

WELCOME TO WOOMERA

STUDY GUIDE



A FILM AUSTRALIA NATIONAL INTEREST PROGRAM

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National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

Sales and Distribution | PO Box 397 Pyrmont NSW 2009

T +61 2 8202 0144 | F +61 2 8202 0101

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SYNOPSIS

In recent years, Woomera has been synonymous with what the Australian government calls its 'immigration reception and processing centre'. Once heralded as a model of suburban living, this historic town was reviled as a 'desert jail'. But the detention centre has closed and the town is in danger of closing too.

A purpose-built defence village that once boasted 6000 residents has dwindled to a couple of hundred. Those who remain face an uncertain future.

Their dilemma is a far cry from the late 1940s when the vast rocket range was first created in the outback to accommodate Britain's defence plans or later, when the Americans based themselves here to track missile launches from nearby Nurrungar.

Through the eyes of residents past and present, this documentary reveals life in Woomera from the inside and follows the community's struggle to keep the town alive. As a government town however, its future is not necessarily in the hands of the locals. Marketing of the range has now been contracted out to a multinational company, with potential to capitalise on escalating global interest in weapons development to fight the 'war on terror'.

Spanning half a century from the cold war to the space age and beyond, this is a film about ordinary people in a small town caught up in big events

CURRICULUM LINKS

This program will have interest and relevance for teachers and students at middle to senior secondary and TAFE-tertiary levels. Curriculum links include English, SOSE/HSIE, Media Studies, Environmental Studies and Science, with cross-links to Information Technology computer skills.

WHAT DO YOU RECALL FROM VIEWING THE PROGRAM?

1. What activities did British scientists carry out in the 1950s, in the desert near Woomera, and why? Name the two locations where these experiments took place.
2. What involvement did the Americans later have in the region, at Nurrungar?
3. What involvement has the Australian Government recently had with Woomera?
4. How many people lived in Woomera in its 'heyday'? How many people lived in the town at the time this documentary was filmed? What reason is given for this population change?
5. What is a central tourist attraction of Woomera, as seen in the sequence involving the arrival of a tour bus?
6. Professor Peter Morton links the development of Woomera to the world political situation as it existed at the end of World War Two. Why does he refer to the word 'Armageddon'? (You may need to find out what this word means and where it first came from.)
7. What does M.A.D. mean?
8. Two women — Vasudha Lockyer and Lynn Dillon — are

interviewed at the Woomera post office. Why are they living in Woomera? What did Vasudha's mother in India say when she saw a video of the Woomera township and the surrounding district?

9. Peter Morton describes some of Woomera's past social problems. What were they, and what reasons does Morton give for them?
10. In the program Morton's comments are immediately followed by archival footage and narration from the 1960s. In what ways are these messages about life in Woomera different from those that Morton presents?
11. Describe the government security restrictions in and around Woomera.
12. BAE Systems is well known for what purpose? What role does BAE Systems now play in Woomera, and why?
13. What is the WPA and what is its importance to the Woomera district? How much land does it cover in kilometres? Who controls it?
14. Who was the Hon. Richard Casey? What was the role given to the Native Patrol Officer, in the 1950s, at the time of Casey's speech?
15. At the time of the nuclear explosions in the 1950s, what official messages (on film) were being presented about the children living in Woomera?
16. What was the Blue Streak and ELDO, and what was their fate?
17. At the time this program was being filmed, why are Murray and Merran Tschirpig leaving town? What is the general significance of this single event?
18. Describe the concept of the Defence Support Program, which was run by the Americans at Woomera from the 1970s to the late 1990s.

Colonel Mike Hess, formerly of the United States Airforce, at Nurrungar.



19. Who 'besieged' Woomera each year, during the 1980s and 1990s, and why?
20. Why was it a 'shock' to Woomera residents when the Americans left in 1999?
21. What did the Australian Government begin doing in the Woomera region only two months after the Americans left, and why?
22. What was Father Jim Monaghan's reaction to the mass breakout in 2000 of refugees from the detention centre?
23. In general, how many refugees were held in the detention centre at any one time, and how, at times, did they react to their treatment? How did many of the townsfolk respond to this situation?
24. What is the ACM organisation, and what was its function at Woomera?
25. Among the refugees in the detention centre, where were the women and children eventually taken, and why?
26. How many detainees escaped into the desert? Why doesn't Henriette Greenfield ever want to return to Woomera?
27. What percentage of detainees at Woomera were eventually found to be 'genuine refugees'?
28. What hopes does Bob McKenzie have for Woomera's future? What governmental and business activities now take place in the region?
29. Describe the secrecy that still exists in and around Woomera.
30. What do you think Jim Monaghan means when he says, at the end of the program, that 'the sadness in other parts of the world will be the prosperity of Woomera, I suppose'?

THE WOOMERA COMMUNITY

The program constantly presents images of the citizens of Woomera, past and present, and emphasises the region's geographical and cultural remoteness from the large cities of Australia.

- Draw a map of South Australia, showing Woomera's location, and a scale measurement of its distance from the state's capital city, also marking and labelling the places where nuclear testing and satellite tracking have taken place near Woomera. Mark the general area known as the WPA. Include in a sub-heading on your map the meaning of the Aboriginal word 'Woomera' and a short explanation as to why you think this word was chosen as the town's name.
- Look at the two websites Woomera on the Web and Woomera SA—Nothing To Get In Your Way, listed in the References and Further Resources section of this study guide. Both sites contain maps of Woomera. Find, print out and place into your work folder the maps of the town as it was in the 1960s and as it is today. By comparing the maps, discuss in writing whether there are any differences to the town's layout and size, providing reasons for your findings. (To carry out this activity, you may first need to form small groups, or come together as a class, to discuss relevant issues.)
- Continuing from the previous activity, print out and place into your folder photographs of at least three buildings or facilities that are either in or near the Woomera township, which also feature in the documentary program. (Alternatively, you may trace or draw your own illustrations.) Label each one, including a short note about its relevance to the residents from previous decades and/or the present.
- Imagine you were among the very first people to move into the new town of Woomera in the late 1940s—early 1950s. Write a letter to a friend or relative describing your observations, feelings and thoughts about your new life, drawing attention to both its positive and negative aspects. You may write the letter from the point of view of a child going to school, or someone working for a living in the town.
- Did Woomera have its own radio station before television came to Australia in 1956? As a class project, plan and record a 30-minute 'Radio Woomera' broadcast made up of local news items, interviews, community assistance information on health and education, advertisements by local business and anything else of interest or entertainment value to the local community. The class may also consider spending some time researching the popular recorded music of the era, to include some music tracks, perhaps extending the broadcast to an hour. The broadcast could be recorded via sound file computer format, or transferred to it and posted on your school's internet site.
- Samples of Woomera's local newspaper, *Gibber Gabber*, are available on the internet. View some editions of the newspaper, then prepare and present your own items for publication. Some examples: letter to the editor, an advice column, advertisements, news reports, horoscope (or 'Gibberscope') etc. (Note: the 10 September 2004 edition, which was the most recent available on the internet at the time this study guide was written, contains a humorous advice column titled, 'Ask Kate!', which is well worth reading.)



Murray Tschirpig at his Woomera service station.



A purpose-built defence village, Woomera once boasted 6000 residents and was heralded as a model of suburban living.



- The program draws attention to some of Woomera's hidden social and behavioural problems (alcoholism, domestic violence, isolation and loneliness, boredom, depression, extra-marital affairs etc). In small groups, work together to write and produce a short play, which could be performed to the rest of the class, about one or more of these issues. You may present the play in any mode you feel is best — social documentary realism, tragic melodrama, comedy etc.
- Imagine that a group of townswomen, concerned about the lack of cultural and entertainment outlets and choices, and the destructive influence this is causing, meets to discuss how life in general for the people of Woomera could be improved. Write a report of their recommendations as though it were an item for the local newspaper. (If you have desktop publishing abilities, present the item with headlines and in newspaper column format.)
- We are informed by the program of Woomera's declining population and the residents' fears and hopes for the future existence of the town. Dramatise this by planning a short fiction story about someone living in present-day Woomera. You may wish to discuss in class, first, the range of issues, themes and characters that might be built into such a story, and the possible approaches that might be best, such as its style and genre, and whether it should be presented in the first-person or third-person viewpoint.
- Your promotion business company has been approached to devise large wall posters to promote Woomera's future, and to attract not only tourists from the rest of Australia and overseas, but also new residents. Working in groups, put together the poster or set of posters. (Alternatively, construct a website or even a television advertisement.)

WOOMERA AND THE COLD WAR

For many decades after World War Two and the advent of the 'nuclear age' and the beginnings of the 'space race' — the desire to be the first among nations or world blocs to conquer and control outer space — the Australian nation and much of the rest of the world was caught up in a sense of international paranoia, suspicion and approaching doom and annihilation. The construction of the township of Woomera was a direct result and a reaction to this fear of what the future might bring.

- Research then write an informative-style essay (approx. 500–700 words) about the Cold War. Your essay should answer the following questions: what was the Cold War; when did it start, and why; when is it now accepted to have

ended, and why; what was Australia's involvement; what are the long-term effects and results of the Cold War (if any)?

- In small groups or pairs, research the history of WRESAT, Australia's first and only space satellite (1967). Each group is to plan and produce a large wall poster about WRESAT, showing its development, its purpose, achievements, effects, influence (if any) on space exploration, and why there have been no further Australian satellites. An alternative to this may be for each group to select one aspect of the history of WRESAT and produce a set of connected posters, from WRESAT's beginnings to its conclusions.
- The class should divide into two large groups: one group is to research the roles and activities of the British in Woomera during the 1950s–1960s, and their relative success or failure; the other group is to research the same as applied to the Americans in Woomera, late 1960s–1990s. Each student should select a particular aspect of the topic to research, with the findings pooled in regular group meetings. Each group should maintain detailed notes of its meetings, its objectives and its plans, so that all students in the group are aware of how their own work will fit into the entire structure. The overall material of each group should be presented to the class as a project involving question-and-answer talks or short speech-lectures, visual displays (photographs, illustrations, charts and posters etc) and web pages etc. Each group should also look at local, national and international criticism and political protest against the perceived dangers and secrecy of these scientific and military activities in and around Woomera, and whether such reaction and unrest was justified.
- Construct a two-page magazine spread about the 1954 Petrov spy case.
- Plan and write a short story about the Cold War in Woomera (nuclear and rocket testing, satellite tracking etc). Write the story in the science fiction or political spy thriller genre. Alternatively, in groups or as a class, plan a full-length feature or serial script, to be presented by the entire class as a recorded radio play, which could be downloaded in sound-file format to a web site. (You will find more details about radio serials and how to organise a radio play in Film Australia's study guide for the *Australian Biography* documentary program featuring actor Charles 'Bud' Tingwell.)
- During the 1950s many American science fiction films were made that, it is argued by film experts, reflected the Cold War, anti-Communist or McCarthyist 'mentality' of the day. Some of these titles were: *The Thing*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*,

The Day the Earth Stood Still, *This Island Earth*, *War of the Worlds* and *Earth vs the Flying Saucers* (see References and Further Resources for more information). As a class, view one or two of these films, making sure they are the original titles, and not later remakes, and discuss the ways they may be considered to be Cold War stories.

- Following from the above activity, select a science fiction film from the same era that has not been screened to your class during lesson-time. View the film (at home or elsewhere) and write a movie review of it, making sure you relate it to the Cold War era. If you draw your information about the film from any published sources, including the internet, include a list of those sources at the end of your review.
- See class discussion activity, under the Woomera and Border Protection heading, linking the Cold War era to the more recent 'war on terror'.

WOOMERA AND INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIA, HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

From the beginnings of European civilisation in Australia in the late 18th century, the concept of terra nullius, or 'empty land', grew and became a widespread attitude. Aboriginal people were generally considered by the new, white immigrants to be a race of rootless, wandering peoples with no genuine attachment to and ownership of land; and much of the land itself, and its natural environment, was thought to be uninhabitable.

- Collate whatever information you can find on the health and environmental effects of nuclear testing and radioactive fallout arising from scientific and military experimentation at the Woomera rocket range, Maralinga etc (the website of the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association is a good place to start). Write an objectively presented report of your findings, conclusions and possible recommendations, as though it was to be considered by the Australian government. (You may also adapt this information for the next activity, below.)
- Working in groups, research and present a combined project on the history of Indigenous Australians in the region covered by the Woomera Protected Area, mainly concentrating on the mid-20th century to the present. This could be carried out in a variety of ways, from multimedia presentations and displays to lecture demonstrations and question-and-answer discussions. Some aspects to consider are: the names of each tribal group; their population figures; where and how they lived; the ways they have been affected by the encroachment of European civilisation, and in particular the development of Woomera, the rocket range and nuclear testing experiments; the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the work carried out by the Native Patrol Officer to move Indigenous populations out of the region, and whether this was disruptive or even destructive to their way of life; whether nuclear testing and other scientific experimentation in the region has had any short and long-term effects on the health and well-being of Aboriginal people and their natural environment (including vegetation, natural water supplies and native wildlife as sources of food); whether there is a need for Aboriginal people to be compensated by federal or state governments; what the future holds for Aboriginal people in the Woomera region.



Andrew Starkey was the first Aboriginal Liaison Officer employed by the Department of Defence.

- Write a 500-700 word biography of Walter MacDougall, the Chief Native Patrol Officer entrusted with the job of moving Indigenous Australians out of the WPA, assessing the importance and effectiveness of his role, his power, and his relationship with and treatment of Indigenous people.
- In groups, plan a script for a play about any aspect of the effect of the development of Woomera and its associated scientific activities on the Aboriginal community. Discuss in class, first, the range of stories, settings, themes and characters that are possible. Think about what could be an appropriate format for presentation of your script. Draw upon your knowledge and experience of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal storytelling techniques as well as others such as readers' theatre. Rehearse and enact the play to the class.

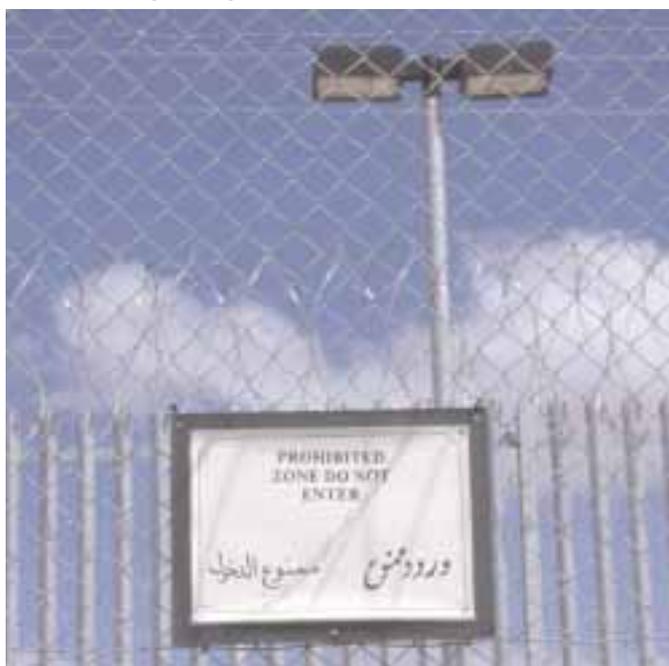
WOOMERA AND BORDER PROTECTION

When the refugee detention centre was built in Woomera, local residents initially saw it as a way to revive the town's declining existence. However, the introduction of hired armed guards, patrol dogs, barbed wire and illegal aliens to Woomera also brought protesters, the world media and a great deal of anguish, doubt, despair, guilt and pain.

- Write an objective, informative-style essay discussing the reasons for the Australian government's development of border protection measures and the construction and purposes of detention centres.
- Imagine you are the editor of a local newspaper in the town of Woomera. Write an editorial presenting the newspaper's opinions about the positive and/or negative effects on the townspeople of the introduction of refugees and the detention centre into the region.
- In diary form, present a week in the life of a detainee (adult or child).

- Working in pairs, one student takes on the role of a news interviewer, while another student takes on the role of a protester campaigning against the treatment of those held in detention centres. (In such an interview, ‘tough’ questions may be asked and the interviewee should be given the chance to defend, explain or rationalise her/his opinions, activities and behaviour — this may or may not lead to a lively discussion or even an argument, depending on how the interview progresses). The interview may be videoed and screened to the class.
- Plan and debate the following topic in class or before the entire school: that refugee detention centres and the treatment of the men, women and children held within them, have harmed Australia’s international reputation as a caring, compassionate society.
- Class discussion: are there any parallels to be drawn between the ‘paranoia’ of the Cold War era and the more recent, early 21st century ‘war on terror’? (You may wish to compare or contrast the ‘Red Menace’ and America’s banning of the Communist Party in the mid-20th century to Australia’s recent efforts to prevent aliens from illegally entering the country, the construction of detention centres and America’s Guantanamo Bay jail in Cuba.)
- Write an allegorical short story for television about border protection, illegal aliens, detention centres or the war on terror. (In other words, as with ‘Cold War’ science fiction tales, the story should not directly present these issues in a realistic fashion, but suggest them in other ways.) You may wish to present it as a storyboard display, featuring illustrations or photographed stills of key scenes, in which case the activity could be carried out as a group project.
- The following activity combines a number of issues raised in the program about the deeper feelings of some of those Woomera citizens interviewed concerning the possible consequences of the secrecy and purpose of military experiments and the moral question surrounding the treatment

A barbed wire sign, in English and Arabic, at Woomera’s detention centre.



of refugees in detention centres. Your answers to Questions 28, 29 and 30 on page 3 of this study guide will also help. First, note the comments made, during interviews throughout the program, that seem to question the ethics of military experimentation and detention centres. Debate in class whether these speakers, and the other citizens of Woomera who depended for their livelihood on the existence of nuclear testing and detention centres and who may still depend today upon the existence of secret testing of military technology, feel any sense of guilt in participating or relying on these activities for a living. Should they? Consider in fairness the choices and alternatives these citizens and their families may have had, and take into consideration similar examples either in history or currently, in Australia or elsewhere, where the motives of ‘ordinary’ people earning a living may be questioned (the tree-logging industry in section of Australia’s old-forest regions may be one example).

FILM STUDIES: DOCUMENTARY AND PROPAGANDA

- Discuss in class the difference between factual documentary and propaganda message film. What are the dangers of propaganda to an audience, and to the community in general, or even to an entire nation? (You may wish to view a film such as Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 9/11* as stimulus material.)
- Examine carefully the visuals and soundtracks of the archival newsreel film from the 1950s and 1960s, used in the program. Write a short essay discussing the types of messages those films presented to the audiences of the day, and whether they might be considered as government propaganda or as objective, informative and educational documentary.
- Discuss in class whether *Welcome to Woomera* is an even-handed, objective film history of Woomera from the 1940s to 2003, or whether it contains elements of the filmmaker’s own subjective opinion. (To carry out this activity, you will need to look closely at the film’s structure, the way it is pieced together, or edited, the way various camera shots are presented, the narrator’s voice-over and other uses of sound; for example, you may ask why the film is not presented in strict chronological order, but intercuts between past and present, from archival film to contemporary situation, and whether your emotional and intellectual responses are being challenged.)
- Working in small groups, half of the class is to produce an illustrated magazine article, or a website, which presents an objective, informative documentary look at either the purpose and the activities of a refugee detention centre, an American satellite tracking station, a nuclear test experiment, or the present and future role of BAE Systems or the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in Australia. In groups, the other half of the class is to produce the same, except that they should set out to produce a form of subjective ‘spin’ or propaganda message about their chosen topic. (An alternative is for groups of students to produce both an objective and a subjective media product of their chosen topic.) Students should define the audiences they are aiming at, and tailor their ‘informative’ or ‘persuasive’ messages and approach to that audience. Later, in class discussion, compare, contrast and examine the differences in approach between the two types of presentations.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER RESOURCES

Books, Reports & Articles

Desmond Ball, *A Base For Debate: The US Satellite Station at Nurrungar*, The Independent Publishing Group, 1988

Len Beadell, *Outback Highways*, Rigby, 1979 (A compilation of extracts from the bushman-author's other books, including his experiences of Woomera's early years.)

Jean M Brooks, *A Woomera Storm*, Jacobyte Books, 2002 and *The Woomera Trap*, Jacobyte Books, 2001 (These two books are novels set in Woomera, written by the late Jean M Brooks, who lived in the town with her family during the 1960s while her husband worked on the rocket range. This is entertaining fiction in the romance/thriller genre, which provides a lot of accurate information about Woomera and what it was like to live there in the 1960s. The first book is from the point of view of the husband, and the second of the wife.)

Kerrie Dougherty and Matthew James, *Space@Australia: The Story of Australia's Involvement in Space*, Powerhouse Publishing, Sydney, 1993. See <https://maas.museum/product/space-australia-the-story-of-australias-involvement-in-space/>

Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia, No 30, 2002 (Looks at the origins of the design of the Woomera village as a post-war model township.)

J R McLelland, *The Report of the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia*, (2 vols), Australian Government Public Service, Canberra, 1985

John May, *The Greenpeace Book of the Nuclear Age: The Hidden History, The Human Cost*, Gollancz, 1989

Robert Milliken, *No Conceivable Injury: The Story of Britain and Australia's Atomic Cover-up*, Penguin, 1986 (Looks at the British Nuclear Tests; written for a general audience.)

Peter Morton, *Engaging With Leviathan: A Historian's Perspective on Using the Scientific Archives of the Department of Defence*, Proceedings of the Recovering Science Conference, University of Melbourne, 1992. Also in *Recovering Science: Strategies and Models for the Past, Present and Future*, Science Archives Centre, University of Melbourne, 1994 (Looks at the process of researching *Fire Across the Desert*, see below, and is also available online at: <http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/conf/recovering/morton.htm>)

Peter Morton, *Fire Across the Desert: Woomera and the Anglo-Australian Joint Project 1946-80*, Australian Government Public Service, 1989 (The official Defence history of the Long Range Weapons Project.)

Jeffrey Richelson, *America's Space Sentinels: DSP Satellites & National Security*, University Press of Kansas, 2001 (Includes an account of the role and history of Nurrungar.)

Mark Shephard, *A Lifetime in the Bush: The Biography of Len Beadell*, Corkwood Press, 1998 (Biography of a bushman and artist who was at Woomera when the town was being built, and who worked on the construction of the British nuclear testing sites.)

History of the Cold War

M Keith Booker, *Monsters, Mushroom Clouds, and the Cold War: American Science Fiction and the Roots of Postmodernism, 1946–1964*, Greenwood Publishing, 2001

Dennis Glover, *Orwell's Australia: From Cold War to Culture Wars*, Scribe Publications, 2003.

Derek Heater, *The Cold War*, Wayland, 1989.

Peter Love and Paul Strangio (eds), *Arguing the Cold War*, Red Rag Publications, 2001 (Looks at Australia during the Cold War years.)

Robert Manne, *The Petrov Affair*, Text Publishing, 2004

Stewart Ross, *Causes of the Cold War*, Hodder Wayland, 2001

Michael Thwaites, *Truth Will Out: ASIO and the Petrovs*, Collins, 1980

Many books about the history of science fiction films and novels contain sections about the Cold War era. There are also some specialised titles, such as the following:

Cyndy Hendershot, *I was a Cold War Monster: Horror Films, Eroticism and the Cold War Imagination*, Bowling Green State Popular Press, Ohio, 2001

David Seed, *American Science Fiction and the Cold War: Literature and Film*, Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999

Bill Warren, *Keep Watching the Skies: American Science Fiction Movies of the Fifties*, McFarland and Co Ltd, North Carolina, 1986. (Volume 1 covers films 1950–1957; Volume 2 covers 1958–1962. Explores in some detail every Hollywood science fiction film produced during this era.)

Refugees and Detention Centres

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *A Last Resort? The Report of the National Enquiry into Children in Immigration Detention*, HREOC, 2004. See also: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/news/opinions/last-resort-children-immigration-detention-2004>

Peter Mares, *Borderline: Australia's Treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers*, UNSW Press, 2001

Southerly, Vol 64, No 1, 2004, Halstead Press, Sydney (This edition of the quarterly journal is titled *Another Country*, and is made up of writings by refugees held in Australian detention centres.)

Australian novels dealing with refugees and detention centres:

Morris Gleitzman, *Boy Overboard*, Puffin Books (Penguin), 2002

Morris Gleitzman, *Girl Underground*, Puffin Books (Penguin), 2004 (Sequel to *Boy Overboard*.)

Tom Keneally, *The Tyrant's Novel*, Doubleday, 2004.

Websites

The Woomera Community

- Woomera on the Web: <http://homepage.powerup.com.au/~woomera/> (Contains information on Woomera's rocket history and lots of enquiries, memories and correspondence from ex-Woomeraites, plus extracts from the local newspaper, *Gibber Gabber*.)

- Department of Defence - Woomera:
<http://www.defence.gov.au/woomera/>
Woomera community newsletter - Gibber Gabber:
<http://homepage.powerup.com.au/~woomera/gg.htm>

- A general site about Woomera's history, heritage, attractions and future prospects:
www.ausemade.com.au/sa/destination/w/woomera.htm

The Cold War

There are over two million English-language websites about the Cold War. Here is a selection:

- Cold War Museum: www.coldwar.org
- Cold War Resources for Australian Students:
<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/digibook/824806/the-cold-war-1945-1991>
- Cold War Web Resources:
<http://www.plosin.com/beatbegins/links.htm>
- Significant Cold War events:
<https://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/korea/>
(Includes Australia's involvement in the Korean War.)
- Australia's Greatest Spy Story: <http://petrov.moadoph.gov.au/>
(One of many websites about the Petrov affair of 1954.)

Space Technology and the Space Race

- Australia in Space—A History: <http://harveycohen.net/crcss/history.html>(Also includes info about WRESAT.)
- BAE Systems corporate website: www.baesystems.com
- Blue Streak Model Rocket Kit (and much more):
www.apogeerockets.com/Blue_Streak_rocket.asp
- Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA): www.jaxa.jp
- University of Queensland's tests of scramjet technology at Woomera in 2005, in collaboration with JAXA. Information about UQ's scramjet program (called Hyshot) is at:
<https://www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2006/03/launch-facility-donated-uq-scramjet-scientific-flights>
- UK space race during the 1950s–1960s including photos and diagrams of Blue Streak and Black Knight rockets:
<http://www.armaghplanet.com/blog/blue-streak-uks-cold-war-rocket.htm> and <http://www.spaceuk.org/bstreak/bstreak.htm>
- What went wrong with England's space program? <http://www.wired.co.uk/article/why-didnt-britain-win-the-race-to-the-moon>
- WRESAT, Australia's first and only space satellite: <http://homepage.powerup.com.au/~woomera/wresat.htm>

Nurrungar and Satellite Tracking Stations

- A left-wing political criticism:
www.greenleft.org.au/back/1993/95/95p28.htm
- Early warning satellites and 'space storms' — example of a Defence Department press release:
www.defence.gov.au/media/1998/217-98.doc
- A general overview of the USA's DSP (Joint Australian-American Defence Support Program):
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint_Defense_Facility_Nurrungar

Science Fiction from the Cold War Era

This is a fascinating topic, because it fictionalises and fantasises in underlying and allegorical ways the kinds of beliefs that, for example, prompted the development of Woomera and its techno-military complex.

- *Dan Dare: Pilot of the Future* (A Cold War English science fiction comic strip serial about outer space exploration which, as a reflection of the times, began and concluded in *Eagle* magazine during roughly the same years that Britain's space program ran. Reprints of *Dan Dare* comic strip stories are available in full-colour large-format book form, published by Dragon's Dream): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dan_Dare
- Fifties: Alien Invasions and Creature Features:
<http://www.filmsite.org/titles-creatures.html>
- Science Fiction Films (scroll down to 1950s and 1960s):
www.filmsite.org/sci-fifilms.html
- 1950s: Movies TV and Society:
www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/50sbib.html

Woomera and Indigenous Australia, Health and the Environment

- Indigenous Australians and nuclear testing: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_nuclear_tests_at_Maralinga
- European Network for Indigenous Australian Rights: <http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/organisations?oid=523>
- Extensive web links:https://web.archive.org/web/20080719004540/http://www.radioactivewaste.gov.au/Rehabilitation_former_test_sites.htm
- Walter MacDougall, Native Patrol Officer:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_MacDougall
- Australian Nuclear Veterans Association: http://anva.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&catid=34

Woomera and Border Protection

Internet searches for 'Border Protection' and 'Woomera Detention Centre' produce many references including:

- Australian government border protection legislation and debate: http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bld=r5408
- Friends of the Earth media release:<http://www.foe.org.au/media-releases>
- Independent news items on unrest in Woomera detention centre (with references to many wider issues): <https://noplacforsheep.com/tag/woomera-detention-centre/>
- Law Council of Australia's views on border protection:
<https://www.lawcouncil.asn.au/lawcouncil/images/LCA-PDF/a-z-docs/Post-BorderProtectionLegislationPackage.pdf>
- Lobbyists welcome closure of Woomera detention centre:
<http://cathnews.acu.edu.au/303/76.php>

Film Studies: Documentary and Propaganda

- Definition of documentary film (contains many titles and web links): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_film
- Definition of propaganda film (contains many titles and web links): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda_film
- Extensive information about propaganda, with many links: www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/propaganda

Film and Television Programs

About Woomera (Four Corners, ABC TV, 2003. Uses video footage taken by Australian Correctional Management employees inside the Woomera Detention Centre and interviews with ACM staff in its analysis of events during the Centre's early existence. See www.abc.net.au/4corners/content/2003/20030519_woomera or www.abc.net.au/programsales/s1136686.htm)

The Atomic Café (Directors Kevin Rafferty, Jayne Loader, 1982, 90 mins. American documentary of black-and-white propaganda footage from the days of the 'duck and cover' approach to civil defence in event of a nuclear attack.)

Backs to the Blast (Director, Harry Bardwell, ABC TV, 1981, 60 mins. Documentary account of South Australia's nuclear history, including the Maralinga atomic tests.)

The Iron Giant (American animated cartoon, 1999. Beautifully presented science fiction tale about a young boy growing up in small-town America during the 1950s, pointedly dealing with the Cold War mentality of the era — a suitable movie to begin with in class, before looking at science fiction films from the era itself. See Websites section, above, for more science fiction films.)

Letters to Ali (Director Clara Law, 2004. Australian documentary film about a Melbourne family's attempts to meet a young refugee in the Port Hedland detention centre, Western Australia.)

Newsreel Nostalgia (NFSA, 1992. Video includes newsreel of 1954 Petrov affair. A study guide is also available. See www.nfsa.gov.au/learning— search for Study Guides.)

Silent Partners (Director Harry Bardwell, ABC TV, 1988, 60 mins. Documentary based on Peter Morton's book, *Fire Across the Desert*.)

A Year to Remember 1954 (Director Syd Wood, distributed by Festival. Part of a video series of Australian newsreels from 1931 to 1956.)

WELCOME TO WOOMERA

A Film Australia National Interest Program in association with Flying Carpet Films. Produced with the assistance of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Writer/Director Steve Thomas

Producers Steve Thomas, Kim Anning

Executive Producer Anna Grieve

Year 2004

Duration 55 minutes

Study guide written by Roger Stitson © NFSA

For information about Film Australia's programs, contact:

National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

Sales and Distribution | PO Box 397 Pyrmont NSW 2009

T +61 2 8202 0144 | F +61 2 8202 0101

E: sales@nfsa.gov.au | www.nfsa.gov.au



On the "greens" at the Woomera Golf Club

