VC or No VC: That is the Question

Applicable for use in Australian Curriculum: History –
Year 10 (World War II)

Written by Dr Louise Zarmati, Tasmania.
This Unit has six lessons over a two-week period.
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Learning Objectives

In this unit, students will:

- Examine primary and secondary sources to conduct an historical inquiry.
- Critically evaluate the reliability of primary sources as evidence in the construction of an historical argument.
- Use historical evidence to develop and communicate their own interpretations of past events.

This will assist students in meeting the following curriculum requirements:

**Historical Knowledge and Understanding**

- Experiences of Australians during World War II (such as Prisoners of War (POWs), the Battle of Britain, Kokoda, the Fall of Singapore) (ACDSEH108).
- The impact of World War II, with a particular emphasis on the Australian home front, including the changing roles of women and use of wartime government controls (ACDSEH109).

**Historical Skills**

- Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods (ACHHS186)
- Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources (ACHHS187)
- Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)
- Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)
- Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (ACHHS192)
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<td><strong>Lesson objective</strong></td>
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<td>- Students understand the background and nature of the Victoria Cross (VC).</td>
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<td><strong>General instructions</strong></td>
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<td>- Find out more about the Victoria Cross and who has been awarded the medal.</td>
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<td>- Complete activities on Australians who have received the Victoria Cross.</td>
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<td><strong>Specific tasks</strong></td>
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<td>- Complete Worksheet 1: What is the Victoria Cross?</td>
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<td>- In your own words, explain to a partner why the Victoria Cross was created and what considerations go into awarding it to someone.</td>
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<td>- Find out which conflict has produced the highest number of Victoria Crosses and why.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Should Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean be retrospectively awarded a VC? (Part 1)</td>
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<td>Worksheet 2: Should Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean be awarded a VC?</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson objective</strong></td>
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<td>- Students analyse primary source documents to gather evidence on the wartime activities of Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean.</td>
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<td><strong>General instructions</strong></td>
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<td>- Consider the criteria for awarding a VC and whether a particular Australian serviceman was eligible/worthy.</td>
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<td>- Complete activities on the serviceman above and discuss the merits of his ‘case’ with other students.</td>
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<td><strong>Specific tasks</strong></td>
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<td>- Carefully analyse Sources 1–3 in Worksheet 2: Should Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean be awarded a VC?</td>
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<td>- Then complete the Questions on Source 1 in the worksheet. (Remainder to be completed next lesson.)</td>
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<td>- Experiences of Australians during World War II (such as Prisoners of War (POWs), the Battle of Britain, Kokoda, the Fall of Singapore) <em>(ACDSEH108)</em></td>
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<td>- Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past <em>(ACHHS190)</em></td>
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<td>- Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of primary and secondary sources <em>(ACHHS189)</em></td>
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<td><strong>Lesson objective</strong>&lt;br&gt;Students construct an argument, based on evidence, about whether Edward Sheean should be posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.</td>
<td>- Experiences of Australians during World War II (such as Prisoners of War (POWs), the Battle of Britain, Kokoda, the Fall of Singapore) (ACDSEH108)</td>
<td>- Worksheet 2 (cont.)</td>
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<td><strong>General instructions</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Consider arguments for and against Edward Sheean being awarded a VC.&lt;br&gt;- Mount your own argument on the matter.&lt;br&gt;- Compare your views with those of fellow students.</td>
<td>- Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (ACHHS192)</td>
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<td><strong>Specific tasks</strong>&lt;br&gt;- This lesson, finish the remaining tasks from Worksheet 2 (questions regarding Sources 1, 2 and 3).&lt;br&gt;- Read aloud your arguments for or against the posthumous awarding of the VC to Edward Sheean.&lt;br&gt;- Contribute to the class discussion on the topic.&lt;br&gt;- Note down your observations about the class discussion about Edward Sheean. In particular, to what extent do students have similar opinions on whether he should be awarded the VC? What are the most common arguments for and against? Were you surprised by any of your classmates’ conclusions?&lt;br&gt;- List some other methods of recognising outstanding service during wartime and peacetime.</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson objective</strong>&lt;br&gt;Students consider whether Australians John Simpson Kirkpatrick should be retrospectively awarded the Victoria Cross and whether Albert Jacka should be retrospectively awarded a bar to his Victoria Cross.</td>
<td>- The impact of World War II, with a particular emphasis on the Australian home front, including the changing roles of women and use of wartime government controls (ACDSEH109).</td>
<td>- Worksheet 3: Should Simpson and Jacka have been awarded VCs?</td>
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<td><strong>General instructions</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Explore the criteria for awarding VCs.&lt;br&gt;- Analyse the wartime experiences of Simpson and Jacka and form conclusions about them.&lt;br&gt;- Consider the arguments for and against the retrospective awarding of a Victoria Cross.</td>
<td>- Process and synthesise information from a</td>
<td>- Contribution to class discussion</td>
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<td><strong>Specific tasks</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Lesson objective</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Students interrogate the purpose and nature of military medals in order to understand their significance in society.</td>
<td>- range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)</td>
<td>- Worksheet 4: What is the purpose of military medals?</td>
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<td><strong>General instructions</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Discuss military medals and awards.&lt;br&gt;- Find out about the legend of the metal used in Victoria Cross medallions.&lt;br&gt;- Complete activities on the purpose of medals and their use in propaganda campaigns.</td>
<td>- The impact of World War II, with a particular emphasis on the Australian home front, including the changing roles of women and use of wartime government controls (ACDSEH109)</td>
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<td><strong>Specific tasks</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Complete Worksheet 4 individually.&lt;br&gt;- Discuss responses as a group.&lt;br&gt;- Extension: Read about the development of the Victoria Cross in Crook, M., <em>The Evolution of the Victoria Cross</em> (Tunbridge Wells, UK: Midas Books in association with Ogilby Trusts, 1975).</td>
<td>- Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson objective</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Students debate the merits of the retrospective awarding Victoria Crosses and the significance of such military awards in history.</td>
<td>- Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)</td>
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<td><strong>General instructions</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Review activities completed above.&lt;br&gt;- Synthesise evidence into an original argument.</td>
<td>- Class debate: ‘The Victoria Cross has provided motivation for servicemen and women to excel on the battlefield.’</td>
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|      |        | • Share your opinions on the Victoria Cross with other students and justify your arguments with evidence.  
• Construct a written argument about the Victoria Cross.  
  **Specific tasks**  
• Review your responses to Worksheets 1–4.  
• Participate in a formal class debate on the topic: ‘The Victoria Cross has provided motivation for servicemen and women to excel on the battlefield.’  
• In your debating speech, draw on evidence collected in worksheets and activities above.  
• As a class, decide on the winning team and design an appropriate classroom award.  
• Complete the Assessment Task: Essay. | • Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (ACHHS192) | • Assessment task: Essay: ‘The Victoria Cross has performed a vital role in history.’ Do you agree? |
Worksheets

Worksheet 1: What is the Victoria Cross?

Read about the Victoria Cross below and complete the tasks that follow.

The military decoration known as the Victoria Cross (VC) was first created by Queen Victoria in 1856 when she signed a Royal Warrant, the legal basis for the existence of an award. This warrant sets out the terms and conditions of receipt of the medal.

The need for the creation of a new decoration arose because:

1. The British had been fighting the Russians in the Crimea for three years and those receiving awards were mostly officers and staff instead of ordinary soldiers.

2. The Crimean War was the first war that was reported as it happened and on the spot, so the public was aware that the brave actions of ordinary soldiers were not being recognised.

3. The British were fighting alongside their allies the French, who already had the Legion of Honour award which they gave to their own regular soldiers who merited it.

The original warrant states that the VC was to be awarded only ‘to those officers and men who have served Us [Queen Victoria] in the presence of the enemy, and shall have then performed some signal [outstanding] act of valour or devotion to their country.’

It became the highest award in the whole system of honours and awards in the British Empire. Australia was still a member of the British Empire when its first citizen, Sir Neville Howse, was awarded a VC for bravery during the Boer War (1900–01). Up until 1991 a further 95 Australians received the VC from Britain. After 1991 Australia instituted its own version known as the Victoria Cross of Australia. This is still the most important medal in the Australian Honours and Awards system and has an identical form of Warrant to the British medal. Because several fake Victoria Crosses were sold as genuine items to collectors in the early 1900s, a secret mark was put on all Victoria Crosses made since.

For a long time it was believed that all VCs had been made from bronze from two cannon captured by the British during the Crimean War (1854–56), kept in the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich. However, when historian John Glanfield conducted an investigation into the manufacturing of the VCs he found that the metal from the cannon believed to have been captured during the Crimean War and held in were, in fact, Chinese in origin. Glanfield also argues that metal from the Woolwich cannon was not used until 1914.

Requirements for the award of a Victoria Cross

The standard of gallantry required for receipt of the VC is particularly high because it is the greatest award that can be bestowed on an Australian for exploits on the battlefield. The requirements for The Victoria Cross are very strict. All awards of The Victoria Cross are approved by Her Majesty the Queen.

The recommendation of the award must come from those who had seen the action themselves or had direct report about it. It must be accompanied by conclusive proof and verification of facts as far as circumstances allow. Three independent witnesses are considered the minimum necessary to support a VC recommendation.

It is difficult to determine levels of gallantry and past inquiries to determine if a VC award is merited would ask such questions as:

- How near was the enemy and how many were there?
- How far was the advance under heavy fire?
- How many times and how severely was the soldier wounded?
- How crucial was the capture of this position or the destruction of this enemy strongpoint?
- What was the length of time for the whole undertaking?
TASKS

1. The Victoria Cross is not made of gold or another precious metal. Why do you think this is so?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Go to https://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/vic_cross/ for a list of all Australian VCs that are held at the Australian War Memorial. Note down any names on the list that you recognise. What did these people do to be awarded the Victoria Cross?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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3. Find out more about the Victoria Cross at http://anzacday.org.au/the-victoria-cross-1. In the light of your research, explain why the VC has such a high reputation.

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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End of worksheet
Worksheet 2: Should Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean be awarded a VC?

Read about Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean and complete the tasks that follow.

In November 1942, 18-year-old Edward (Teddy) Sheean sailed on HMAS Armidale to Timor to help resupply and evacuate troops and civilians from Betano Bay, Timor. His job was as a loader of ammunition for one of the three Oerlikon [pronounced ‘er-lick-on’] anti-aircraft guns on board.

At this time the Japanese were sweeping through South-east Asia and destroying all Allied military forces in their way. En route to Timor Armidale was located by Japanese bombers and fighters and endured several different attacks. HMAS Armidale was sunk on 1 December 1942. Of the 149 people on board, only 49 survived the attack. Some like Sheean went down with the ship, others on rafts and small boats were machine-gunned in the water by the Japanese and others were never found.
Survivors of the sinking of the HMAS Armidale clinging to a life raft. This photograph was taken from an Allied aircraft. It was not able to land in the water to pick up these men; none of them survived. [https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/045256/](https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/045256/)

During the attack Armidale was hit by two torpedoes and the order was given to abandon ship. Edward Sheean showed extraordinary bravery by assisting others to abandon ship, releasing a motor boat for survivors, then going back to use his Oerlikon anti-aircraft gun to single-handedly shoot at the Japanese aircraft. At some point he was wounded by the Japanese planes but continued to fire, shooting down at least one aircraft until he was finally killed and the ship disappeared under the waves. Sheean was posthumously awarded a **Mention in Dispatches** for his bravery at the time.
This petition, ‘To Support Teddy Sheean for a Victoria Cross’ was posted in public places around Tasmania in 2015. Sheean was born, educated and worked in northern Tasmania before he enlisted in the Royal Australian Naval Reserve in 1941. (Photo: B. Wood, 2015)

In 2011, the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal was requested by the Australian Government to ‘inquire into and report on unresolved recognition for past acts of naval and military gallantry and valour’. The intention was to review the cases of a number of service personnel to determine their eligibility for Victoria Crosses or some other recognition of their actions. Amongst others, one of the acts of gallantry examined was that of Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean during World War 2. The tribunal heard evidence from a number of witnesses as well as conducting their own investigations.

The comparative table in **Source 1** is adapted from the report of the tribunal and details the witness statements presented in support of awarding Sheean a posthumous (after death) VC.

**TASKS**

Carefully examine **Sources 1, 2 and 3** (see below) and answer the questions that follow.

**Source 1: Witness Statements – HMAS *Armidale*  
(From Table 17.2 [https://defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au/inquiries/completed-inquiries/valour/ordinary-seaman-edward-sheean/])**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Witness</th>
<th>Location of witness at time of sinking</th>
<th>What was witnessed</th>
<th>Where and when reported</th>
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<tr>
<td>Witness 1: Stoker Ray Raymond</td>
<td>On port side in water, from engine room, 35-40 yards from <em>Armidale</em>.</td>
<td>Oerlikon manned by Sheean; shooting down of one Japanese aircraft and damage to possibly two others.</td>
<td>Statement attached to Submission 128; interviewed by Frank Walker in 1980s.</td>
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<td>Witness 2: Able Seaman Edward ‘Ted’ Pellet</td>
<td>In vicinity of motor boat on deck of <em>Armidale</em>, and later in the water.</td>
<td>With Sheean on the deck as Pellet used an axe to release the motor boat; saw Sheean injured as he headed back to gun; from motor boat in the water observed Sheean firing gun.</td>
<td>Statement attached to Submission 128; interviewed by Frank Walker in 1980s.</td>
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<td>Witness 3: Leading Signalman Arthur Lansbury</td>
<td>After piping ‘abandon ship’ throughout ship he escaped to water on the port side of ship.</td>
<td>While going around the ship saw Sheean go back to Oerlikon, strap himself in; saw him ‘hit in the back’.</td>
<td>Statement attached to Submission 128; interviewed by Frank Walker in 1980s.</td>
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<td>Witness 4:</td>
<td>Blown over port side from depth-charge setting position; a few hundred yards away.</td>
<td>Saw aft Oerlikon start to fire; witnessed tracer hitting a Zero which ditched into the sea. Later learned it was Sheean firing gun.</td>
<td>Statement attached to Submission 128; supplementary written account taken on 1 June 2002; interviewed by Tribunal Secretariat on 2 September 2011.</td>
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<td>Wireman William ‘Bill’ Noel Lamshed</td>
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<td>Witness 5:</td>
<td>Port side in the water.</td>
<td>This is not entirely clear. Caro certainly related Sheean’s actions story to many immediately afterwards.</td>
<td>Wrote statement; wrote an article for the <em>Australian Journal</em> published on 2 June 1945.</td>
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<td>Ordinary Seaman Russell ‘Russ’ Caro</td>
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<td>Ordinary Seaman Ray Leonard</td>
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<td>Witness 7:</td>
<td>In the water on starboard side of ship.</td>
<td>Did not witness Sheean, but heard about it from other survivors.</td>
<td>Statement attached to Submission 128; interviewed on 18 November 2011.</td>
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<td>Ordinary Seaman Donald Rex Pullen</td>
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<td>Ordinary Seaman Colin Madigan</td>
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<td>Witness 9:</td>
<td>Washed off stern, probably on starboard side of ship.</td>
<td>What Duckworth witnessed is not clear, but he stated in the interview ‘As she went down, Ted Sheean kept one of his guns firing, and went down with the ship. He got a row of machine gun bullets right across the chest, but went back to his gun, strapped himself in and kept firing as she went below the water. He brought down a fighter.’</td>
<td>1945 interview by Peter Hemery – attachment to submission 236.</td>
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Questions on Source 1

Carefully analyse Source 1 (see above) and answer the questions.

1. Explain why it is important to record the location of each witness at the time the event took place.
2. Explain why it is important to note ‘where’ the witness was at the time of the action and ‘when’ the evidence was given?
3. Consider the details of each witness’s statement and fill in the table by ranking them in order of reliability (i.e. the most reliable witness at ‘1’ and the least reliable at ‘9’).
4. What other factors might impact on the reliability of eye witness accounts such as these?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Name of Witness</th>
<th>Reason for Conclusion</th>
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Use this diagram to help you locate the actions, and position of witnesses

Layout based on HMAS Castlemaine, a Bathurst class corvette like HMAS Armidale and now a museum ship in Williamstown, Melbourne.

http://hmascastlemaine.org.au/
Source 2: Some of the arguments for and against awarding Sheean the VC

Summary of arguments in favour

- Sheean’s actions, displaying outstanding individual bravery, resoundingly meet the criteria for the VC. The Tribunal has the opportunity to right a wrong in the case of Sheean; he has been honoured, but not with the nation’s highest award for gallantry (Submissions 27, 57, 58, 92, 128, 128A, 193 and 200). Not to do so would be an injustice to Sheean, his family, all Tasmanians, if not the entire Australian community (Submission 82).
- Sheean’s selfless and heroic actions had a positive effect on his surviving shipmates (Submission 95).
- A survey among members of an RSL sub-branch placed Teddy Sheean as their first choice for the VC (Submission 89).


Summary of arguments against

- If it is decided that the VC was denied because the administrative arrangements prevailing at the time were inappropriate and that current conditions should apply, then ‘it is incumbent on [the responsibility of] the awards system to reassess all past awards through a modern prism’ (Submission 124).
- Without wanting in any way to detract from the very real gallantry displayed by Ordinary Seaman Sheean during the action that led to the sinking of HMAS Armidale on 1 December 1942, it must be clearly understood by the tribunal that the majority of claims made about Sheean’s actions post the date of his death are inaccurate at best and in many cases preposterous (Submission 99).
- The actions of Lieutenant Whitting were every bit as instrumental in saving the lives of those men who survived, in fact, probably more so, yet he received the same award as Sheean (Submission 99).

Source 3: Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheean, HMAS Armidale

Questions on Sources 1, 2 and 3

1. Examine the painting of Edward Sheean in Source 3.
   - Who painted it?
   - When was it painted?
   - Why was it produced?
   - Where is it located today?

2. How reliable do you consider Source 3 in relation to the witness statements you read in Source 1?
3. In your opinion, should the tribunal consider this painting (Source 3) of Sheean as evidence in favour of awarding him a VC? Why or why not?

4. What award was Sheean given? Why wasn’t he given the VC?

5. Based on Sources 1, 2 and 3, and your knowledge of the requirements for receiving a Victoria Cross (see Worksheet 1), do you think Edward Sheean should have received one? Why or why not?

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<th>Arguments for</th>
<th>Arguments against</th>
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Worksheet 3: Should these men have been awarded VCs?

Read about two individuals below and complete the tasks that follow.

John Simpson Kirkpatrick

On 21 February 2011, the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, Senator The Hon. David Feeney, requested that the Defence Honours and Awards Appeal Tribunal inquire into and report on unresolved recognition for past acts of naval and military gallantry and valour.

‘Simpson, the man with the donkey’ was assessed by the Tribunal as to whether he should have received a Victoria Cross.

John Simpson Kirkpatrick was born in Britain but later moved to Australia. In August 1914 he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force, serving at Gallipoli the following year as Private John Simpson in the 3rd Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps. He served from the time of the landing at Gallipoli on 25 April until he was killed in action on 19 May.

Simpson became famous for his work as a stretcher-bearer. Using one of the donkeys brought in for carrying water, he transported wounded men day and night from the fighting in Monash Valley to the beach on Anzac Cove. He did so, according to Charles Bean, through ‘deadly sniping down the valley and the most furious shrapnel fire’. He was killed by machine-gun fire while carrying two wounded men and was buried on the beach at Hell Spit.

The war diary of the 3rd Field Ambulance commended ‘the excellence of the work performed by Pte Simpson continuously since landing’. Simpson was posthumously Mentioned in Despatches. His first donkey was known as Abdul, Murphy, or Duffy.


Albert Jacka

Albert Jacka was the first Australian recipient of the Victoria Cross during World War I. Jacka’s award was explained thus:

‘For most conspicuous bravery on the night of the 19th – 20th May 1915 at Courtney’s Post, Gallipoli Peninsula.

Lance-Corporal Jacka, while holding a portion of our trench with four men, was heavily attacked. When all except himself were killed or wounded, the trench was rushed and occupied by seven Turks. Lance-Corporal Jacka at once most gallantly attacked them single-handed, and killed the whole party, five by rifle-fire and two with the bayonet.’

Jacka instantly became a national hero. He also received 500 pounds, a gold watch and was featured on World War 1 recruitment posters.
Jacka was then sent to the Western Front where he performed more remarkable acts of bravery. Several people at the time and since believed Jacka should have been awarded three VCs. Australian military historian Charles Bean later wrote, ‘Everyone who knows the facts, knows Jacka earned the Victoria Cross three times’. Go to https://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/fiftyaustralians/26.asp.

TASKS

1. What acts of bravery did John Simpson Kirkpatrick perform?
2. What award did Simpson receive?

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3. Why didn’t Simpson receive a Victoria Cross?

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4. On the face of it, do you agree with the Tribunal’s decision about Simpson?

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5. What further information might you need before coming to a final conclusion about the Tribunal’s decision?

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7. Identify Jacka’s acts of bravery at Pozières and Bullecourt on the Western Front in France:
8. List the awards received by Jacka:

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9. Give a possible explanation for why Jacka did not receive a bar to the Victoria Cross he was awarded in Gallipoli:

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10. Do you agree or disagree with the decision not to award Jacka a bar to his VC at the time? Give evidence to support your answer:

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End of worksheet
Worksheet 4: What is the purpose of military medals?

Complete the tasks below about military medals.

1. Consider the following quotations:

   ‘A soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of coloured ribbon’

   - Napoleon Bonaparte

   ‘The value attached by soldiers to a little bit of ribbon is such as to render any danger insignificant and any privation light....and the sight of one of these crosses on the breast of a Soldier returned home invalided (wounded) would bring more recruits than any of the measures we can now adopt.’

   - The Duke of Newcastle in a letter to Prince Albert recommending the establishment of The Victoria Cross. 20 January 1855.

   ‘A private ... placed a bullet in his (an enemy’s) brain, thereby probably saving many lives by his presence of mind. This same was Jerry Mulane and he was awarded the DCM (Distinguished Conduct Medal) afterwards. There was not the slightest doubt that these Huns (Germans) were employing an old trick of theirs to shoot us in the back. The humane instinct that prompted me to turn a deaf ear to the injunction (instruction) to give my man short shrift (shoot him instead of capture him) was responsible for my not getting a medal. But they were things I never looked for.

   Augustus Emerson Tennent.  War Narrative, 30 September 1916-1 October 1919
   State Library of New South Wales
   Call number MLMSS 3049
   Page 37

   ‘When I go home people ask me, “Hey Hoot, why do you do it man? Why? You some kind of war junkie?” I won’t say a goddamn word. Why? They won’t understand. They won’t understand why we do it. They won’t understand it’s about the men next to you. And that’s it. That’s all it is.’

‘Both the night nurses were given the Croix de Guerre (a French military medal), which we all appreciated. Still, a medal isn’t much compensation for a foot, is it?’

Sister Lynette Crozier, who served on the French Front line in July 1917, describing how a Canadian nurse had her foot blown off during a bombing raid over their hospital. Melanie Oppenheimer, Australian Women and War. Department of Veterans Affairs: Canberra, 2008, p.28.

‘Why do we fight? Why do we do it? You find yourself involved in a battle and you find yourself doing crazy things. I don’t know why we do it. You certainly are terrified of being regarded as chicken (a coward)...So you do it.’


2. Consider all of the above quotations in 1. What role do you think medals play in motivating soldiers? List four other motives for acting bravely in the field.

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3. Why do you think Napoleon Bonaparte and the Duke of Newcastle express different perceptions on the value of medals to those in the other quotes?

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5. Give two examples of propaganda medallions used in wartime and why they were used.

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ii)____________________________________________________________________

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6. In what ways other than medals are high-performing servicemen and women recognised?

ii)
Assessment Task: Essay

Write an essay of 600–800 words on the topic below.

Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs based on evidence from primary and secondary sources, a conclusion and a bibliography.

Topic: ‘The Victoria Cross has performed a vital role in history.’ Do you agree?

*End of assessment task*