



Critical discourse analysis on the representation of national security as a central theme of AUKUS

By

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Abstract

The Indo-Pacific has become the next battle ground in the defence of what it means to be Australian. The increasing competition between two world orders—democratic rules-based order and non-democratic rule by law—as projected by the leading world powers in the region, the United States and China, has increased tensions and created a need to stabilise the region. Australia has responded by allying itself closer with the US through the AUKUS security partnership that will modernise the ADF. The central theme of AUKUS is national security, which extends across two related policies, the National Defence Strategy and non-Australian recruitment of New Zealanders into the ADF. The language and symbology of Anzac was used by the Australian government to produce Australian sentiment towards national security, which is a binary that excludes Australians and non-Australians who do not fit the Anzac archetype. This study used critical discourse analysis to interrogate news broadcasts and answer the question: what does AUKUS represent national security to be, and how will military service in Australia change or remain the same? Four themes were identified, where national security was a mass media conveyed product of the Australian government to increase national power in the world order, friendships were used and referred to hierarchically to position nations in the Indo-Pacific below Australia, and the enemy was illustrated as any threat to national security, even though the public identified China as the enemy. This study argues that national security is a construct of the democratic nation state. This social construction legitimises policies that exclude non-democratic representations based on world order, enforced by alliances and an over-reliance on military capability. However, it was assessed that that the discursive formation of national defence is incomplete, depending on the formation of the 21st century Anzac, and the real effects of Trump’s re-election and the ADF’s modernisation through AUKUS. It was also identified that the wider implication of national security is the expansion of the western ideology. However, given the time and size limitations of this study, this concept was stated but not explored. While this study explored national security through AUKUS, Anzac and military service, it serves as a baseline introduction to the concept, which requires further research.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis:

1. does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university
2. and the research within will not be submitted for any other future degree or diploma without the permission of Flinders University; and
3. to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: Katherine Hare

Date: 6 December 2024

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ACMA	Australian Communications and Media Authority
ADF	Australian Defence Force. Also referred to as Defence
ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, from which is derived Anzac
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand and United States
APH	Australian Parliament House
ASD	Australian Signals Directorate
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AUKUS	Australia, United Kingdom and United States
AUS	Australia
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations & Council of Foreign Relations
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DoD	Department of Defence
DSR	Defence Strategic Review
DVA	Department of Veterans' Affairs
DWP	Defence White Paper
Five Eyes	AUS, US, UK, NZL and Canada
IGADF	Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force
ITAR	International Traffic in Arms Regulations
NAA	National Archives of Australia
Nashos	National Servicemen

NDS	National Defence Strategy
NZL	New Zealand
PM	Prime Minister
PM&C	Prime Minister and Cabinet
Q&A	Questions & Answers ABC program, also referred to as Q+A
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
The Quad	AUS, US, India and Japan
TV	Television
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
VOZ	Virtual Australia
WW1	World War 1
WW2	World War 2

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

Introduction

The mission and purpose of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is to “defend Australia and its national interests in order to advance Australia’s security and prosperity” (Defence, n.d.-a, para 2). However, the ADF has found itself a step behind in its strategic environment amidst the military modernisation, projection of power, and threat of conflict in the Indo-Pacific region (Defence, 2020). In response, the Australian government has addressed this deficit by establishing the Australian, United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US) (AUKUS) security partnership (Defence Ministers, 2021). This study will look at how the AUKUS partnership and issues of national security are discussed in the media to understand how its production, consumption and representation will impact military service in Australia.

This thesis is organised as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides the relevant background and context on the strategic environment that has led to the AUKUS partnership, outlines the theoretical frameworks that guide this study, documents the study’s evolution and states the research question.
- Chapter 2 reviews the literature on AUKUS and the ADF, identifying four themes.
- Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach of this study.
- Chapter 4 provides the results of this study, organised into key themes, and synthesises and discusses the implications of this study.
- Chapter 5 concludes this study.

The Strategic Environment

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The Indo-Pacific

On the 16th of September 2021, then Australian Prime Minister (PM) Scott Morrison, UK PM Boris Johnson, and US President Joe Biden announced AUKUS as a “new enhanced trilateral security partnership” to deal with the evolving strategic environment of the Indo-Pacific (Morrison et al., 2021c, 2:19). The Indo-Pacific is a region that ranges “from the eastern Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean connected by Southeast Asia, including India, North Asia and the United States” (Australian Government, 2017, p. 1).

The Indo-Pacific has been a site of growing competition for regional dominance between the US and China for more than a decade (Defence, 2016; He & Li, 2020; Medcalf, 2019), where continuing US dominance would maintain the rules-based global order Australia prescribes to (Australian Government, 2017; Behm, 2017). A difference in statecraft speaks to the fundamental differences between the US and China (Behm, 2017). The US, UK and Australia follow the rule of law as democratic societies, where security and defence systems are based on the protection and rights of their citizens, compared to non-democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian societies with communist or religious foundations, where security and defence systems legitimise and protect the state, including against the rights and activities of its citizens—such as China (Behm, 2017, p. 333). Or, as Stuart Hall so neatly titled and summarised, the difference is between the west and the rest (Hall, 1992). This, at its core, is what I believe has led to the AUKUS partnership, which is supported by the language used and ongoing reference to the US and China relationship in the region across the 2000-2016 Defence White Papers as summarised below.

In recent years, the Australian government has documented China’s increasing projection of power and the long-term implications of their dominance in the Indo-Pacific through the Defence White Paper (DWP). In the year 2000, China was described as a world power whose relationships in the region, with both democratic and non-democratic nations, could have strategic consequences for Australian national security (Defence, 2000). By 2009, the US-China relationship was identified as the critical factor that would shape Australia’s strategic environment, where “*the Rise of China*” through their military modernisation was projected to rival and potentially overtake that of the US by 2020 (Defence, 2009, p. 34, emphasis in original). The South China Sea (SCS) and its island groups within the Indo-Pacific region is a major global trading corridor and thus a disputed area by surrounding nation claimants including China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia, contesting sovereignty, freedom to navigate, security and access to marine resources (Schofield, 2013). In 2013, China’s militarised development, expansion and claim of sovereignty of the Spratly Islands in the SCS therefore increased US-China tension within Australia’s region (Behm, 2017). However, the Australian government refused to choose a side (Defence, 2013).

By 2016, the government’s perception was that the implied ‘threat’ of China had diminished. The Australian Department of Defence assessed China would remain a major power in the region but would not overtake the US, and that conflict was unlikely. Following this, the paper welcomed China’s growth and shared

responsibility of the Indo-Pacific, then shifted the security focus to other non-democratic societies, namely

Afghanistan and Ukraine, as the war against terrorism continued (Defence, 2016). Allan Behm's understanding of the global insecurity best describes the geopolitical period between 2016 and 2020, and the forces that influenced Australia's approach to national security:

The United States and China will dominate the global strategic landscape for the rest of this century, and beyond. The lack of strategic congruence between them has profound implications for the rest of the global community, at once constraining the strategic options of the states that constitute that community, while at the same time generating strategic opportunity as the power balance between the behemoths continually adjusts. How states manage these constraints and opportunities will depend on their ability to construct a contemporary security policy framework and to reconcile the inconsistencies caused by the tension between bilateral and multilateral approaches to protecting the national interest. In other words, in an altogether new strategic environment, states will need to reinvent themselves and devise new ways to meet new problems. States will need to recalibrate their national security settings while redefining their role in delivering national security and global strategic stability (Behm, 2017, p. 335).

However, the catalyst for the Australian government to act on the evolving strategic environment was the 2020 Defence Strategic Update. It identified that a ten-year strategic planning cycle no longer prepared the ADF to respond and stay ahead of emerging threats, requiring a policy change that enabled it to become a self-reliant, capable and lethally ready military, given:

Major power competition, coercion and military modernisation are increasing the potential for and consequences of miscalculation. While still unlikely, the prospect of high-intensity military conflict in the Indo-Pacific is less remote than at the time of the 2016 Defence White Paper, including high-intensity military conflict between the United States and China. (Defence, 2020, p. 14, para 1.12)

To address this global security issue, the Australian government established the AUKUS partnership.

Security Partnerships in the region

AUKUS will operate amidst the complexities of the Indo-Pacific to deliver security and stability, and complement Australia's other security partnerships, which include ASEAN, ANZUS, Five Eyes, the Quad, and bilateral/trilateral agreements (Morrison et al., 2021c; Umar & Nuraini Santoso, 2023).

- ASEAN: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) includes Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam (PM&C, 2024), where its formation and operation is central to the security of the Indo-Pacific region (DFAT, n.d.-a).
- ANZUS: The ANZUS security treaty (AUS, New Zealand (NZL) and US), which was formed in the wake of the Cold War and start of the Korean War in response to the rising communism threat in the Indo-Pacific of China and what was to become North Korea, and has remained critical to the security of the region with the rise of terrorism post 9/11 (APH, n.d.).
- The Five Eyes intelligence partnership (AUS, US, UK, NZL and Canada), which the UK and US officially established post-World War 2 (WW2) to share information and then extended to the other three nations that today also shares expertise, technology and capabilities (ASD, 2022).
- The Quad (AUS, US, India and Japan), which is a diplomatic partnership that supports ASEAN outcomes in the Indo-Pacific (DFAT, n.d.-b).

- Bilateral partnerships with Japan, Indonesia, India and the Republic of Korea, and trilateral partnerships with US and Japan, and India and Japan in the pursuit of “new economic and security cooperation” in the Indo-Pacific region (Australian Government, 2017, p. 40).

Australia can be defined as a middle power nation that has always allied itself with bigger and more powerful friends (Manicom & O'Neil, 2012). None more so than the US, both historic and current, and through emerging national strategies and partnerships such as AUKUS (Australian Government, 2017; Defence, 2020; Defence Ministers, 2024a; Manicom & O'Neil, 2012). “Our alliance with the United States is central to Australia’s security and sits at the core of our strategic and defence planning” (p. 37), where “for over 60 years, our security has been supported by the extended deterrence provided by the United States” (Australian Government, 2017, p. 39). This longstanding alliance and reach, as can be seen by AUKUS and the predominance above, reflects Australia’s fear of being left behind (Manicom & O'Neil, 2012). Behm (2017) suggests that Australia’s hyperfocus on security that is disproportionate to the threat against the nation and its interests, are also a symptom of fear.

Security in Australia, like other Western nations, is slowly broadening to include issues of health, the environment, access to food, water and education, and protection of people’s way of life in addition to issues of terrorism, crime, border control and regional conflicts (Australian Government, 2017). This aligns with the broader approach of the United Nations (UN) where security is a global and human issue that includes people’s welfare and prosperity, and the sustainable development of all human-environment interactions from poverty to health, industry and climate action (UN, n.d.-a, n.d.-b). However, despite Australia’s stated growing adoption of ‘global’ and ‘human-centred’ security, the formation of AUKUS suggests that Australia is still preoccupied with “policy architectures that support conventional approaches to ‘national security’, ‘state security’, and ‘national defence’” through “the acquisition, deployment, and use of armed force and military conflict” (Behm, 2017, p. 331). It is also arguable that China is likewise driven by its own need of military-based ‘national security’.

Therefore, national security is the central theme of AUKUS, which this thesis will explore. In this study I will argue that national security is a construct of every nation state, and specifically for Australia as a democratic nation state. This social construction legitimises policies that exclude non-democratic representations based on world order, enforced by alliances and an over-reliance on military capability. However, national security as explored so far represents two sides of the conversation. On one hand it is to protect and maintain the western ideology of Australia, and on the other it is to deny the operation and expansion of non-western powers. The practices to achieve this also contrast, through the Defence force which will also be used to project force. To understand why this difference matters and to guide this study, I will use the following theoretical frameworks.

Theoretical Frameworks

This study will be guided by the work of the late Stuart Hall (1932-2014), specifically the following concept of language and related theories of the ‘other’ and the circuit of culture:

Language is one of the ‘media’ [i.e. written, verbal, visual, musical or digital signs and symbols] through which thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in a culture. Representation through language is therefore central to the processes by which meaning is produced (Hall, 1997a, p. 1).

Hall’s work was informed by three notable thinkers: Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), Roland Barthes (1915-1980), and Michel Foucault (1926-1984) whose work provided insights into the process of meaning construction that challenged what, why and how something is said in their respective western cultures, and is still used today (Hall, 1997c). Saussure’s focus on language and what meaning it signifies provided a foundation for post-structuralism, where his scientific, closed system approach of representation was adopted by radical, open-minded post-structuralists (like Hall) who built on his insights to explore how language and its meaning constantly changes (Hall, 1997c). Critic and essayist Barthes took representation one step further to its production, and how meaning has multiple levels, such as the things shown in a picture, the text used, and the overall cultural concept implanted and interpreted (Hall, 1997c). Foucault linked language to discourse that produces knowledge which is controlled by those people(s) and/or institutions with power over others, which Hall distinguishes from Saussure’s and Barthes’ semiotic approach as a discursive approach to meaning construction where both offer value to a cultural study (Hall, 1997c). Hall’s continued use and reference to these thinkers and their insights that underpin his own work has made him a leader in cultural studies in Australia today (Milner & Browitt, 2013), which is why this study will be guided by Hall’s work.

‘Self and Other’

Creating the other is the work of the self. In this context Australia is the self that generates representations of others that we seek security from. Hall poses that ‘difference’ matters because “meaning depends on the difference between opposites” (Hall, 1997b, p. 235). Drawing on linguistics, Hall argues that words have known meaning, for example Australia is known to be a country, continent, and full of kangaroos, because it can be contrasted with an opposite, for example *China*. It can also be used as a concept to convey Australianess, which is not Chinese, Kiwi or American. This relational approach to meaning means that opposites, contrasts, contradictions, differences, ‘other’, and binaries carry meaning. In those differences, power, knowledge and meaning is represented (Hall, 1997b). This study accepts Hall’s theoretical significance of the ‘self and other’ as an important component of meaning-making (Hall, 1997b).

The Circuit of Culture

At the heart of this study is culture, and when its formation and enforcement is within the power of some and not within others, those forces shape how it evolves and what it produces (Gray, 2003). Therefore, this study will use Hall’s Circuit of Culture (Hall, 1997a) as a theoretical framework to look at the production, consumption and representation of national security (see Figure 1).

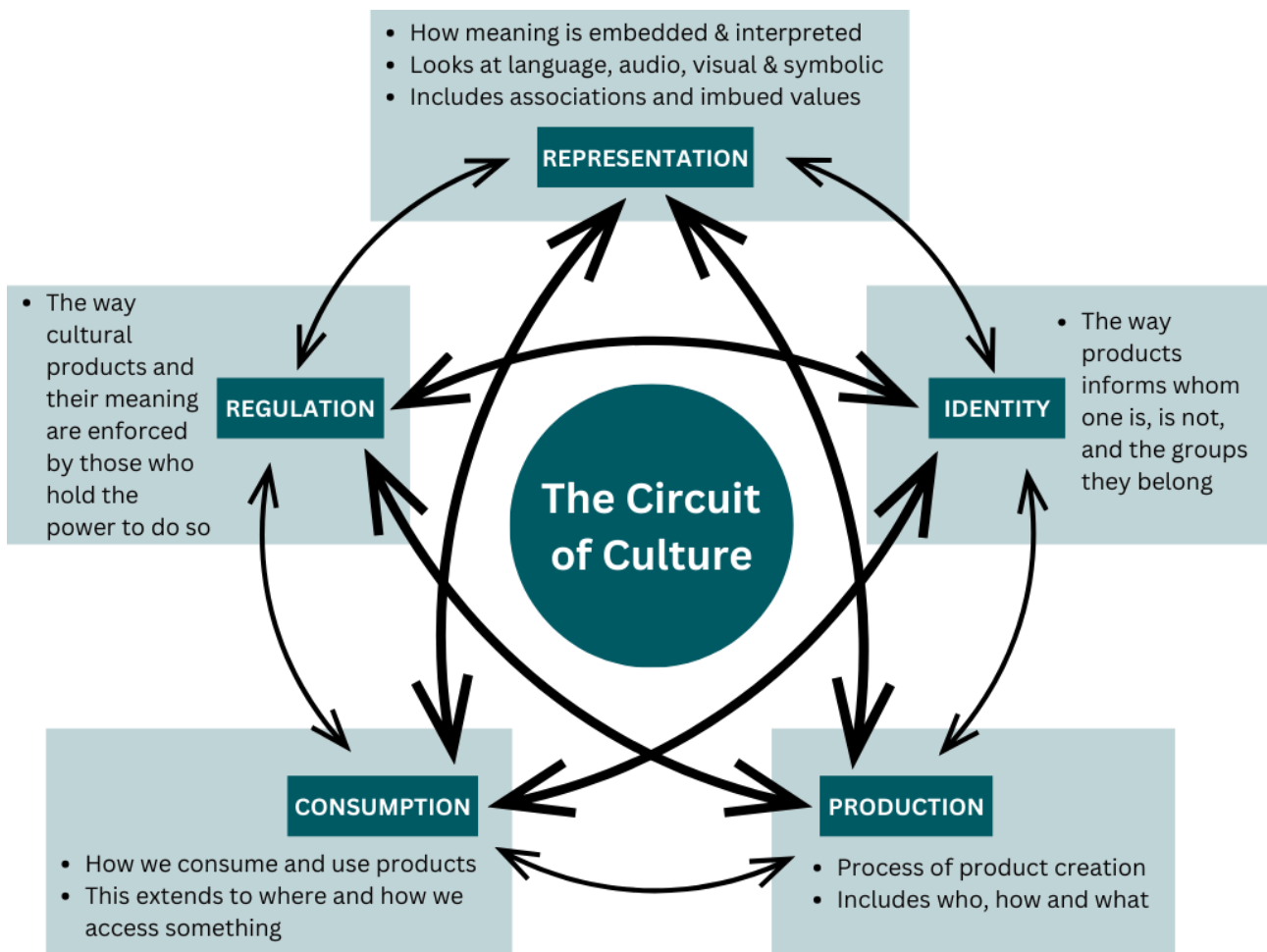


Figure 1: The Circuit of Culture

The Circuit of Culture provides a map of elements that demonstrate how meaning navigates different moments of its productive life (Hall, 1997a). Derived from Hall's extensive contribution to cultural studies, the Circuit of Culture helps one conduct a textural analysis of media while also understanding the complex network of information and relationships it forms (Turner, 2003). Hall (1997b) draws on Foucault when he explains that power circulates non-linearly and produces discourse within its network. Its products are "culturally produced in order to be culturally interpreted", "regulated" and "consumed by people", which includes the product's history that tells us about its origins (Wadham et al., 2007, p. 20). It is for these reasons that the Circuit of Culture has been used in other cultural studies to analyse media sources and how they have created and regulated culture, for example, on Real Madrid and their global culture (García, 2021), on the New Zealand All Blacks rugby team and the impact of a specific Adidas promotion (Scherer & Jackson, 2008), and on a failed Starbucks café in China due to cultural ignorance (Han & Zhang, 2009). It therefore makes it an appropriate model to use to analyse AUKUS and look at how the discursive formation of national security produces an enforceable culture.

The moments within the Circuit of Culture are:

Production — the process by which a product is created, extending to who, how and what was used (Wadham et al., 2007). In this instance, it specifically refers to the way the AUKUS partnership was announced; its production an important step to allow the exchange of meaning (Hall, 1997a).

Representation — The way in which meaning is contextually embedded and interpreted in products that in turn make it meaningful (Wadham et al., 2007). This looks at the language and visual material used, the emotional, conceptual and narrative associations, and the values that guide its production and consumption (Hall, 1997a).

Consumption — meaning is produced when we consume products and make them part of our lives, giving them value and significance (Hall, 1997a). What we do with them also creates meaning (García, 2021). Therefore the medium and how people access it, such as by watching news on the TV, is also an important component of consumption (Wadham et al., 2007).

Identity — the attachment of meaning to oneself that informs who they are, what they feel and what groups they belong, including the inverse—who they are not, which includes national and institutional identities (Hall, 1997a). When products such as those relating to AUKUS are engaged with, people adopt a position or stance that expresses how they identify (Wadham et al., 2007).

Regulation — the way in which culture is enforced and regulated, including rules, laws, policies and norms that guide production and consumption (Wadham et al., 2007), which also reflect the desire and practice of those who want to govern the conduct of others (Hall, 1997a).

However, the process of both production-interpretation and analysis are *active* and therefore will involve bias, requiring us to question the products, our understanding and ourselves to determine if and how bias may have shaped its meaning (Wadham et al., 2007). Fortunately, analysis and interrogation are done simultaneously by asking questions of the information, which Wadham et al. (2007) recommend approaching with the classic who, what, when, where, why and how format, getting more specific as you dive deeper. This study attempts to avoid bias by analysing the products within the boundaries of the circuit of culture, asking questions to reveal their place and relationship within the model.

Contextualising the study

Looking at the discourse of security as the central theme of AUKUS is one way of understanding its meaning in the context of military service in Australia. However, representation can also be derived by interrogating other mediums such as books and films, which is how this study began.

I first proposed to read three books, one each that represented World War 1 (WW1), the Vietnam War and the war on terror. While I could easily identify books that were unbiased, well-researched, credible and of reasonable coverage to portray both WW1 and the Vietnam War (for example, Peter Fitzsimons' *Gallipoli* and *The Battle of Long Tan*, supported by Thomas Keneally's *Australians*), I found that books on the war on terror were stove piped into personal accounts authored by athletes and leaders (such as Daniel Keighran's *Courage*

Under Fire and Sharon Brown's *One Woman's War and Peace*), or into niche jobs such as Special Forces or intelligence, which were predominantly written by British or American authors. This meant that numerous books would need to be read to understand this conflict, which was not achievable within the timeframe allocated for this study.

I chose to change the medium to films, which looked promising, however resulted in the same outcome. While Australian made films such as Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* (1981) and Kriv Stenders' *Danger Close: The Battle of Long Tan* (2019) were clear choices, films on the war on terror were limited to *Jirga* (2018), which is a fictional indie film about a soldier's return to the Middle East seeking forgiveness, and thus not an adequate representation of the conflict. The market is dominated by British and American representations that are also stove piped into Special Forces and intelligence jobs: *Jarhead* (2005), *The Hurt Locker* (2008), *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012), *American Sniper* (2014), *Eye in the Sky* (2016), *12 Strong* (2018), *Official Secrets* (2019), *The Torture Report* (2019), *The Covenant* (2023). I looked to include foreign-made films, however this trail of inquiry was rejected given that the focus is on Australian culture, and that the top 100 films of all time in Australia does not contain any relating to the war on terror: #20 *The Water Diviner* (2014), #23 *The Sapphires* (2012), #24 *Tomorrow When The War Began* (2010), #29 *Gallipoli* (1981), #42 *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016), #57 *The Railway Man* (2013), #77 *Breaker Morant* (1980), #87 *Charlotte Gray* (2002) (Screen Australia, 2024).

Changing tactic, I next investigated plays as a medium, searching first for those relating to the war on terror. While three plays were found—*The Long Way Home* (war on terror), *Rolling Thunder Vietnam* (the Vietnam War), and *The One Day of the Year* (WW1)—this medium was deemed not suitable due to the regional/local audience, limited representation and perceived lower value of plays by the wider public (Fotheringham, 1992). While theatre is becoming known in Australia as an expression of individual identity as seen in the development of Indigenous theatre (Glow, 2006), it is still overwhelmingly white and oscillates between reinforcing and challenging national identities that marginalise groups (Croggon, 2010; Lewis, 2007).

TV shows/series proved to be just as difficult a medium, with *M.A.S.H.*, the long-running American Korean War comedy series dominating in Australia (Sparkes, 2022). The news also presents a problem. TV was not brought into Australia until 1956, available to all by 1957, representative of the national community by the 1990s (Bye, 2017; Turner, 2020), and popular by the 2000s thanks to the Sydney Olympics (Davies & Sternberg, 2007). While newspaper does exist across all time periods, it is the lowest (and declining) source of news in Australia despite having the highest trust (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). Therefore, I was forced to change the study I proposed.

Although this trial and error took time, it helped me understand the limitations of the study I proposed. Gray (2003) says that a reflexive and dynamic approach to the research method is appropriate when you “explore the complexities of social and cultural processes, meanings and practices” (p. 5). The research question I initially posed—what is the meaning of military service in Australia, and how has it changed or remained the same since WW1?—did not directly relate to AUKUS, and therefore failed to make this study relevant. Additionally, the various mediums I sampled demonstrated the futility of the study. Therefore, the research

question was amended to—What does AUKUS represent national security to be, and how will military service in Australia change or remain the same?

Conclusion

In this chapter I defined and illustrated the Indo-Pacific region, which is the strategic environment AUKUS will use ADF resources in. Due to the increasing power dynamic between the US and China in the Indo-Pacific, Australia responded by establishing the AUKUS partnership and more closely aligned itself with the US. National security is the central theme of AUKUS, which is an extension of Australia's hyperfocus and approach to national security through military capability. However, AUKUS also represents a binary approach which is used to defend and project Australia's ideology. Therefore, this study will be guided by Hall's theoretical approaches of the 'other' and the circuit of culture, to understand what AUKUS represents national security to mean.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

In this chapter I review the literature on AUKUS and the ADF through the theme of national security. Four sub-themes are identified: Australian government policy, the National Defence Strategy (NDS), non-Australian recruitment into the ADF, and the Anzac. I further breakdown Anzac and relate it to historical and current examples of national security and military service. Using Hall's concepts of the 'other' and the circuit of culture, I also identify the binaries within the themes.

AUKUS and the ADF

An Australian Government Policy

AUKUS is presented as a national prerogative. However, it positions military power as a national prerogative, too. This may also seem obvious, as the ADF is under ministerial authority, but it is the Australian *Defence* Force. Its mission and purpose is to “defend Australia and its national interests in order to advance Australia’s security and prosperity” (Defence, n.d.-a, para 2) through government regulated “practices and processes” which “ensure that Defence activities and resources are aligned with Government direction and achieve intended results and outcomes” (Defence, n.d.-b, para 1). This purpose is reinforced by what the public is allowed to see about Defence’s activities, where the ADF is brought in *after* something has happened and represented in a way that highlights the political power used to leverage it. For example, after:

- a natural disaster to help clean up and deliver supplies, like Operation Flood Assist 2022 in Northern New South Wales (Defence, 2022), which both Scott Morrison (then Prime Minister) and Anthony Albanese (then leader of the opposition) physically attended as part of their election campaign (Four Corners, 2022);
- a conflict has begun to support our allies, like in the Vietnam and Korean Wars to strengthen Australia’s US alliance (Manicom & O’Neil, 2012);
- a threat of an attack has been made, such as the Lindt café siege in 2014 when the ADF had the capability to help however the ministerial preconditions were not met and precluded their support, leading to an inquest and subsequent legislative change (Griffiths, 2018).

What these examples show us is that the ADF is a resource that the AUS government can call upon *in response* to national agendas which can have a local, state, national or international effect. ‘Defence’ by name, description and action reinforces its meaning without ambiguity, with additional products, such as Operation COVID-19 Assist (Defence, n.d.-d) which used the same representational system—the AUS government providing support through the ADF.

AUKUS is no different. It is a government regulated policy to: address the “security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region” (para 2) where other nations’ advancement reduces Australia’s lead; enable “emerging

security and defence capabilities” that the AUKUS partnership will create (para 3); “promote security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region” (para 4); and justify the switch from acquiring Attack class submarines through France to nuclear-powered submarines through AUKUS given “accelerating changes to regional security” (para 15) (Defence Ministers, 2021). This is why AUKUS is widely referred to and more commonly known as the ‘submarine deal’ (9NEWS, 2023; ABC News, 2021, 2023e; Morrison, 2021a; Morrison et al., 2021a). However, the acquisition of a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) is the first of many capabilities that have been listed under AUKUS, including missiles for use across all three services of the ADF (the RAN, Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)) (Defence Ministers, 2021). The premise for increasing the ADF’s capability through AUKUS is national security, which Behm (2017) notes is a historical trait, explaining that “In the most fundamental sense, national security is an artefact of national economic and political strength” (p. 332). Speaking briefly to the switch from French to American submarines, it allowed Australia to ally itself more closely with the US as per its security strategy (Australian Government, 2017), get access to nuclear technology and capability that has been central to US and UK maritime power (Morrison, 2021b), side with the leading world power in the region (Defence, 2020), and establish a trade deal that future proofs the ADF. Because at the heart of AUKUS is trade.

On a practical level, the AUKUS partnership is a trade agreement that allows for the easier export of national capabilities that include information, data, services, technology and assets for military modernisation (Defence Ministers, 2021) through reforms that streamline exclusive trade between the three nations (Defence Ministers, 2024c). The benefits of which is why it has been suggested that AUKUS may be extended to other nations, including Japan, New Zealand (NZL), Canada, and the Republic of Korea (SBS News, 2024), for AUKUS also excludes trade to proscribed countries for the security and protection of national capabilities. AUKUS is aligned with each nation’s trade policy, including the US’s International Traffic of Arms Regulations (ITAR) (Defence Media, 2024; Defence Ministers, 2024c), which is the most restrictive of the three. The ITAR publishes and regularly updates the list of proscribed countries with which trade is denied or restricted on the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) site. As AUKUS goods permeate through the ADF, Defence industry and government, it will exclude any Australians who have citizenship, whether current or denounced, with any of the proscribed countries from working in positions that use or have access to the ITAR item. As of the 22nd of November 2024, the relevant excluded countries in the Indo-Pacific region are China and Burma, and in the Middle East are Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq (CFR, 2024a). While it is believed that ADF members will be treated as ‘Australian’ and allowed to access ITAR items, the Australian public and ADF veterans who have links to a proscribed country will be limited to work that does not involve ITAR items, regardless of their education and experience. Case in point, a news story about an Australian engineer from Iran (ABC News, 2023c). This security issue has already played out in the Australian government’s formation of the National Defence Strategy and non-Australian recruitment into the ADF.

The National Defence Strategy (NDS)

On the 17th of April 2024, the Australian government announced the National Defence Strategy (NDS), to unite Australians, both civil and military, in the expansion of the ADF's capabilities and personnel (Defence Ministers, 2024a). Described as a blueprint to transform the ADF, it is the first explicit mention of 'National Defence', which is defined as "a concept that harnesses all arms of Australia's national power to achieve an integrated approach to our security" (Defence Ministers, 2024a, para 5). On the surface, this statement empowers Australians and urges them to fight for Australia as a "whole-of-nation approach to Australia's defence" (para 4). It also evokes Anzac by timing the announcement with the lead up to Anzac Day that has historically had more attention and pro-Australian sentiment because of its reinforcement over the last century (Seal, 2007). However, it also excludes Australians by only widening the eligibility for non-Australians to join the ADF. This is the first mention of non-Australian recruitment, and like the NDS announcement, is not a separate event but an extension of AUKUS. 'National power', then, is not what it seems but is the power bestowed by the Australian government on people, partnerships and programs that fit its idea of nationalism. The language of NDS echoes the AUKUS announcement by focusing on security. It references the Indo-Pacific region and the AUKUS partnership as an Australian government initiative to address current day challenges, as well as reinforcing that "Australia's alliance with the United States remains fundamental to our national security" (Defence Ministers, 2024a, para 21).

Non-Australian Recruitment into the ADF

On the 4th of June 2024, the official statement that confirmed the details for non-AUS recruitment was released (Defence Ministers, 2024b). The Australian government announced that it has expanded the ADF eligibility requirements to allow Five Eyes nations—NZL, UK, US and Canada—to join, starting with NZL in 2024 and expanding to the others in 2025. As of 30 June 2023, there were 89,395 people serving across the permanent and reserve forces of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) (DoD, 2023). However, the ADF is still ~4,400 people understaffed (DoD, 2024). The Australian Government focused on recruitment in 2022 with the goal to grow the permanent forces by ~20,000 by 2040 (Defence Ministers, 2022), which then PM Scott Morrison described as "the biggest increase in the size of our Defence forces in peacetime in Australian history" (Morrison, 2022, 0:25). However, the problem is also retention. The ADF is failing to retain its workforce (DoD, 2023) in a climate of need that has led to the AUKUS partnership. As of 2021, more than 27% of Australians were born overseas, where England and NZL both rank in the top five and represent a combined 5.7% of the population (ABS, 2022b). Australians with Chinese ancestry, on the other hand, represented 5.5% of the population compared to 33% of those with English ancestry (ABS, 2022b).

Given Australia's greater alliance with the US over China, China's exclusion through ITAR and the UK's inclusion through AUKUS, the plan to transform the ADF through the NDS, and the lower representation of China in Australia's cultural diversity, the recruitment of Five Eyes citizens makes logical sense. However, the language and symbology used throughout AUKUS, NDS and non-Australian recruitment suggests that the Australian government is evoking Anzac to drive Australian support and recruitment. This is stated most explicitly through this announcement of non-Australian recruitment, where Deputy PM Richard Marles is

quoted as saying that recruiting New Zealanders strengthens “our ANZAC bond” (para 8), and Minister for Defence Personnel Matt Keogh as saying that the Five Eyes recruitment “reflects the full diversity of Australia and is able to draw on the talents of the entirety of Australian society” (Defence Ministers, 2024b, para 11). Therefore, in the following section I will give a brief background on Anzac and draw parallels to what has been discussed so far in the wider representation of national security through AUKUS and military service in Australia.

Anzac

WW1 is widely believed to be the birth of Australia and formation of its national and cultural identity through the Anzac ideal despite its historical inaccuracies, mythological components, and polarized representation (Crotty & Stockings, 2014; Inglis, 1992; Marti, 2018; Seal, 2007; Ziino, 2016). Anzac was formed on the back of colonization and federation as a duality, where Australians served in the Australian Imperial Force under the British empire, but separated Australia as an independent nation through their gallant efforts at Gallipoli (Stanley, 2011).

The place where they went ashore on 25 April 1915 was named at once by the invaders Anzac Cove, and then the word was applied to the antipodean invaders themselves and quickly became revered in their homelands. All the proud metaphors that had been waiting for such an event were put into national currency. The feat of clinging to the cliffs of Anzac Cove was at once birth, baptism and coming of age. Australians were not, after all, an inferior people. They could perform at least as well as the best in the world in the great test of war. (Inglis, 1992, p. 54)

WW1 gave Australia the opportunity to characterize its triumph as a white Australian colony turned nation, establishing national significance and the ideal of what it means to be Australian (Wadham & Hamilton, 2015). This meant that Anzac represented white Australia, excluding the ‘other’, Indigenous Australians (Stanley, 2011) and women (Inglis, 1987) despite their military service. The power of the Anzac ideal is still influential today more than a hundred years after its creation, where its foundations remain a popular sentiment of nationalism and Australian identity (Donoghue & Tranter, 2015; Stanley, 2011).

While the tropes of Anzac have been expanded over the decades and become more inclusive as will be spoken to below, this study will not dispute the Anzac ideology nor correct historical inaccuracies. It will however leverage its historical construction by the Australian government (Crotty & Stockings, 2014; Inglis, 1965; Lake, 2017; McKenna, 2010), to contextualize and support how AUKUS and military service in Australia is represented. Therefore, a brief background will now be provided.

Celebrated Australian journalist and historian Ken Inglis (1929-2017) documents Anzac’s formation. The acronym ‘ANZAC’ first referred to the name of the Australian and New Zealand Armed Corp force who landed at Gallipoli and christened it ‘Anzac Cove’; their characteristics were applied to all Australians fighting in WW1 who then became revered at home as ‘Anzacs’. The first Anzac memorial was built in Adelaide within a few months. The first anniversary on 25th of April 1916 was named ‘Anzac Day’ and more memorials were unveiled. As the war continued and conscription was voted against, the Anzac tradition became a recruitment tactic. The government legally protected the word ‘Anzac’ and established the Repatriation Department which gave veterans vocational and medical support, employment preference, and awarded pensions, laying the

foundation for what would become the Department of Veterans' Affairs in 1976 (DVA, 2022). Post-war, C.E.W. Bean was commissioned to write the official war history with the freedom to romanticize Australia's contribution and personify the nation, which was then referenced in political speeches, monuments, and the design of the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra (Inglis, 1965, 1987, 1992).

To carry forward the Anzac tradition to new generations, custodianship was handed to the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) and the WW1 veterans they advocated on behalf of, however, the tradition was generally considered to be dying (Macleod, 2002). The Anzac legend was kept alive in popular and enduring fictional representations such as C.J. Dennis' verses *Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* (1915) and *The Moods of Ginger Mick* (1916) (Inglis, 1965), and Peter Weir's film *Gallipoli* (1981) (Seal, 2007). However, it was also challenged as archives were opened and academic research increased, and as schools excursions and tourists visited monuments, memorials, and went to the cinema to watch *Gallipoli*, which was so popular that it was used as part of the school curriculum despite its historical inaccuracies, resulting in "a generational shift in those publicly interpreting its meaning" (Macleod, 2002, p. 150). To correct the public's perception, the government funded DVA, the AWM and by extension the RSL to educate and provide study guides on WW1 to schools and run promotional activities (Crotty & Stockings, 2014; Lake, 2017; Twomey, 2013).

The Anzac characteristics, values and beliefs reconstituted as knowledge of what it means to be Australian are widely agreed across the literature to still represent the masculine white man despite the desire for a more inclusive representation (Crotty & Stockings, 2014; Donoghue & Tranter, 2015; McKenna, 2010; Seal, 2007; Stanley, 2011). I have found the description written by Crotty and Stockings (2014) to be the best summary of those characteristics:

The archetypical "Anzac" is **physically imposing, mentally stoic**, yet mercurial in spirit. He is rough around the edges but has an unflappable sense of **fair play**, natural justice, and deep **democratic** urges. He fights hard but **plays by the rules**. He is distinct insofar as he is an eager **volunteer** with no desire to kill, but rather **resigned to do his terrible duty by his nation and his mates**. He is not a conscript, for compulsion is too close to reluctance. He is, unfortunately, far too often let down by the incompetence of his military and political leaders. His mistakes, such as they are, are not really his. He may be uneducated and unruly, but he is nonetheless clever. Perhaps he had to be, coming from the bush? **He is always white and essentially masculine**; "he" cannot comfortably be a "she" — despite the degree to which the legend is often twisted in an attempt to make such an accommodation. Those who fail to fit this mould, or fail to **celebrate it sufficiently**, run the risk, perhaps, of **seeming un-Australian** (p. 583, emphasis added to highlight the characteristics, values and beliefs as found in the literature).

The characteristics of the ideal Anzac have been attached to those deemed best suited to provide national security on behalf of the Australian government, playing a pivotal role over the decades in what national security has been represented to be. In the following paragraphs, I will break out the Anzac characteristics and connect them to AUKUS and military service in Australia, focusing on national security.

Physical and mental characteristics

While the archetypical Anzac is synonymous with strength and resilience, its binary, those who have physical and/or mental health limitations, illnesses and/or injuries, is more predominant, which makes this characteristic an ideal and status to stereotype others as less, weak, or fragile (Hall, 1997b). This initially represented men who did not fight in WW1 and British soldiers who were in comparison small statured and weak (Inglis, 1965).

Over time, it has been applied to Australians who were medically exempt from serving in the Vietnam War (NAA, n.d.) and those who came back injured but excluded (Twomey, 2013). It also applied to feminists who went unheard and unsupported when they spoke up about their abuse and lack of recognition throughout military conflicts (Inglis, 1987). Today, it is represented by modern ADF members and veterans who suffered the stigmatism and loss of purpose, identity and belonging when they were medically separated (Flack & Kite, 2021; Forbes et al., 2018; Van Hooff et al., 2014; Wadham et al., 2023). These Australians have been portrayed as ‘less’ because they do not hold up to the Anzac archetype.

He is masculine and white

To be masculine, simply, is to be manly, and when combined with military service, the result is that of a warrior culture (Doran, 2020; Flack & Kite, 2021; Wadham & Connor, 2023). A study conducted by Wadham and Connor (2023) identified cultural conditions from the 1960s onward that bred military institutional abuse (violence in the military), which was dealt out and regulated by the institution and its members against ‘others’, those who were ‘different’ from the ideal masculine warrior sexually, culturally, physically, and mentally (see for example: Australian Human Rights Commission, 2014; MacKenzie & Wadham, 2023; Riseman, 2019; Wadham et al., 2018). Kept in-house but occasionally leaked to the wider public, the violence was also a regulating behaviour to dissuade ‘other’ representations than those the organisation harbored (Wadham & Connor, 2023), which are akin to Anzac. In a climate of low ADF recruitment and retention, where ADF veterans number ~500,000 compared to the ~90,000 current serving members (ABS, 2022a), the Australian government’s approach to the recruitment of non-Australians from Five Eyes nations reinforces the ideal and value of those who are physically and mentally whole, and represent the white, masculine archetype.

Volunteerism, duty and war-talk

The reduced status of conscription, avoidance or dereliction of one’s duty to serve and go to war, or further deteriorate their masculinity by speaking of the horrors of war and of military service, also positions someone as less, or in the worst case, as an enemy. Dating back to WW1, it became common practice to inscribe the names of those who served (and died) on memorials, that represented the humble digger and not the horrors of war, to shame and dishonor those who did not serve (Inglis, 1992). The cultural impact of this had social ramifications, where some women of the time preferred their loved ones to have died than not gone to war, for that gave them a higher status (Inglis, 1987). Horrors of WW1 were neither spoken about or represented, which fed into the narrative of the humble Anzac who was a hero because he honorably does his duty (Inglis, 1987).

The Vietnam war era of servicemen and veterans suffered a triple dose of this non-Anzac trait. First, being generalized as conscripts even though less than a third were conscripted as National servicemen (Nashos) and the rest volunteered (DVA, n.d.; NAA, n.d.). Second, to willingly serve during the anti-war sentiment of the 1960s and 1970s (Macleod, 2002). And finally, to be guilty of war crimes, whether deliberately, accidentally or mistakenly, as the war raged in and around civilian villages. These war crimes were made publicly available after the introduction, popularity and national reach of TV in Australia by 1957 (Bye, 2017). This footage was captured, consumed and continued to produce the horror narrative over the 11 years

of Australia's contribution to the Vietnam War (Martin Hobbs, 2018). The horrors of war and military service are typically associated with the enemy to contrast with the nation's heroes who act out of necessity and can thus be celebrated and commemorated, which is core to the Anzac Tradition (Ingليس, 1965).

However, this Anzac characteristic is still challenged today. Horrors continue to be identified as part of military service, separate to those experiences in war and conflict. These horrors are persistently covered up to protect the organization's dysfunction (MacKenzie & Wadham, 2023). The most recent example is the Afghanistan Inquiry Report that found Australian Special Forces soldiers committed war crimes but covered them up (IGADF, 2020). Not only were their actions against their duty, some of the murders were done to induct or 'blood' juniors by giving them their first kill (Doran, 2020; IGADF, 2020). The findings of the report and action to strip medals from commanders (Doran, 2024), illustrates that this Anzac characteristic is still applied today. The report itself was made public with heavy "redaction for national security" (IGADF, 2020, p. II). However, the cultural and systemic issues of the Australian military service have been slowly uncovered over the decades as cultural reform has been accepted and prioritised. Attempts have been made to address concerns such as hazing (Wadham & Connor, 2023), sexual abuse and violence (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2014; Riseman, 2019; Wadham & Connor, 2023), transition and loss of identity (Flack & Kite, 2021; Kleykamp et al., 2021), and suicide (Sadler et al., 2021; Wadham et al., 2023).

The Afghanistan example shows that the ADF had become a power unto its own where sections have ignored customary military law, rules and conventions (MacKenzie & Wadham, 2023). As discussed earlier, the ADF is a government tool and the Anzac an archetype for a person to measure against. However, by violating this characteristic, the ADF has damaged the modern perception of military service (Doran, 2020). The result is a change in representation. As a hierarchical organisation that is today focused on recruitment and retention to achieve its purpose (DoD, 2024), it is the 'differences' that are now represented to portray the message that prior transgressions were 'bad' and the current environment 'good'. The ADF website (Defence, n.d.-c) shows gender and ethnic diversity in both its people and the tasks they are performing, where military service caters for women, Indigenous Australians, people of colour and non-Australian backgrounds, who can fly, deliver aid, shoot things and make things. This change in representation of military service is congruent with recruitment, where the focus has changed from duty for one's country to that of a normal job that's competitive with the civilian market. The underlying message is that the ADF is the organisation for any Australian. However, the fact remains that the ADF is understaffed and the problem is ongoing (Defence Ministers, 2024a), and the recent Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (RCDVS) publicly demonstrated that it still has room to improve (Kaldas, 2023). This suggests that the ADF over time has not only violated the value of duty and war talk, but that it broke the rules to do so, undermining the higher value that is used to underpin the validity and primacy of democratic world order.

Democratic, rule-based alliances between nations

Australia uses the Westminster system, which is a method of democratic parliamentary governance carried forward from our British origins (Manicom & O'Neil, 2012). However, Australian's larrikinism, which contrasts with the Westminster system in that it is informal and associated with a trouble-maker, became a

culturally acceptable trait during WW1 because the Anzac was considered a hero and harmless in his plight (Inglis, 1965). This democratic governance with a larrikinism twist was used by the Australian government to represent and promote the archetypical Anzac in the name of national security, which is best demonstrated by immigration. Therefore, the paragraphs below will pull examples from studies and government documents, however it will not document the historical progression of Australia's controversial processing of migrants.

In the 1980s and 1990s, immigrants, asylum seekers and the rise of multiculturalism were represented by the Australian government and in the media as an illegal flood of boat people who were little more than criminals that threatened Australia's being through their 'difference'—their culture, identity, religion, illegal and unofficial migration, and, of course, their physical characteristics (Leach & Zamora, 2006; Pakulski & Markowski, 2014; Pickering, 2001). This representation was used by the Australian government to promote and deliver the promise of border control from the 1990 election up until the early 2000s, which also served to rejuvenate and increase the "Australian spirit" that is core to Anzac (Macleod, 2002, p. 167). The 2001 9/11 terrorist attack and 2002 Bali Bombings inflamed this western set of ideals and prejudice by coupling terrorism, radicalization and anti-western sentiments with immigration and asylum seekers, whose ocean plight was ignored (Pakulski & Markowski, 2014). One of the changes Australian's experienced during this time was a name change at the airport from customs to border control, which conveyed a sense of threat and need for extra security to prevent non-Australian infiltration (Leach & Zamora, 2006). In 2017, the position was still maintained that "The challenge of state fragility, conflict and violence will remain acute in parts of the Middle East and Africa, affecting Australia's security interests through terrorism and irregular migration" (Australian Government, 2017, p. 33).

Consumption of this regulation through the popular reality TV shows *Border Security: Australia's Front Line* (2004 – current), *Border Patrol NZ* (2002 – 2023), *UK Border Force* (2008 – 2009), *Border Security: Canada's Front Line* (2012 – 2014) and *Border Security: America's Front Line* (2016 – current) have contributed to the continued adoption and production of this western sentiment, which the Australian government continues to support (DAFF, 2024). Australia's participation in the war on terror in conjunction with attacks around the world kept the fear of terrorism alive, with the media representing Muslims as terrorists, which has become the stereotype that still exists today in Australia by civilians and military members alike (Ewart et al., 2017; Kabir, 2006; Miller, 2016).

The Australian government's response to these threats is more security, such as the physical security of parliamentary sites with fences, bollards and access control, and alliances and partnerships with like-minded nations (Behm, 2017), such as AUKUS with the US and UK. In addition to border control, Chubb (2020) found that Australia formed legislative measures that strengthened security practices, policies and perceptions that tracked, recorded and shared more information about people, where the public accepted this regulation as "necessary and inevitable", leading to the reinforcement of further security measures (p. 276). In fact, military intervention was viewed as less preferable than the continued expansion (and tightening) of the nation's security measures (Chubb, 2020). This explains why the theme of national security is still prevalent today as a normalized strategy that justifies the Australian government's pursuit and protection of national interests.

The binary constructed to reinforce this normalized strategy highlights unfair, non-democratic ways and rule breakers that deviate from Australia's point of view, such as that represented by immigrants and terrorists. Behm (2017) states that "The increasingly interconnected global economy provides a significant opportunity to enhance national security by encouraging all states to participate fully in a rules-based international economic system" (p. 332), which the US is the leading world power in its enforcement and which Australia is both allied and prescribed to, as documented below:

International rules designed to help maintain peace and minimise the use of coercion are also being challenged. Australia's security is maintained primarily through our own strength, our alliance with the United States and our partnerships with other countries. Australia's security and prosperity would nonetheless suffer in a world governed by power alone. It is strongly in Australia's interests to seek to prevent the erosion of hard-won international rules and agreed norms of behaviour that promote global security (Australian Government, 2017, p. 24).

Any violation goes against the philosophical and theoretical core of democracy, the rule of law, even when it is aligned with the philosophy of non-democratic nations who instead rule *by law* (Behm, 2017). This means that non-democratic nation states and its citizens represent an irreconcilable difference to what it means to be Australian because they do not follow the western ideology (Hall, 1992). "A significant US role in the Indo-Pacific as a stabilising influence... In this dynamic environment, competition is intensifying, over both power and the principles and values on which the regional order should be based" (Australian Government, 2017, p. 26). Therefore, any threat to the practice of that ideology, or risk of supplanting it with a non-western ideology, is seen to jeopardise Australian national security.

The AUKUS partnership has been sought in response to perceived global insecurities in the Indo-Pacific region, where nation states are jockeying for regional dominance to protect their way of life, which means warring with those who threaten it. This is why Australia has continually allied itself with the US over China. Even though Australia does not publicly categorise China as an adversary (Defence, 2013), the decisions to establish AUKUS in 2022, name a policy 'national defence' and promote it in the lead up to Anzac Day, and recruit non-Australians with the same ideology over Chinese-Australians, marks what China represents as the enemy. This also speaks to the Anzac characteristic and value of alliances and friendships. Friendship has a very specific meaning and origin in Australia, referring to the mateship, loyalty to one another, and camaraderie that is characteristically Australian as written about and influenced by historian C.E.W Bean before, during and post-WW1 (Inglis, 1965). Australia has aligned itself with democratic nation states since WW1, and now that our region and friends are perceived to be under attack, there is no way that Australia will abandon them—it would be un-Australian.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I found that the Australian government uses language and symbology that evokes Anzac to drive Australian support and recruitment in the name of national security. The characteristics of Anzac were then explored and linked to national security and military service. I discovered that Anzac is used to empower and include those who fit the mold, and disempower those who fail to satisfy all of its characteristics and are thus deemed less, excluded or positioned as the enemy. To keep the archetype alive,

Anzac has been adopted and evolved since 1915 to allow Australians to interpret and opt-in to its meaning at each historical and cultural iteration (Hall, 1997c). The result is a binary, with clear examples through history of what Anzac is and is not. The Anzac standard is the highest form of ‘Australianness’ (Seal, 2007), with all other forms seen as a deviation that threatens western ideology (Hall, 1992). Anzac represents what it means to be Australian, which must be protected against change through national security. This ambivalent representation is a hallmark of Australian culture as seen by Anzac, the kinship and rivalry with the UK, sporting codes and matches (e.g. AFL versus NRL, the Ashes and State of Origin), and icons such as Ned Kelly who is both a hero and a villain (Seal, 2007). This foray into Anzac and how its characteristics have informed both national security and military service, have highlighted the importance of binaries, the contradictions that AUKUS presents to allow Australians, Five Eye nations and immigrants to be both Australian and non-Australian, and for military service to both defend and advance Australia’s national ideology. Therefore, the AUKUS partnership signifies more than an alliance, it represents that Australia has committed to the defence of what it means to be Australian.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Method

Introduction

In this chapter I outline the methodological approach this study will take. As a cultural study in the pursuit of meaning through representation, I also define and identify the discourse of national security, and the method of critical discourse analysis used to interrogate the cultural products that informs its structure. Given that the products belong in the realm of mass media, I justify the limitation to TV across three networks.

Methodology

The search for meaning

By taking a post-structuralist stance, I make the following assumptions: meaning is constructed and shared by a culture sharing group (Crotty, 1998), such as the Australian population this study relates to; meanings change between contexts and over time (Hall, 1997c), such as over Australia's military service history; meaning is derived from language and culture (Milner & Browitt, 2013), such as the news reports of AUKUS. Hall (1997a) teaches us that language is a representational system beyond words, which communicates meaning specific to a culture sharing group hence their ability to understand and construct their reality. Hall's work focused on how the media constructed and enforced public opinion in a power play that legitimised the state's agenda (Milner & Browitt, 2013).

Discourse

Following in Hall's footsteps, this study will also look at how the Australian Government has used the media to construct national security through AUKUS, where AUKUS is the focus and national security the discourse. A discourse is a "system of knowledge" that gives power to those who maintain and regulate it across social institutions, such as the Australian government across the ADF (Wadham et al., 2007). In simple terms, a discourse is a conversation about a topic or practice through its language, imagery and ideas that are related yet represent different elements (Fairclough, 2015). A discursive approach will allow me to look at how the Australian government talks about national security and thus how it is produced, consumed and represented, which constructs meaning and knowledge that will redefine, regulate and reshape the practice of military service in Australia (Hall, 1997c). To study a discourse, (Hall, 1997c, pp. 45-46) argues that it must contain these six elements, which the discourse of this study satisfies:

1. Use of key words, i.e. 'security', 'national' and 'defence' in **statements** (for example see Defence Ministers, 2024a);
2. **Rules** that govern how the topic is allowed be talked about, such as Anzac, which was protected and represents the ongoing characteristics of WW1 veterans and Australians (Inglis, 1992) and rules-based order of democratic nations (Behm, 2017);
3. Groups of **people** who "personify the discourse", such as Australians, the ADF, partner nations, immigrants and terrorists;

4. **Authority** and how it/they instill a sense of truth, for example world leaders and mass media;
5. Regulating **practices** that people engage in, follow or are subject to within their institutional setting, such as the ITAR, NDS, and ADF recruitment; and
6. **Acknowledgement** that time/context will create change and a new discursive formation on the topic will arise, however this initial formation will have established a historic baseline. Case in point, national security is undergoing a new discursive formation with the announcement of AUKUS.

The discursive formation of a discourse is found across a variety of cultural products that support the same agenda (Hall, 1997c). Specific to AUKUS, the discursive formation of national security therefore includes products and sub-themes that continue to contribute to national security, such as that already identified in the NDS and non-Australian recruitment. Therefore, a discursive approach to this study is an appropriate method to answer the research question. To analyse the discursive formation of national security, this study will use critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA explores dialectical relations within a discourse to understand how its production, consumption and representation creates unequal power dynamics, such as that of inclusion and exclusion as portrayed in Chapter 2 with what Anzac is and is not (Fairclough, 2015). CDA is problem based (Wadham & Connor, 2023), where a critical stance is adopted by the researcher to analyse and weigh-in on the social, political and cultural issues they identify such as national security (Wodak & Meyer, 2015). Through CDA, discourses are looked at the way they construct a particular point of view (Fairclough, 2015). In this study, I will use CDA to look at how the Australian government uses AUKUS to represent national security, and consider how military service in Australia will change or remain the same. The benefit of using CDA is that it provides a consistent method of analysis for the range of multimodal cultural products interrogated (i.e. text, visual, audio) (Gray, 2003). Cultural products can be anything, from material items to body movements that are produced by people and convey information (Wadham et al., 2007), which can then be analysed.

Products

The AUKUS partnership was announced on TV as breaking news, which led to more products being produced and consumed in the form of media release, interviews and news stories. “Mass media have become the basis of national, international and local communication, and the transmission of information” (Wadham et al., 2007, p. 17). Therefore, the cultural products chosen for this study are news products broadcast on TV and published on their respective websites and social platforms, supported by reports and media releases on official Australian government and ADF websites that represent the preferred meaning intended of the news topic (Hall, 1997b). These products will be limited to the AUKUS announcement on the 16th of September 2021 and other products that contribute to the discursive formation of national security.

TV in Australia

TV has become the most popular medium in Australia for constructing national identity (Fotheringham, 1992), which is central to this study given it is based on the Australian government’s production of national security. However, by including texts from the official Australian Government and ADF websites, such as media releases, I will get a better understanding of the political context that influences how and why the cultural

products analysed are produced (Wadham et al., 2007). By limiting products to ‘news’, this study will get a better understanding of what national security is represented to be. 95% of Australians access news each week (ACMA, 2024), with 51% accessing it more than once a day (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). TV is the most popular and primary source of news in Australia, even though it is declining as online (through news websites or free-to-air catch-up TV) and social media sources are increasing (ACMA, 2024; Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). Its ongoing supremacy is based on the type of content people prefer: video (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). This enables the networks to conduct long-form video interviews and then re-purpose it in visual, audio and written formats across TV, website, radio and social media and cater to all audiences, which is clear when you interrogate the amount of news reports released on the same topics over a 24-72hr period. Therefore, I expect to find both differences and similarities across the three networks as they compete to build trust and engagement in their viewers. However, this study will not include or interrogate comments associated with video recordings as they represent a small proportion of Australian and foreign consumers and therefore do not represent the government. The number of views, and (in)ability to comment *is* of value and represents consumption and regulation of products and will be included where appropriate. By whichever method Australians access news, mainstream news brands are the main source (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024), where the ABC, 7 & 9 networks consistently rank in the top three (ACMA, 2024; VOZ, 2024a). By looking at AUKUS across these three different networks, I will expand the range of data that speaks to how national security is represented.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)

The ABC has historically been the most trusted of the three networks due to its reach and diversity that caters to all generations (e.g. ABC News, ABC Radio, 7.30 Report, Triple J, Q+A, Four Corners) (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024), achieving a national reach across all of its mediums of 69.4% during the period of the AUKUS announcement (ABC, 2022). The ABC positions itself as a trusted, transparent and contemporary news and information provider that delivers and contributes to Australia’s multicultural “society, culture and identity”, while also balancing creative expression with governance and compliance (ABC, 2024, para 2). The ABC’s board and leadership team reflect the characteristics of Anzac—white men whose governance controls representation (ABC, 2024). Although the SBS has just overtaken the ABC as the most trusted brand (65% compared to 64%) (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024), the ABC will remain a chosen network for this study due to its historic dominance over the time period analysed.

The 7 News & 9 News Networks

The 7 & 9 networks have battled for decades for supremacy by searching for successful shows such as Sunrise (Young, 2009). They discovered that flow and sequence matter for uninterrupted viewing (Davies & Sternberg, 2007) as does loyalty to different sporting codes, e.g. AFL versus NRL, which affect viewership and flow-on consumption of news (VOZ, 2024b). 9NEWS positions itself as the “most trusted source of news and current affairs” (9NEWS, 2024a, para 1), which explains why its recording of the AUKUS announcement was embedded in an article that draws upon multiple interviews. 7NEWS positions itself as the home for everything—local news, lifestyle, sport, health, food, travel—including international news from popular

networks (e.g. CNN), justified by their self-proclaimed status as the highest rating news program since 2022 (7NEWS, 2024). In this regard, 7 and 9 represent mainstream consumers who engage with the news on a surface level as they watch their favourite programs. From this exposure, and depending on their level of trust in the news, consumers assess whether they feel mis- or under-represented and choose to either reject or avoid what has been reported, or be driven to digest more via different sources to validate their position (Park, Fisher, Fletcher, et al., 2024). Different sources are chosen based on consumers perception of news that has high journalistic standards, is transparent, unbiased, and fairly represents people (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024), of which the ABC, 7 & 9 networks have consistently ranked (ACMA, 2024). Given the Australian government use of mass media to announce AUKUS, the 7 & 9 networks are an important medium for news production, consumption and representation.

Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined that this study would follow in the footsteps of Hall. From a post-structuralist stance, this study will analyse the discursive formation of national defence using critical discourse analysis. By limiting the cultural products analysed to news broadcast on the TV across the ABC, 7 & 9 networks, supported by official media releases, this study leverages the most popular mass media source of news, and therefore will get a more accurate point of view of the Australian government's representational system.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

Introduction

In this chapter I present the results of the CDA on the AUKUS announcement and supporting news broadcasts. Four themes emerged that together formed part of the discursive formation of national security. I also synthesize and discuss the implications of the study, arguing that national security continues to undergo its discursive formation as part of a wider strategy to expand the current world order.

National Security

Mass Media is the Mouthpiece

The AUKUS announcement was a carefully orchestrated live 12-minute event across three countries (Australia, US and UK) that presented a united front. From the set up to the key points to the one-way delivery without allowing for questions, its production was designed to produce one meaning—the AUKUS partnership is the official alliance of three friendship-based western democratic nations who share the same values, beliefs and history as forged in WW1. The agreement allows for the sharing of information and technology for the safety, security, stability and freedom of the Indo-Pacific region. The first initiative under AUKUS is a fleet of nuclear submarines for the RAN that will adhere to the nuclear non-proliferation laws, which the plan for will take 18 months to flesh out (Morrison et al., 2021c).

However, the announcement was skewed towards Australia and was led by then PM Scott Morrison, occurring on the morning of Thursday the 16th of September at 7:01am, during the live shows Sunrise (channel 7), Today (channel 9) and News Breakfast (ABC), as seen by their logos in their respective recordings of the event (Morrison et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2021c). This means that the time would have been midday Wednesday 15th of September in the US and 8pm Wednesday 15th of September in the UK. Its production is mostly symmetrical across the three nations, containing the same elements—a podium with the national coat of arms centre stage, the three national flags in the background, and flanked by TVs that will live stream the other two leaders.

By framing the announcement as political news, particularly 9NEWS' position from the White House, it increases the level of engagement 7, 9 and ABC NEWS can expect from their audiences (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). Broadcasting the announcement during and through popular and mainstream news programs on TV, i.e. Sunrise, Today and ABC News Breakfast, and before the typical workday began, leveraged the most popular sources of news (ACMA, 2024), the power of flow (Davies & Sternberg, 2007) and created content that could be snipped and re-purposed across other channels to spread the announcement (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). However, the nuances in the production and delivery of this announcement produced other meanings that are integral to the formation of national security.

9 News Production of AUKUS

The 9 News production of AUKUS included the whole announcement, including UK PM Boris Johnson's and US President Joe Biden's address, and there is no customization to the recording itself. However, its production begins in the US and remains focused on Biden during Johnson's address, which represents a deference and expectation that Biden, as the leader of the greater world power of the three nations would make the announcement and has the greater authority (Manicom & O'Neil, 2012). Published to the 9NEWS website, the announcement is packaged as part of a live, breaking news broadcast to the White House during the Today show (Morrison et al., 2021b), and contained within a news article (Vidler & Masters, 2021). The article first links to more video content on AUKUS, which has been developed since its announcement, which is a quality of a news source whose audience are heavy news users and have a level of distrust and therefore seek more information, resulting in higher engagement (Park, Fisher, Fletcher, et al., 2024). Its compilation attempts to be a trustworthy, credible, inclusive and transparent news report (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024).

7 News Production of AUKUS

7NEWS, however, published the full address to their 7NEWS Sydney Meta (Facebook) account, which has had 22,000 views (Morrison et al., 2021a), and Morrison's portion of the address to the 7NEWS website (Morrison, 2021c) within an article (7NEWS, 2021). Similar to 9NEWS, 7NEWS packaged Morrison's announcement in the article under the banner of live, breaking news during Sunrise. The article itself, however, offers news consumers a different perspective—the potential threat from China—which is a valued news quality (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024) and a stark omission from the other networks and the announcement. 7NEWS production followed in the wake of the ABC, however it lacked the smooth transitions. Johnson took the second address, but it began while Morrison was still the subject, and the same when Biden took the address, Johnson was still the subject. While not significant, it represents a lower quality production as a mainstream news source.

The ABC's AUKUS Montage

The ABC's coverage and reproduction of the announcement included a 50 second montage that produced a visual, instrumental and spoken story of AUKUS prior to the address (Morrison et al., 2021c). The ABC had a potential reach of 309,000 through the live and iView ABC News Breakfast TV program, and an average expected monthly viewership of more than 6.2 million people on its YouTube channel (ABC, 2022), which it live streamed to. Its production was customized and clean, over-produced compared to the other two networks, and at a higher quality which is one of the top trust factors for those who consume news (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). This is evidenced by the montage and clean cuts to each leader's location for their address, and the package it thus creates on YouTube which has had more than 36,000 views. However, comments are disabled for the 2 million ABC News Australia YouTube subscribers, regulating the engagement consumers have with the production by restricting their participation to that of a receiver of information. It feels like the 'official' announcement, where one is told what AUKUS is but not invited to challenge it, which mimics the announcement itself which was a one-way announcement from world leaders to the media. This is

likely due to the ABC's governance by older, white men, which reflects both the Anzac characteristics and the AUKUS announcement (ABC, 2024).

The ABC's 50 second montage produced a slightly different message to the orchestrated announcement—three democratic nations continuing to work together to achieve peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region (Morrison et al., 2021c). It is underpinned with a slow, low-pitched instrumental that evokes the feeling of walking down memory lane while rolling through footage and photos. The images are overlaid with gold, capitalized text with bolded key words that signify importance and scale of the partnership, from the representative might of the US and UK to the effect it will have on the Indo-Pacific. It is the typography of worldly power, backed with historical moments and introducing Australia as the next most powerful nation. The text is read by a female voice-over, who has a low-pitched, calm and melodic tone. Being female and not masculine, this binary is reminiscent of women who proudly sent their men to fight and bring honour to the nation, of the patriarchy who make sacrifices to protect our people, and thus the accepted social standpoint we are expected to maintain (Inglis, 1987). In 50 seconds, the montage represents Australia and our obligations as the continued work of the modern Anzac, producing both knowledge and power (Hall, 1997a) as its characteristics are presented as fact and locating power in the Australian government to uphold our identity.

The opening shot is rolling footage in fast-forward that looks over the Tower Bridge in London, UK, as the sun sets over the scene. A female voice-over reads **“THE UNITED KINGDOM”** (:00), representing both the nation and the status of a united kingdom that enables the peaceful environment for people to co-exist. The scene shifts to Capitol Hill in Washington, US, this time with a storm brewing in the background as the same text and voice reads **“THE UNITED STATES”** (:02), representing the power and might of the US that physically and metaphorically stands above others, and the willingness to fight to hold that position. It then cuts to **“MARATIME DEMOCRACIES”** (:03), interestingly using the plural while only picturing the UK's *Queen Elizabeth* class aircraft carrier that portrays power but not force. It then cuts to a black and white photo of a seated President Harry Truman surrounded by eight standing white men. While the text refers to the cultured and advanced nations of the US and UK, the visual elements represent the two nations as white-centric in population, point of view and leadership, where senior military and world leaders such as President Harry Truman, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip inspect ships, shake hands and pose for media, all under the banner of **“UNITED”** (:05), which is also symbolic of ‘conquered’. It contrasts peace with **“TIMES OF NEED”** (:12) instead of ‘war’ or ‘conflict’, even though it shows British soldiers marching through the streets of London during WW2 without fanfare, sorrow or patriotism. This signifies the need or duty to go to war—the UK way—without the willingness for bloodshed or excessive use of force that is anti-Anzac. (Morrison et al., 2021c, emphasis in original).

The first time Australia is represented, the shot shifts from UK parliament to a poetic scene where Morrison attends on Johnson's words. The hierarchical difference of parent and child further reinforced with **“GUIDED BY THE ENDURING IDEALS WE SHARE”** (Morrison et al., 2021c, 0:16, emphasis in original). The ideals are: democracy, visually (and ironically) represented by a photo of President Biden backed by the US flag, the First Lady and Kamala Harris; resilience, depicted by an empty street on a dark and gloomy day during

COVID-19; innovation, as a rocket takes off; and diversity, which shows a smiling young girl with copper skin and hair who gives the impression that she is Indigenous but does not have the characteristics to make you feel certain. However, when you slow the speed and go frame-by-frame, another girl is seen first who is Indigenous, which your brain recognises and associates with the other girl, who better represents the adoption and inclusion of Indigenous Australians through their diluted heritage and enculturation, which serves as another example of Indigenous representation that has a white-lens (Turner, 2020).

The first shot of the three leaders together is at the 2021 G7 Summit in Cornwall, UK, to which Australia was invited to attend. The G7 represents the seven nations who hold nearly 50% of the global economy—US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan—meeting annually to discuss transnational economic issues (CFR, 2024b). By using this photo, it elevates Australia's perceived status to that of its US and UK partners, which gives the impression that Australia has grown into an economically viable partner, connecting past to present.

To take the audience on this change, the music uplifts, images become light and bright, showing photos of current ADF male and female members meeting President Joe Biden, mix gendered volunteer fire fighters in a scorched area, the three nation's flags on the Sydney Opera House, and an amphibious beach landing on a remote coast in the Pacific. The message is clear and a little overstated – Australia has a lot of coast to protect amongst the humanitarian aid and disaster relief operations that we support domestically and in our region, which the AUKUS partnership will provide resources and capability for, so that Australia will have **“FREEDOM AND SAFETY OF OUR PEOPLE”** (:33), can achieve **“PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE INDO-PACIFIC”** (:36) **“FOR THE GOOD OF THE WORLD”** (Morrison et al., 2021c, 0:42, emphasis in original).

The product is disseminated on YouTube with comments disabled to regulate and restrict its meaning. The 'world' reference represents Australia and our region as globally important, which is also stated by the three leaders during their address. However, it also implies that the AUKUS partnership represents world leaders who have the power and capability to decide what is right (and wrong) on behalf of others to regulate world order (Behm, 2017). Such a status, whether real or imagined, is a binary that gives power to themselves and denies others, which creates a hierarchy between nations and within a people through a classification system that robs some of power, which extends to their culture, identity and prospects because they are categorized as 'less' and Australia is categorized as 'better' (Hall, 1997b). The inclusion of 'peace', which was only stated by Biden, posits that conflict is possible but the US and its allies will succeed.

The ABC's montage puts Australia on the world stage while obeying the characteristics of Anzac, reminding people of our British origins, the wars we have fought in, our advanced democratic ways and military might, the power and prestige of the US and UK, people like the little girls we need to protect, all through an alliance that we have voluntarily agreed to for the 'good of the world', thanks to the three white men who lead us.

The varying quality of these network productions influences the trust viewers feel when engaging with the news, with higher quality leading to more engagement via the same source, i.e. the ABC, which was reportedly 78% for TV and 91% for online (ABC, 2022), and lower quality pushing viewers to different, higher quality sources, i.e. from 9NEWS to the ABC, or to disengage (Park, Fisher, Fletcher, et al., 2024).

Deviations to the intended production

Despite it being a carefully orchestrated event, there are slight differences between the leader's announcement, which the ABC's coverage illustrates (Morrison et al., 2021c).

To Morrison's right is the UK live stream, with their coat of arms as a presentation placeholder, to his left the US live stream, with AUKUS written above the three nation's flags, ordered AUS, UK, US to reflect the acronym. Behind Morrison stands the three nation's flags, mirroring the order of leaders on stage: UK, AUS, US. The UK live stream begins, and Johnson is in place behind the podium; the US live stream begins, and Morrison turns to wait for Biden to walk on to the stage and stand behind the podium. There is a moment before Morrison's address begins when we see a united front, three white men standing behind their respective coat of arms mounted podium with the nation's flags behind them, however, Johnson's flag order is US, UK, AUS and Biden's is US, AUS, UK, repeated three times. While omitted from the 7&9NEWS recordings, these opening differences to the announcement are insightful to how each leader presents their positional power.

Morrison echoes Johnson's set up, symbolic of Australia's British origins and our closer cultural ties that the ABC's montage presented as democracy through parliamentary decision-making. This subtle UK-alignment creates a contrast with the US. Whether accidental or deliberate, the alignment allows Australia to borrow the UK's worldly influence like a cloak, logically and emotionally validating the partnership, and working to mitigate the perception that AUKUS serves a US agenda, even though AUS is officially more allied with the US (APH, n.d.; Australian Government, 2017; Manicom & O'Neil, 2012). I believe that this subtle perception creates doubt, which is a valuable tool to mollify fears that the AUKUS partnership is a pre-emptive alliance for conflict, which has historically been the case since WW2 (Manicom & O'Neil, 2012). The order of flags behind Morrison does not position AUS above or below the UK and/or US, and therefore does not challenge or usurp their position but instead respects it, however, it also states that Australia holds a similar position. When Morrison begins the address, welcoming and introducing Johnson and Biden, it shifts the product of the announcement from a US creation, as perhaps 9NEWS expected when they began their coverage on Biden, to an Australian led change, supported, instead, by the US and UK which gives Morrison's announcement authority in the eyes of the public. Finally, each nation's 'official' recording of the announcement shows their respective 'leader' in action, demonstrating that they hold and use their positional power by taking command of the stage before the announcement commences (van den Brink & Steffen, 2008).

In Australia, Morrison stands behind the podium, and is the only leader initially present, waiting for the others to digitally 'arrive' (Morrison et al., 2021c); it is his announcement as the PM of Australia. In the UK, Johnson also stands behind the podium, the single TV to his right showing the US' AUKUS presentation placeholder, which then opens to a split screen view of the AUS and US leaders (Morrison et al., 2021e).

In the US, however, Biden is the last to arrive. The dual TV set up already showing the AUS and UK live stream as he walks into a grand room in the White house that has floor to ceiling curtains, gilt framed

paintings, an ornate rug on which nine flags and the podium stand, all lit by chandeliers as he strolls up to the podium, removes his protective mask and marvels at the set-up; turning side to side he laughs, all the while Morrison has begun his address (Morrison et al., 2021d). Through his actions and supported by US officials for the setup and delivery, Biden recognised the perceived hierarchy Morrison attempted to establish and undermined it (van den Brink & Steffen, 2008) in a show of US casual grandeur that displayed wealth, history, and controlled the timing of the announcement by being the last to arrive. In essence, it was a demonstration that world order must be maintained (Behm, 2017), even amongst allies.

World Order Must be Maintained

Morrison tried to regain control and re-position himself as an equal throughout his address by his use of ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ (Morrison et al., 2021c), which is a relational construct as he reorients the self and the other (Hall, 1997b). The result is a unified show of the self. Morrison uses his positional power as PM and as an Australian who exists on the same level as the UK PM and US President with whom ‘we’ share the same values and beliefs of freedom, democracy and rule-based order. However, both Johnson’s and Biden’s address denied the elevated position he pitched and reinforced Australia as a middle power nation and themselves as the leaders of major world power nations (Manicom & O’Neil, 2012).

Johnson did this by referring to the submarine deal as a way to help Australia modernize its military, using advanced technology and experiences of the Royal Navy, which he states are 60 years ahead. He also describes the UK-AUS history that has shared experiences and values, especially “freedom and democracy” (6:25), thus making AUS “a natural partner” (Morrison et al., 2021c, 6:54). ‘Natural’ is a significant word that denotes a racial representation which fixes meaning between two groups of people (Hall, 1997b). Johnson’s comment reminds Australia of its British origins as “criminals and... welfare recipients (Inglis, 1992, p. 53) in comparison to the more cultured UK, and congratulates AUS for breaking through its naturalization, which can be attributed to Anzac that helped bridge Australia from a colony to a nation. As Seal (2007) described the impact as follows, “It is one of the sustaining strengths of the Anzac mythology that it manages to negotiate the culturally necessary balance between the sacred and the secular in its powerful and monopolistic representation of Australianness” (p. 143). While it could be interpreted as an insult, the lack of media on the reference indicates that its meaning was either missed or was akin to the weird uncle at a birthday party whose speech is outdated. I am inclined to believe the latter; history has shown us that post-federation, Australia kept some of its British origins (such as democracy), developed its own nationalism (such as Anzac), but also that it has moved towards and allied itself with the US (Manicom & O’Neil, 2012).

Biden denied Morrison his world stage in a few ways. First, by referring to Morrison comically as “that fellow down under” (Morrison et al., 2021c, 7:17) instead of his name or title, which minimised Morrison’s authority, and was reproduced by the media and presented as another example in a long line of Australian leaders’ names gone wrong (see: Armitage, 2021). Biden then speaks to the need to modernise aging military equipment for the region. He nominates the first project as an upgrade to the AUS submarine fleet to nuclear

powered, which US will guide AUS through as a long-term user of the capability. Biden's sentiment of the project comes across as reassuring, as if the US and UK are Australia's training wheels on the nation's elevated status to enforce world order, which is why the US will continue to work with existing partnerships in the region (such as ASEAN) and not hand the reins over.

The interrogation of these visual and verbal nuances as the address unfolded conveys one meaning of AUKUS—AUS is ranked third in this alliance. Although, the message of AUKUS is clearer: western ideological dominance will continue to enforce and maintain global order in the Indo-Pacific.

Immediately after the announcement, Morrison conducted an hour long press conference (Morrison, 2021b) and the official joint statement was released (Defence Ministers, 2021). Both echo the announcement, draw on all three leader's address and specifically state the additional armament capabilities that the AUS government will acquire *for* the ADF. The announcement and press conference were Morrison's one-two punch in the production of national Defence, which first attempted to position AUS on the same level as the UK and US, and second to position himself as the leader who produced this higher status. Morrison's press conference has been viewed more than 97,000 times, with the most replayed sections (which is highlighted by YouTube's algorithm) when he speaks to the significance of Defence spending and how its continued increase is in Australia's interest including more weapons that will be brought on board through AUKUS, when being asked and answering a question about nuclear weapons and nuclear waste, and when challenged by a reporter if proper ministerial processes were used (Morrison, 2021b). These sections highlight the ongoing need for updates and information by news consumers, driving the creation of more news on the topic (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024). These consumer-derived topics show that national security is evolving in meaning for the public, but that government's remain attached to military-aligned policy (Behm, 2017). However, the AUS production of AUKUS failed to establish Morrison's authority and deliver a political, important and relevant news topic, given its scarcity in the news (Park, Fisher, McGuinness, et al., 2024).

However, the formation of national security continued, and next featured as part of Morrison's 2022 election campaign. Morrison argued that national security was Australia's top priority (Four Corners, 2022), making an overt case for his contribution to the AUKUS alliance and the increased capability it will provide the ADF, which 9NEWS (2022b) noted was his election premise. Despite Morrison losing the election, it kept national security on the radar, as the NDS and non-Australian recruitment were announced.

Figure removed due to copyright restriction.

Friendships are Hierarchical

Morrison began the AUKUS address, describing then UK PM Boris Johnson and US President Joe Biden as "two great friends of freedom and of Australia" (Morrison et al., 2021c, 1:03). Morrison's opening remark and address that follows calls on nothing less than for Australians to hold true to our national identity as Anzacs. Visually, the address represents the Anzac archetype, while simultaneously extending what it means

- We, as in Australians, are friends to be told the good news;
- Australian media are friends to share the news;
- US and UK are friends to whom we have decided to be closer friends;
- ASEANs are friends who will benefit from the news;
- ANZUS, Five Eyes, and the Quad as partners who will gain from the friendship through their existing alliance;
- and also referring to Pacific nations as family, which includes New Zealand whose familial relationship will be expanded (Morrison et al., 2021c).

Its inference signals to Australians that the government, and Morrison specifically, has allied itself *with mates, for mates*, and calls upon us to show him and our new friends the same trust and loyalty we have for each other. The use of friendship and how each group is categorized as a friend creates a hierarchy that shifts the power in the Indo-Pacific (Hall, 1997b).

By attaching ‘freedom’ to ‘friends’, it signifies an action or future status to be achieved, implying that AUS is trapped, denied or limited freedom by an oppressive foe, but through friendship will be liberated. However, the ‘friends’ this specifically refers to are the UK and US, which Morrison reinforces with his use of ‘we’: “we join our nations” (1:12) because “we have always seen the world through a similar lens... we have always looked to each other to do what we believe is right... always together, never alone” (Morrison et al., 2021c, 1:19). The ‘always’ refers to our shared military history since WW1 up until the most recent conflict, the war on terror, which Morrison summarises as a sacrifice Australians have made and will make again in the future as “we re-commit ourselves to this cause” (Morrison et al., 2021c, 4:11). To be free implies that one was ‘freed’ by a greater power who has removed or gained control over the forces working against it. The AUKUS announcement phrases it as a partnership that provides security and stability “our region needs” (2:00) “to engage not to exclude, to contribute not take, and to enable and empower, not to control or coerce” (Morrison et al., 2021c, 2:06). In other words, this friendship will organize the *removal* of anti-freedom forces by friends, for friends, to which AUS will first benefit, and then who will come to the aid of our ASEAN friends who hold less power.

What is not said during the address is ‘China’. However, the same language (coerce, control, exclude) is found in Defence documents in relation to China’s show of power in the Indo-Pacific (Defence, 2016, 2020). In the discursive formation of national security, this omission is like a vacuum and has led to the creation of more products (Hall, 1997c).

The Enemy is Security’s ‘other’

The enemy is alluded to by Morrison when he describes the Indo-Pacific as complex and challenging, which is driving the need to “deliver a safer and more secure region” (2:36); by Johnson through inference to “preserve security and stability in the Indo-Pacific” (4:40); and Biden simply as threats in the region (Morrison et al., 2021c). However, Biden also specifically references past military conflicts, which adds weight and

meaning to ‘threat’ by association as he describes how our nations fought “together... stood shoulder to shoulder for literally more than 100 years, through the trench fighting in WW1, the island hopping in WW2, during the frigid winters in Korea, and the scorching heat of the Persian Gulf” (8:00), all of which were in the defence of democracy (Morrison et al., 2021c). Like a double-edged sword, Biden describes the AUKUS partnership as the next step for nations who have been “faithful and capable” (Morrison et al., 2021c, 8:12), a simple statement that implies so much depending on your position. As a close friend such as AUS, it is public recognition as an emerging world power given rank in the world order. As a friend by association, perhaps a nation in ASEAN, it is a position that can be obtained. As an adversary, it represents the binary, a challenge or a threat, where a world power is taking over the political playground and recruiting more players (Hall, 1997b).

Looking again at the AUKUS announcement, ‘security’ was specifically said by all three leaders in relation to the Indo-Pacific region. Four key words were said by all three leaders: ‘friends’, ‘freedom’, ‘security’ and ‘safe’ (Morrison et al., 2021c), which conveys a message that is aligned with Australian foreign policy, the purpose of the ADF, and public sentiment. So, when we revisit the concept of this section, the ‘enemy’ can be defined as any Australian or non-Australian who does not fit the Anzac archetype, specifically the weak, small, female, ethnically or religiously diverse, including immigrants and asylum seekers who are ‘less’, potential terrorists, and seemingly un-Australian because of their disloyalty to their home nation and thus pose a security risk to Australia; and other nations who do not accept and comply with the proscribed world order.

‘Friend’ is now much easier to define: any Australian or non-Australian who fits the Anzac archetype, and nations that have proven they are not a security risk through alliances and information sharing. This means that only the Five Eyes nations are Australia’s real friends and can be considered and treated as Australians. Other nations, such as those in the Quad and ASEAN, are friends, so long as they do not violate that trust. This implies that the more these nationalities migrate to Australia, the less valuable they are perceived to be. However, if they show the same patriotism, loyalty and duty to their own country, *in* their own country, Australia as a nation will value them more and reward them with friendship, freedom, security and safety, i.e. power through a place in the world order. While this is my perception based on the analysis thus far, it is also supported by the trade agreement which underpins the ability for nations to share their Defence related products, services and data under AUKUS.

Hall (1997b) says that focus on a binary, such as the AUKUS announcement on friendship, draws attention to its opposite to create balance in all elements of the circuit of culture, but particularly representation. In the vacuum of its identity, the media and public named them: China. In the few news videos post the AUKUS announcement that were produced, a clear dichotomy presented—consumers who were interested were concerned about a conflict with China (7NEWS, 2022; 9NEWS, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c; ABC News, 2023d; Q&A, 2022, 2023), and the rest were disengaged with the topic.

The ABC network produced more content through length across its various news channels than the 7 & 9 networks combined, however, each item has fewer views than the first AUKUS announcement. This

hyperfocus on China in particular positions channel 7's production of the announcement as the most representative of the consumer's needs, and highlights what was not said during the announcement—Australia is modernizing and mobilizing its ADF in preparation for a conflict with China. While 9's version did reference China by noting its omission from the announcement, the ABC positioned AUKUS as a project for peace. However, the ABC were the first to do an in-depth 34 minute coverage of AUKUS only 24 hours after the announcement, focusing on the same replayed areas in Morrison's press conference, while highlighting mostly China and the Indo-Pacific region; the content has been viewed more than 154,000 times (ABC News, 2021). The differences in how each network presented the same announcement as no threat from China (ABC), low threat (9NEWS), and medium threat (7NEWS) reflects their brand positioning, where the ABC align most in purpose and representation to the Anzac.

During Morrison's 2022 election campaign, it was perceived that he was manifesting a conflict with China *by* pushing the AUKUS agenda (Four Corners, 2022). However, it was the next announcement on 14 March 2023, of the AUKUS plan, which was delivered 18 months after the first as promised, that sparked the biggest consumption of news on AUKUS. The ABC's broadcast outperformed 9NEWS 174,000 views to just 20,000 (9NEWS, 2023; ABC News, 2023b). The ABC's triple length content contained more information regarding China's lack of support for AUKUS, which is what news consumers wanted as evidenced by the surge of more content and views following this announcement that fed into the doubt about AUKUS that had been reported, pitching Western leaders (AUS, US, UK) against China and Russia that has been viewed 324,000 times (ABC News, 2023a). When the NDS was released, security remained the primary argument (Defence Ministers, 2024a). Additionally, it echoed AUKUS and the characteristics of Anzac that have so far being explored in this section, namely, Morrison's description of the region as challenging, the concept of 'defence', the value of rules and democracy, and the historical and cultural foundations our three nations share (Defence Ministers, 2024a). However, it makes a far more overt case for the presence of an enemy in the Indo-Pacific region, which resulted in the tangible production of the NDS to “**deter** through denial any potential adversary's attempt to project power against Australia through our northern approaches” (Defence Ministers, 2024a, para 8, emphasis in original). However, it does not specifically mention China and does not need to. The Australian government has back flipped on naming an adversary and instead made any threat to national security the enemy, and when the purpose of security is to maintain stability and freedom for our friends, the enemy is any force that challenges the world order, even if the public want to give them an identity.

Discussion

The 21st Century Anzac

What the AUKUS announcement establishes and then states more explicitly through the NDS and non-Australian recruitment, is that the Australian government has positioned national security as the path forward in the current climate of world power competition in the Indo-Pacific. By using the news as a mouthpiece to the Australian public, positioning Australia as a responsible and powerful nation in the region capable of enforcing world order for their smaller friends against the enemy of change, the government has constructed a

national cause for Australians to fight for. Additionally, the repeated use and representation of the Anzac archetype, which, again, becomes more explicit, suggests that Anzac is also undergoing a discursive formation to exist in the current historical and cultural period (Hall, 1997c). This is further reinforced by the non-Australian recruitment of New Zealanders in 2024 which will put into practice the government's national security policies. The result will be the 21st century Anzac. However, the discursive formation of Anzac is only one component of national security, which means that the discursive formation of national security is still forming and is dependent on Anzac. This has created a “‘politics of representation’, a struggle over meaning which continues and is unfinished” (Hall, 1997b, p. 277).

The Trump Dilemma

In my search for news on AUKUS, it was impossible to ignore the mounting concern on Trump's re-election (for example see: 9NEWS, 2024b; ABC News, 2024). His status as a republican and historic record that muddled democratic world order by his 'friendship' with North Korea, threat to build a wall against the invasion of Mexicans and by withdrawing US from the Middle East, created uncertainty that AUKUS might not deliver national security. While it has been reported that Trump will adhere to the premise that led to AUKUS, this will not be known until his presidency begins and has an effect on reality (Hall, 1997c). Therefore, the Trump dilemma presents another factor that prevents national security from completing its discursive formation.

Expansion of the west

While beyond the scope, time and word limit of this study, there is a clear link between national security and the expansion of western ideology. The Australian government's use of Anzac, hierarchical friendships, classifying the enemy as any and all threats to what it means to be Australian, while modernising the ADF for both conflict and enforcement, suggests that Australia will expand its reach and projection of force to directly compete against China's world power. The other side to this is the response and mobilisation of non-western ideologies. The formation of the BRICS group—Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—in 2009-2010 represents an agreement between democratic and non-democratic states to redistribute institutional power to allow developing nations to emerge economically, and has since grown to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and potentially Saudi Arabia, which represents 50% of the world's population (Ferragamo, 2024). It was initially derogatorily dismissed by western powers due to the countries' differences and disorganised alliance compared to western states, however, in the last decade the BRICS group has unified under their shared goal to oppose the US led western global order and ideology, and launched the New Development Bank in Shanghai, China, that directly competes with the World Bank (Stuenkel, 2020). While this concept requires further reading and study on globalisation and colonialisation, it raises interesting concerns about the use of national security to maintain, enforce and spread western ideology through military capabilities, and the ethical dilemma that poses to suppress the development of non-western ideologies, economies and world powers. The discourse of national security therefore requires a larger study to contextualise it across multiple disciplines.

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the results of the study, which were organised under four themes: the media, world order, friendships and the enemy. By exploring the binaries through the circuit of culture using CDA, it was clear to see the Australian government is attempting to expand the definition of who is a friend and what is the enemy, in the promotion and representation of national security. National security remains a priority for world, democratic order, which the media plays an important part to produce the message. However, I assess that national security is still undergoing discursive formation. Therefore, I also introduced concepts that I believe will contribute to its formation, including the 21st century Anzac, Trump's re-election and the greater

intent of AUKUS to expand western ideology. Given the time and word limitations of this study, these concepts remain theoretical and beg the need for further study.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In this study, I argued that national security is a construct of the democratic nation state. This social construction legitimises policies that exclude non-democratic representations based on world order, enforced by alliances and an over-reliance on military capability.

I introduced the AUKUS partnership, which Australia, the UK and US have formed under the theme of national security, and sub-themes of the NDS, non-Australian recruitment and Anzac. Its effect will take shape in the Indo-Pacific, which is the battle ground of two competing ideologies—the western, rules-based democratic world order led by the US, and the oriental, non-democratic communist state of China. Australia has allied itself with the US against change in the world order by establishing the AUKUS partnership. However, the premise, language and symbology used by the Australian government to represent national security is policy based military modernisation against the ‘other’, the security concerns of immigration and terrorism, through which the Anzac archetype is both implicitly and explicitly represented through binaries.

To explore what national service is represented to be by the Australian government, this study took a post-structuralist stance that assumes meaning is constructed through language as a representational system. National security was identified as the discourse, and a critical discourse analysis was conducted to look at its discursive formation. Following in Hall’s footsteps, this study chose cultural products from the mass media, specifically news broadcasts that aired on TV, which is the primary source of news in Australia. The products analysed were the AUKUS announcement across three news networks (the ABC, 7 & 9) and supporting media releases.

This study found that the Australian government used TV news to produce a specific meaning, that AUKUS will deliver national security, stability and freedom for (and by) friends. However, in the nuances of the production, the world order between the three nations played out, where Australia was ranked third. Additionally, friendships were used and referred to hierarchically to position nations in the Indo-Pacific below Australia. The heavy use of ‘friendship’ created a vacuum that drew attention to the notion of the enemy, which resulted in more products being produced on AUKUS and national security that named China as the enemy. However, throughout this study, the enemy was subtly framed by the Australian government not as a who, but as a what, where the enemy was represented by any and all threats to Australia’s national security and its ability to project democratic power.

It became clear that the discursive formation of national security is yet to be completed. Given the parallel between AUKUS and Anzac, and the pending recruitment of New Zealanders and other Five Eye nations into the ADF, new submarines and other military capabilities coming on board through AUKUS, and Trump’s re-election, national security may be only in the beginning of its formation, dependent on the outcome of these other factors. It was also noted that national security through AUKUS likely has another agenda—expansion of the western ideology.

However, given the limited time and word count of this study, globalisation and colonialisation were not included. This study is also limited in its utility because it presents a baseline introduction into the theme of national security. However, it links AUKUS, the ADF and Anzac as a government initiative to represent national security as the new cause to unite democratic nations in the fight for world order, which is an important foundation from which further research should be conducted.

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