a life-changing experience for the students, as well as a significant ‘return’ to the nation by witnessing the ‘transmission of the ANZAC legend’. None of these plans for dispatching groups of Australian children overseas suggest their authors appreciated the ‘contested commemorative space’ of Gallipoli. The indifference some Australians display towards Gallipoli as a foreign site reflects what Jenny Macleod has described as Australia’s ‘emotional unwillingness to perceive Anzac Cove as sovereign Turkish territory’. This ‘unwillingness’ has been proven time and again, from as early as the Treaty of Lausanne. Even still, Australia makes extraordinary demands on a foreign site, as evidenced by the roadworks controversy in 2007.

47 Examples include, Submission, Brian B.; Submission, Michael M.; Submission, Erdin G.
50 Macleod, Gallipoli, p.94.
But building a connection to the past need not take place in Turkey. To inspire Anzac for another generation, Paul T. believed all that was necessary was for children to be allocated a serviceman or woman to ‘adopt’. Adoption, in this case, required researching that person’s life and their war story. This kind of adoption, as discussed in Chapter Five, is a popular approach to bridging the distance between the present and the past, and eliciting a connection to history. However, as noted in earlier chapters, while this strategy often fosters empathy and inspires interest in the subject, there is a risk it might obstruct the ‘bigger picture’.

Beyond pedagogy, for Paul T., the long-term objective of these ‘adoptions’ was more important. He asked young people to ‘take ownership’ of Anzac, to ‘ensure the spirit of Anzac lives’. Practically speaking, he ventured that young Australians could take carriage of the Anzac Day march. Cassandra C. put forward a similar adoption program calling on school students to represent their ‘digger’ in the Anzac Day march. Paul T. and Cassandra C.’s submissions demonstrate the fear that Anzac Day might lose relevance and that its traditions might languish. Just as Bruce Ruxton had grudgingly accepted in Chapter Four, as veterans become fewer in number, children take their place, or at least they are asked to, to ensure the continuation of Anzac’s rituals.

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52 Submission, Paul T.
53 Submission, Cassandra C.
The public clearly felt they had useful ideas and valuable opinions to contribute to the planning of the Anzac Centenary program. This chapter has discussed many enthusiastic submissions so far, but within this collection, and in society more widely, Australia’s collective handwringing about young people’s engagement with Anzac was most evident in response to the Australian Curriculum.

**The Anzac Centenary and the Australian Curriculum**

This chapter has demonstrated that many Australians claimed a stake in the Anzac Centenary. Similarly, the public felt keenly invested in how a national history, especially its war stories, would figure as part of the Australian Curriculum. The Curriculum has been described as a ‘hot topic’ and the same could be said for the Centenary. At their merging, these two subjects became contested ground.

According to some of the submissions, the similar timing of the Anzac Centenary and the Australian Curriculum offered the opportunity for uniformity and convention across teaching remembrance. Alan S. reasoned that it would be best to mandate certain requirements: ‘I would … like to submit that all teachers have class discussions leading to the Centenary so that all children realise the significance of … ANZAC Day’. In bold font and capital letters, he warned: ‘**THIS DAY MUST NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.**’ For Kon K. it was as specific, and as rigid, as stipulating at least four lessons per year for grades three to twelve. Kon K.’s and Alan S.’s submissions imply that schools

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55 Submission, Alan S.
56 Submission, Kon K.
were not already studying Anzac histories, but as demonstrated in Chapters Five and Six, this is far from an accurate assessment.

Kon K., Alan S., and others feared that if Anzac was left out of the classroom it risked fading from a popular memory. Criticisms about teaching Anzac histories, and Australian history more widely, generally came from those who had long since been at school and they often did not have an informed understanding of modern classrooms. This steadfast belief that anyone is qualified to comment on educational practice is encouraged at the highest level. As the Education Minister Christopher Pyne reasoned: ‘Everyone’s been to school; everyone’s an expert in education one way or the other.’

All kinds of ‘experts’ weighed in on how Anzac should feature in the Australian Curriculum. The public debate that ensued frequently highlighted the sacred nature of Anzac and some ‘experts’ disputed the role of critical analysis in the memory of war. This was most notably demonstrated in reference to the senior years’ modern history course questions. A draft curriculum proposed that students would investigate the ‘controversies surrounding the purpose and function of memorial sites and commemorative events’. Concerned by this line of inquiry, New South Wales RSL President Don Rowe protested that he could not see the controversy surrounding memorials or commemoration. Adrian Piccoli, the state’s Opposition Education spokesman, was similarly perplexed. ‘High school history,’ he announced, was ‘not the place to start questioning the purpose of events such as Anzac Day’.


‘questioning’ and sought to restrict exploration of the past. War memorials and commemorations are inherently complex sites of memory, but interrogating their context, their evolving purpose, and their layered meanings does not involve wilful disrespect. Work like Ken Inglis’ *Sacred Places*, the landmark survey of Australia’s commemorative landscape, and Bruce Scates’ history of Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance, *A Place to Remember*, are examples of careful but critical studies of memorials that do not diminish their subjects’ reverence.⁵⁹

Despite Scates’ and Inglis’ examples, for some, like Piccoli, the reflex was defensive. Their responses are illustrative of Frank Bongiorno’s observation that: ‘Even to suggest the Anzac tradition might be analysed in the classroom, rather than merely being transmitted as a received body of lore, is to poison the minds of the young with the treachery or nihilism of sixties radicalism.’⁶⁰

Politicians’ anxiety about Anzac’s place in the Australian Curriculum did not abate. In 2013, as the Anzac Centenary drew closer, Shadow Minister for Education Christopher Pyne complained that Anzac was neglected in the Australian Curriculum. In an ABC radio interview, Pyne was forthright with his concerns and argued for the elevation of Anzac:

> Well in the national curriculum, in the history subject, ANZAC day is listed alongside many other days as part of the curriculum – as

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part of its teaching. So ANZAC day is locked in with NAIDOC week, reconciliation day, harmony day and so on. Now, nothing to take away from those other important days, but there’s a public holiday for ANZAC day, because ANZAC day is very central to our understanding of our Australian character and our Australian history, and I think it downplays ANZAC day for it not to be a standalone part of the history curriculum - to be taught about Australia’s culture and what we’ve done in the past.\textsuperscript{61}

Courting public approval (and not afraid of a little scandal), Pyne extracted the study of Anzac Day from the primary school curriculum and complained about ‘lining it up’ with other commemorations and ceremonies. A more dispassionate analysis suggests few of these concerns had any real basis. Pyne was indignant about the way Anzac Day was studied, but he was referring to Anzac Day as it appears in the Level 3 syllabus, when students discuss: ‘Days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, Anzac Day, and National Sorry Day) and the importance of symbols and emblems.’ Just because Anzac Day is not specifically referenced in the brief descriptors at other year levels, does not mean it is not studied there as well. For example in Foundation Level classes students are asked: ‘How they, their family and friends commemorate past events that are important to them’. Then in Level 2 students explore: ‘The history of a significant person, building, site and/or part of the natural environment in the local community and what it reveals about the past.’\textsuperscript{62} There is ample opportunity to consider Anzac Day in the primary school curriculum and, as outlined in Chapter Six, there is


generous, in fact, compulsory coverage of Australia’s Anzac histories in the secondary school years. Pyne’s outrage encouraged those who feared Anzac’s memory was being lost. Peter Garrett, the education minister charged with implementing the Curriculum, accused Pyne of ‘picking at the scab of the history wars’.63

Once elected to government, Pyne assumed the portfolio of education, allowing him to authorise sweeping reviews of what he perceived as a deeply flawed curriculum. To conduct this review, he selected two controversial appointees, Kevin Donnelly and Ken Wiltshire.64 Opposition Spokesperson for Education Kate Ellis captured the exasperation of many when she criticised Pyne for thinking that ‘in six months two individuals can do a better job of coming up with a national curriculum than in five years academic experts from all around Australia working collaboratively achieved’.65

Pyne’s Curriculum’s review made thirty recommendations. Relevant to the content of history courses, Donnelly and Wiltshire advised to ‘properly recognise the impact and significance of Western civilisation and Australia’s Judeo-Christian heritage, values and beliefs’; to build a stronger ‘conceptual narrative’; to limit the selectiveness of the course so that students were

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65 Hurst, ‘Christopher Pyne’.
guaranteed to study key topics; and ‘to better acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses and the positives and negatives of both Western and Indigenous cultures and histories’. But, after all the controversy, ultimately ACARA only adopted four recommendations from the entire review. None of those had anything to do with further emphasising Anzac histories. As Misty Adoniou summed up, the process was ‘much ado about nothing much’.

The controversies raised in reference to Anzac within the Australian Curriculum evoke recurrent themes from this thesis and pose an appropriate place to close this chapter. In Chapter One, the exhaustive and heated debates of Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia marked the beginnings of political anxiety about teaching Anzac histories; clearly, similar sentiment persists today.

Conclusion

Children’s voices have not featured in this chapter, nonetheless, they were at front of mind in all the submissions discussed. Broadly, the submissions shared an overarching sentiment that Australia’s youth had to engage with the Anzac Centenary, but there was far from consensus on how this might practically transpire. Again and again, submissions demanded more ‘Anzac’ in young people’s lives. This might mean increased space in the curriculum or additional teaching resources. But children, it was imagined (and hoped) would observe and participate in the Anzac Centenary outside of a school setting as well. Regardless of what advice the Commission acted on, children were an essential

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part of this anniversary. As they always have been, children were a part of Anzac’s story.
Conclusion

Now there is left naught but the silent dead,
Whose graves make sacred all that rock-bound shore;
    But the heroic deeds of those who bled
And died for us, in Liberty’s great war,
    By unborn generations will be read
In history’s glorious pages evermore.¹

- Alfred Waterworth

Barely five years on from the landing at Anzac, Alfred Waterworth, the headmaster of Glen Dhu State School in Launceston, bemoaned the absence of any children’s school text dealing with the Dardanelles. So Waterworth took matters in hand and promptly produced The Story of Anzac Day Told for Boys and Girls. As the passage above suggests, Waterworth’s project was poetic and patriotic. But first and foremost it presented itself as a work of history. Tasmania’s Education Department recommended the book’s use in the classroom and ‘several prominent officers who were on Gallipoli’ endorsed its sweeping claims.² Waterworth appears to have been motivated by an anxiety that Anzac might slip away from what he called those ‘unborn generations’. Like many other adults encountered in this thesis, he feared its histories and traditions would somehow be lost.

A Tasmanian headmaster’s determination in 1920 to convey the ‘heroic deeds’ of Anzac to children reflects a pattern that persists almost one hundred years later. In this thesis, I have considered the often extreme responses of adults to young people’s engagement with Anzac. Politicians have demanded the revision and re-revision of school curricula; parents and teachers have

expressed alarm at student protests; through letters to the editor and one submission after another to government commissioned inquiries, concerned members of the public have rallied to the cause of remembrance. Youth looms large in this anxiety about Anzac. Nor is that surprising. Youth embodies, in a very literal way, the future of a society. If they neglect the message of Anzac, its (perceived) ideals are sure to languish.

This thesis has evaluated children’s encounters with Anzac from an adult perspective. We have listened to the testimony of educators, politicians, and the public and seen the way textbook, curricula, certain rituals of remembrance, and even family memory shape the accepted discourse of Anzac. We have also looked for other ways that Australian children experienced war and its aftermath. First World War repatriation records in particular offer a deeper understanding of how servicemen and their children lived in the shadow of war. Tracing the impact of more recent conflicts proved more challenging. Memoirs and oral history collections suggest the ways children shared the burden of a war ‘coming home’. These later sources have their limitations. Usually written well into adulthood, a childhood memory has often been shaped and re-shaped over a lifetime. Even so, these stories make for compelling reading. Used critically and carefully, they allow a glimpse into children’s worlds.

This thesis has discovered new sources and used more familiar records in different ways. It has also strived to correct an imbalance. All too often the relationship between young Australians and Anzac is seen as one-dimensional. Children are presented as entranced by a mythology, the slips in their knowledge are highlighted, or their exaggerated emotional reactions held severely to account. But that is only one aspect of children’s encounters with Anzac. Interrogating their testimony (rather than the opinions of their elders)
reveals a complex and multivocal response. One of the principal aims of this thesis has been to challenge any easy, narrow depiction of young people and Anzac. Many children balk at Anzac orthodoxies and they demonstrate a willingness to question, even dissent. These defiant voices were loudest in the 1960s and 1970s, when young people (like many of their older brothers and sisters) took issue with Anzac commemoration as ‘“Heritage” crap’.3 At other times, children’s challenge to Anzac has been more subdued or even framed by a more acceptable agenda. Margaret, for example, who asserted in her Anzac Festival essay that ‘the traditions of Anzac [really] belong to youth’. Or Daniel who resisted RSL protocol to march with his grandfather, and insisted, ‘I don’t care what anyone says’.4

Margaret and Daniel, and others like them, tested adult stakeholders’ grip on Anzac. Sometimes children are more subversive though. Consider, for example, the Lowther Hall wreath featured at the beginning of this thesis. While many classmates wrote solemn messages of remembrance, one student penned, ‘I wish for harsher punishment on parole violators and world peace.’ Quoting an FBI agent undercover at the Miss United States beauty pageant suggests this student may have thought creating the wreath was a pointless exercise. Here, as in so many other cases, children’s words and actions can be read in different ways.

Reading ‘for the silences’ has long posed a challenge for historians. Many young Australians may not be openly hostile to Anzac, but they are unable or unwilling to connect to its stories. To be sure, many Australian children dutifully participate in remembrance, they are captivated by Australia’s war past, and they are clearly attracted to nationalist or spiritual sentiments evoked

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by Anzac. But those who rise for the Dawn Service or travel to Gallipoli are far from typical in their cohort, and young Australians are more likely to sleep in on 25 April, watch the AFL match, or ‘do nothing’ on their public holiday. Children are not, and never have been, totally entranced by Anzac. Their engagement with its rituals span a broad spectrum, they are capable of contending with its complexities, they raise concerns and doubts, and they actively reshape Anzac to accommodate their generation and their world.

To achieve a more complex and nuanced understanding of children’s Anzac experience, it was an imperative of this thesis to listen to children themselves. Children are often hidden figures in the past and this requires historians to ‘exert[] more imagination’ when it comes to sources. Determined and far-ranging research unearths traces of children’s Anzac experiences, even if they are frequently tucked away in archival collections and obscured in official records. As this study includes a significant focus on modern youth, I have been able to talk to children directly and capture something of their testimony for the historical record. Though my sources have varied across chapters, the intention was always the same – to lend children a voice. This strategy offers agency to children in a space where they are often assumed to be naïve, even unthinking. Naturally, it is important to be mindful that there was always an intended audience or a particular purpose of this evidence. Perhaps the Young Australia League boys were worried an officious League chaperone would discipline them for not making a diary entry. Maybe the students who submitted an essay to the Anzac Festival competition sought an easy £3 reward. Still, even if children tell adults (including myself in my interviews) what they believe they want to hear, their chosen narratives reveal what children consider are the ‘correct’ responses to Anzac.

3 Marten, ‘Childhood studies and history’, p.53.
Further to the aim of a more complex consideration of children and Anzac, I have adopted a multifarious definition of learning. No one disputes the fact that children acquire knowledge in the classroom. As several historians have noted (and I have done in Chapter Six) a survey of educational resources is revealing. Material generated for the classroom reflects social priorities and contemporary concerns. Even so it should not be read at face value. Teachers and students alike interact with the curriculum creatively, they read (and interpret) sources selectively and with their own interests in mind. Nor are textbooks and readers the sole or even most important influence shaping children’s historical sensibilities. Each child brings a personal set of circumstances to the classroom and it is important to consider how these fashion their readings of Anzac as a historical topic and influence the shape and style of remembrance. This is true for successive generations of Australian school children. It might be living with a father who is changed by his war, observing the commemorations at a local memorial, watching Mel Gibson in Gallipoli, or being part of a multicultural community.

The research and writing of this thesis has occurred against the backdrop of the Anzac Centenary and the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. This context provided an ideal, if shifting, space to reflect on how Anzac is actually taught in the classroom. Beyond this study, it would be interesting to investigate if there have been significant changes as a result of the Centenary or the Curriculum. Are school students suffering commemorative fatigue from the Anzac Centenary or has their connection to this history strengthened? Has the Australian Curriculum compelled a more transnational approach to studying war or has it reinforced Gallipoli as the centre of Anzac? Carolyn Holbrook and Nathan Wise predict that Anzac’s centenary will offer ‘a rich bounty for future
This ‘bounty’, and the passage of time, will allow historians to further interrogate these questions.

Whatever further questions my research has raised, this study’s archival discoveries, its recording of testimony, and the retrieval and analysis of child-centered narratives contributes something quite distinctive to the scholarship of Anzac. After all, as Peter Stearns writes, ‘childhoods mirror the societies that surround them, and they also help produce these same societies through the adults who emerge from children’s socialization’. And for that reason (among others) children are ‘a unique key to the larger human experience, from historical past to global present’. By reconsidering Anzac from this perspective, we understand our whole society a little better, not just the way successive generations have experienced or remembered war.

Codified, authorised sources, like Waterworth’s primer and many others I have examined in this thesis, provide necessary insights into how children learn about Anzac. But this history is more complicated than official sources often suggest. By turning to material where we find the voices of children themselves, we can learn more about their encounters with Anzac. Lowther Hall’s elaborate paper wreath, pictured at the beginning of this thesis, could have easily been disregarded as evidence. It is ephemeral and chaotic. But it also carries the messages of children. Reading the leaves of that wreath, and seeking out the testament of youth, reveals how children have always played an important part in Australia’s Anzac story.

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7 Stearns, Childhood in World History, pp.15-16.
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