



Broken Nation: Australians in the Great War



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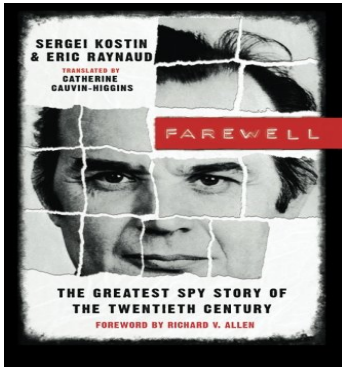
Broken Nation: Australians in the Great War

The first comprehensive history of Australian experience in World War I World War I, for many Australians, is the event that defined their nation. The larrikin diggers, trench warfare, and the landing at Gallipoli have become the stuff of the Anzac legend. But it was also a war fought by the families at home. Their resilience in the face of hardship, their stoic acceptance of enormous casualty lists, and their belief that their cause was just, made the war effort possible. Broken Nation is the first book to bring together all the dimensions of World War I. Combining deep scholarship with powerful storytelling, Joan Beaumont brings the war years to life: from the well-known battles at



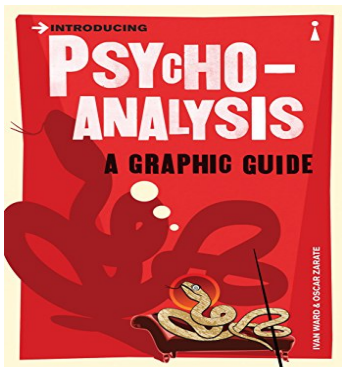
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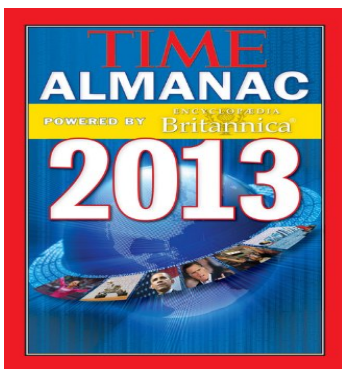
The Law as a System of Signs (Topics in Contemporary Semiotics)

Even if Peirce were well understood and there existed general agreement among Peirce scholars on what he meant by his semiotics, or philosophy of signs, the undertaking of this book-which intends to establish a theoretical foundation for a new approach to understanding the interrelations of



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Review 1:

The first World War had a major and enduring impact on Australia. Beaumont does a good job showing the enormous political, Military, human, and economic costs this conflict had on the Australian psyche. Unfortunately, the overall value of her work is seriously limited by her unctuous leftist ideological grandstanding. Such posturing is called "Blame America First" in the U.S. and Beaumont represents the virulent Australian strain of this sanctimonious leftist contagion. Her use of terms such as "Anzac Myth," which seeks to denigrate the well-intentioned but ineptly executed Dardanelles campaign against the Ottomans, is a perfect example of her snide and sneering leftist bleating. Despite its obvious military failure, this campaign enabled the Australian military to learn from its failures and forge a military force and military doctrine which has enabled Australians to be great warriors for freedom in the subsequent century and one of America's most trusted allies. Would Beaumont have preferred that the Central Powers won World War 1? Does she think the world and Australia would be better off if the Axis powers won World War 2, if North Korea and Maoist China controlled the Korean peninsula, if the Khmer Rouge still controlled Cambodia, if the former Soviet Union had won the Cold War, and if ISIS and other Islamist death cults are allowed to wreak vengeance in Sydney's Martin Place and other locales? Beaumont is asleep at the wheel when it comes to understanding the real sources of human depravity and fails to appreciate Australians and other defenders of freedom who daily risk and sometimes sacrifice their lives so she can engage in her ivory tower bloviating drive!!

Review 2:

great book very interesting

Review 3:

hi,
i enjoyed the book immensley especially the heroics of the Australians , i did feel it could have been condensed which is why the tree stars.

Review 4:

This is a ripper of a good yarn, and solid historical scholarship, on how World War I affected the soldiers involved, how the battles turned and how we remember then, and page-turning social analysis of the home front and its effect on future history. The writer, Professor Joan Beaumont, is an international scholar in this field, and won the 2014 Prime Minister's Literary Award for Australian History for this volume. Here is my review

My fascination with the Great War, as for other amateur genealogists, begins with the involvement of my relatives. My wife's paternal grandfather Edward Funston served on the Western Front and suffered trench feet, as well as his brother Hubert Funston who was shot beside him. Her maternal great grandfather Thomas William Austin also served, and survived the war but disappeared. On my father's side, Fred Petty arrived on the Western Front in December 1917 and was killed by a German shell in March 1918. On Mum's side, her Uncle Frank Humphreys served and was wounded in both Gallipoli and Germany, and met his future wife nurse Alice Layland while being treated. Mum's Uncle Ted Humphreys also served. Their lives, and the lives of their families, were all hugely affected.

Australian's interest in our involvement in the war and what it means for our national identity will only increase as we commemorate the centenary of the start of the war in 2014, the centenary of the landing at Gallipoli in 2015, and in fact four years of centenaries. There will opportunities for "battle tourism" to visit historic sites and memorials, Australians will review The Light Horsemen,

Gallipoli and Beneath Hill 60 and whatever new movies appear, and there will be a host of new books. Broken Nation offers a rare comprehensive account of the involvement and battles of Australian Forces, and what the war meant for Australia at home.

Joan Beaumont is Professor of History at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University. She is an internationally recognised historian of the two World Wars, the memory and heritage of war and the experience of Prisoners of War. Her volume is thoroughly researched - drawing on primary documents as well as engaging with other historians from C E W Bean's official war accounts, other eyewitnesses, and other commentators of the war and its memories and myths.

The narrative includes thorough treatment of the main sites of battles - from Gallipoli to the battles of attrition on the Western Front at the Somme and Third Ypres, from Pozières to Villers-Bretonneux, and from the capture of German New Guinea to the boldness of Beersheba, as well as the context of other land and sea battles where Australians had less or no involvement. It includes authentic portrayal of the stalemate of trench warfare, the terrors of poison gas and difficulties with treating the wounded, the dilemmas of politics and poor planning, and the huge casualty numbers and their trauma and deaths. (Australia's forces included 410,000 volunteers, over 60,000 of whom died.)

Notably, Beaumont also analyses how battles have been remembered, the memorials that have been erected and the popularity of pilgrimages. She describes the inspiration and heroism of many Australian military leaders and soldiers alike, and diggers who have been memorialised such as John Simpson and his Field Ambulance donkeys. Moreover, she dispels a number of myths that have grown with the telling, such as that Gallipoli failed simply because the ANZACS landed on the wrong beach, and that British Generals were uninventive with strategy and resigned to attrition. In fact new technology and its innovative use helped break the stranglehold of defensive trench warfare as Allied forces combined artillery preparation, creeping barrage, tactical innovation by infantry (sometimes in small groups of "Peaceful penetration"), tanks, airplanes and resupply.

There is also nuanced treatment of the origin and influence of ANZAC mythology and its mateship, and alluding to the need for another book on that theme. And Beaumont questions the claim of Australian exceptionalism - Australian diggers are worthy of praise as good soldiers, but others were courageous and innovative too, and Australia was a small part of a much larger British Imperial effort, which in turn was part of a larger British Imperial and multinational undertaking.

Broken Nation is at its most distinctive, however, in describing how Australia was affected by the War. It analyses the recruiting drives, economic and industrial mobilisation of "the home front" including patriotic volunteerism and sacrifice of the declining standard of living, vitriolic debates over conscription, split of the Labor party, industrial oppression and the shattering of unionism, use and misuse of censorship and the War Precautions Act, regrettable use of internment camps and mass deportation, the challenges of repatriation, and the onset of the Influenza epidemic so soon after the war. Prime Minister Andrew Fisher had declared Australia's intent was to "stand beside our own to help and defend her to our last man and shilling" (p.17) and it was costly.

The book's main character, however, is Prime Minister Billy Hughes, who replaced Fisher in October 1915 and served until 1923. Hughes campaigned for Australia's own army. During and after the war he was vocal, at international summits and in the media when other countries didn't agree with him, arguing for the need to maintain White Australia, for Australia to retain control of German New Guinea, and to receive substantial reparations from Germany. What he lacked in diplomacy he made up for in sheer determination, even if not getting the results he wanted.

As an Australian theologian, I was fascinated to read of the churches' response to the war. Many ministers celebrated Australia's response to the call to overthrow Germany's militarism. One preached for volunteering "as a willing sacrifice ... their reasonable service" (from The Australian

Baptist, echoing Romans 12:1-2, cited on p.104). Later in the war, some preachers struggled to address the huge losses while still wanting to support the war effort. Then there was the contrast to most church leaders, let alone to Hughes' leadership, of Archbishop Daniel Mannix's sympathy to Ireland and the union movement, and his explicit opposition to conscription and even critique of the war as "simply a sordid trade war" (p.313).

Broken Nation maps the tides of battles for Australia's involvement overseas in the Great War, but also offers page-turning social analysis of the home front and its effect on future history. Beaumont summarises her argument:

No community can wage battles as polarising as the conscription debates of 1917 and 1917 without carrying scars. Post-war Australia remained divided for years into the camps the war had spawned: a broken nation in which the volunteer was pitted against the 'shirker'; the conscriptionist against the anti-conscriptionist; and, though sectarianism was not created by the war the Catholic against the Protestant. The insults, calumny and accusations traded in the hysteria of the war years were not forgotten-they echoed down the years (p.549).

Broken Nation thus maps the tides of battle for Australia's involvement overseas in the Great War, but also offers page-turning social analysis of the home front and its effect on future history.

A shorter version of this review was originally published in History Australia 11 (3), December 2014, 240-242.

Review 5:

First half is good, but I couldn't stomach the second half. The violent descriptions got worse and worse as the war progressed and I couldn't read more..

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