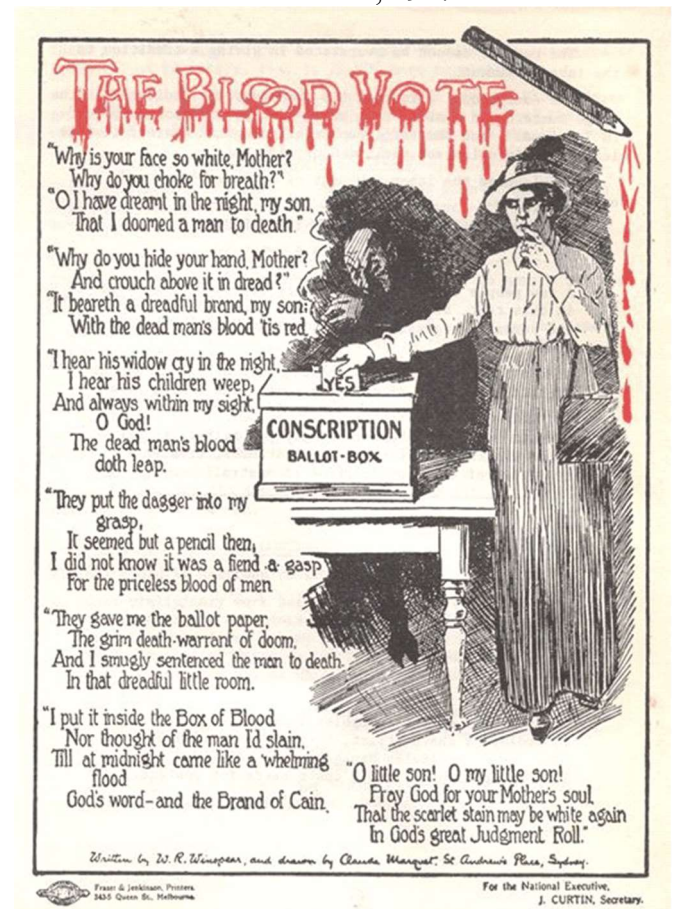


The Great War, Australia at war : Australia's response to the outbreak of war: enlistment for the war.

Doc.1: A call from the Dardanelles, source: New South Wales, Sydney, by The Defence Department of the Commonwealth, 1915



Doc.2: The Blood Vote, Purportedly written by William Robert Winspear, drawing by Claude Marquet, printed by Fraser & Jenkinson in Melbourne, 1917.



Instructions:

In the shape of a structured presentation, you will answer the problematic by relying on your knowledge while including the analysis of these documents. Please note that the documents are intended to help you, but you must go further to answer the question asked.

Question: What arguments/techniques were used to persuade Australians to vote “yes” or “no” in the conscription referendum during the First World War?

Choose one example to illustrate your presentation.

WWI: enlistment for the war.

Issue: Question: What arguments/techniques were used to persuade Australians to vote “yes” or “no” in the conscription referendum during the First World War?

Correction à titre indicative : ce sont des connaissances, vous devez ensuite vous les approprier, les organiser et concevoir votre introduction et votre conclusion.

Contextual elements common to both posters:

Propaganda poster to support or oppose the Australian referendums on whether or not to introduce conscription.

Propaganda: ideas spread to influence public opinion for/against a cause.

Conscription: compulsory military service for young men. The Defence Act of 1903, which provided for the raising and servicing of the new Australian army, was one of the first pieces of legislation passed by the new Commonwealth Government.

One of the provisions of the Act was the government’s right to conscript men for the purpose of self-defence. But nothing has been done.

On 5 August 1914 Australia joined other countries in the British Empire and declared war on Germany. Men quickly enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), which was to fight alongside the British Army.

Unlike the major European military forces, the AIF was entirely a volunteer army as compulsory military service was still limited to service inside Australia. Official recruitment began in August with the government initially committing 20,000 troops to the campaign.

By the end of the year, more than 50,000 men had enlisted at a rate of nearly 10,000 per month. Men were enlisting for a number of reasons: patriotism, the excitement of action, travel, and for the pay, which was among the most generous of any Allied army. This pay was particularly attractive as Australia was in the midst of a drought and depression.

However, after news of the disastrous Gallipoli campaign made its way back to Australia, enlistments started to decline.

Referendum: direct question asked of the population on a major social issue. The suffrage can only answer yes or no.

In Australia, in order to support the United Kingdom in the European battles by sending men, Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes set up two referendums, one in October 1916 and one in December 1917, for the introduction of Australian conscription along the lines of the British, New Zealanders and Canadians who decided on conscription in their countries in 1916.

The question for the second referendum was: “Are you in favour of the proposal of the Commonwealth Government for reinforcing the Commonwealth Forces overseas?”

The debate split the country. The working class and unionists felt they were bearing the brunt of the war and voted predominantly against conscription. Protestants with a connection to Britain voted in the majority to assist the Empire by introducing conscription, while Catholics, most of whom were of Irish background and opposed to the British handling of Irish independence, mostly voted against it. The political fallout from the referendum was profound.

The first failed by a slim margin; the second took place in December 1917 and again most Australians voted against it

	YES	NO
Referendum of October 1916	1087557	1160033
Referendum of December 1917	1015159	1181747

Doc 1: Propaganda poster produced in 1915 in New South Wales, Sydney, by The Defence Department of the Commonwealth.

This recruitment poster uses the theme of Australians fighting at Gallipoli to encourage men to enlist. A tall, burly soldier wearing a typical Australian soldier's hat with emu feather and rising sun badge stands astride the Straits, one foot on the Gallipoli peninsula and the other on Asia Minor. The soldier has raised his hands to his mouth and is shouting the Australian bush cry ‘coo-ee’. The poster contains typically Australian symbolism, with no reference to Britain or the British Empire, showing a unified nation no longer under British rule. The difference in size between the Australian man and the environment shows the reader that Australians are better people. Australia = heroism, helping others. The posture and what the soldier says suggest that war is not difficult, that it is just a formality. A patriotic Australian soldier calling on his compatriots to join the army and fight in the war. - This poster shows a rather one-sided view of the war.

Geographical references (Gallipoli, Dardanelles in Turkey, Saros Golf) enable future soldiers to locate the battlefields.

“Coo-ee-” is an old Australian slang for attracting attention, e.g. Hey or Oi. • Both texts requests for men to join the army and fight in the war. • The location of the main text “Coo-ee- Won’t YOU come?” is the main thing that attracts our attention because of the placement of the quote and the colour contrast because between the quote and the background. Citizen duty? If they don’t help

they will be bystander. There's also the idea of adventure here, a sort of call to adventure, which is in line with the arguments used by the volunteers to enlist. The words enlist now is put into a strategic position as it is at the bottom and it is in a darker colour, which means that it doesn't seem as important as the first quote. The poster prefers to put the word 'enlistment' at the bottom of the page, to emphasise the YOU. It implicates the reader and appeals to their patriotism, not to leave their comrades alone at the front.

The man in the poster is a young fit Australian man, who is fighting in the war. • This poster gives us a representation that the war is just another way for a man to be more masculine. • There is nothing in this section of the poster that suggests that the war is a dangerous and hazardous place to be and that death or the lost of limbs are a result of the war.

Color in the poster • In the poster there is a light and dark section, and the lighter section seems to be surrounding the darker side, which suggests that the Australians are on the winning side of the war. The poster itself isn't very bright but it uses warm colors. • Warm colors in this picture are used to attract attention • The contrast of colors used make this poster very eye catching. • The use of the colors brown, blue, and white makes it seem like a nice place to be.

Doc.2: 1917, anti-conscription handbill poem issued during anti-conscription campaign, 1917. Purportedly written by William Robert Winspear. Note: Leaflet with a verse by W. R. Winspear and a drawing by Claude Marquet, features an image a deeply worried woman casting a 'Yes' vote while Billy Hughes, Australia's labor prime minister and supporter of conscription, looks on gleefully. It was printed by Fraser & Jenkinson in Melbourne, 1917 and authorised by J. Curtin, Secretary for the 'National Executive'. 'The Blood Vote' was widely-published in papers such as The Australian Worker, The Westralian Worker and The Catholic Press. It was also posted directly into letter-boxes. museumvictoria.com.au

Context:

In 1915: defeat of Gallipoli battle, 28150 victims, including 8709 deaths. The Somme (1916) saw a dramatic increase in Australian troops killed or wounded. In the seven weeks after the attack began, the AIF lost close to 6,000 men and another 17,000 wounded. It seemed impossible that the AIF could replace its huge losses through voluntarism alone.

The referendums come against a backdrop of bleeding troops: the ANZACs, engaged at Gallipoli but also on the Somme, have lost many men, and voluntary commitments are no longer enough to make up for lost men.

	Numbers enlisted and numbers who served	Deaths	Wounded	Casualties
WWI human cost for Australia of less than 5 million people.	417 000 enlisted 324 000 served overseas	Around 60 000	More than 150 000	210 000 men,

Several themes used here to persuade women to vote no in the referendum

Death: use of blood, colour scheme on black and white to highlight the red, which represents blood. Here, blood = sacrifice of men, fathers, brothers, sons, a reference to losses in battle. In the background, a sort of vampire: in this case, the Australian Prime Minister, representing the blood-drinker who wants to send men to the slaughter. He also has goat's feet = Satan. Puts even more emphasis on the idea of death, of selling one's soul to the devil if one votes yes, of hell. Hell on earth, fighting hell. Repetition of the idea of death with the words "dead" and 'blood' in the poem at the end of each verse: "that I doomed a man to death" "with the dead man's blood 'tis red" "blood of men" in the first 3 verse. Play on guilt. Argument: don't send the men because you're sending them to their deaths. "I smugly sentenced the man to death"; "for the priceless blood of men". The expression on the woman's face is also full of guilt and hesitation.

The pencil used to write the response to the vote is represented as a kind of weapon.

Religion:

Religious images: Satan is still drawn in the background, but there are also religious references such as 'O God', 'God's word- and the Brand of Cain' (this visible sign accompanies the curse of Cain, guilty of murdering his brother, Abel. Voting yes would mean condemning his own brothers and having them killed in the biblical reference) the idea also of the 'Thou shalt not kill' commandments. 'Pray God for your Mother's soul' because she is going to condemn her brothers, 'In God's great Judgment Roll'. Significant use of religious references, always with the idea of making the woman who votes feel guilty.

Women:

Why is the poster targeted at women? Women have only been able to vote for a short time: in Australia, the first vote took place in 1901 when the Commonwealth was born. So this right is brand new for women. In Australia, women are gaining rights and therefore playing an increasing role in political decision-making: see course below.

In 1861: female ratepayers won the right to vote but only in local gov elections.

1888 : Women's Suffrage League

1890 : Working Women's Trade Union to fight for improved women's employment conditions and the vote

1894 : Women's vote bill for South Australia, signed into law by Queen Victoria.

South Australia became the first state in the world to allow women to both vote and be vot-ed for.

1908 : same for Western Australia's as the last state of Australia Commonwealth

So they have a say, thus this specific poster for them. On the other hand, the arguments mentioned were cited by her son: an emotional bond between mother and son. If she votes 'yes', she's condemning him too. She also likens herself to the widow, the mother in the poem. The choice of a poem in the background was certainly made to appeal to women.

The poster can be read on two levels: the drawing, which makes an impression without having to read the poem, and the poem, which explains the 'slogan'. In fact, the words used in the slogan are designed to make an impression on the reader: 'The Blood Vote'.

Note: Aboriginal women do not have the right to vote, which means that they cannot vote.

Sources:

<https://www.nma.gov.au>

<https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au>