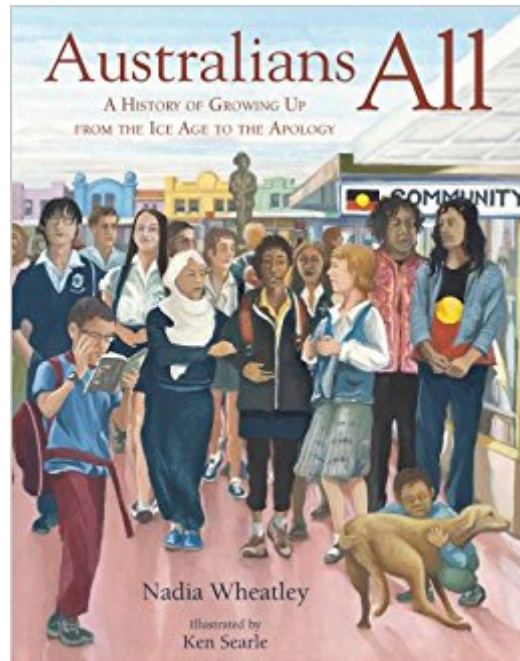




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Australians All



Synopsis

A lavish and comprehensive new history of Australia, told through the lives of children, *Australians All* tells the story of what it was like to grow up on our continent from the Ice Age to the Apology. The historical narrative is interspersed with over seventy mini-biographies and childhood accounts, including some well-known Australians such as William Barak, Ethel Turner, Eddie Mabo, and Mark Oliphant as well as many lesser-known Australians. Meticulously researched and lavishly illustrated with a combination of facsimile images including photographs, paintings, and cartoons, as well as new illustrations by Ken Searle, this groundbreaking work will be treasured by young Australians and their families.

Book Information

Hardcover: 280 pages

Publisher: Allen & Unwin (October 1, 2013)

Language: English

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #4,285,949 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #79 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Australia & Oceania #524 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Australia & Oceania

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

Customer Reviews

"In Australian histories there is a particular group whose tales and presence and concerns are rarely narrated. These are the children and adolescents. They are depicted as mute sufferers of the decisions of elders (as were the children of the Depression), helpless victims of policy (the Stolen Generations) and the children of the Second World War (of whom I was one). They appear in most writing of history as mere passive accessories to what adults do. But their stories are our stories too, and their stories are our history, and Nadia Wheatley, that great writer, tells that wide-ranging story in a way so imaginative and colourful that it would attract any young person, and make young readers feel that many of their personal struggles have been faced before, by children of the past

and present. Nadia has performed an essential service to history and the young."

â "Thomas Keneally

Nadia Wheatley writes for both adults and young people. Her award-winning books cover the genres of fiction, history, biography, and picture books, and reflect her commitment to social justice. Nadia's first book, *Five Times Dizzy*, was often described as the first multicultural children's book in this country. Ken Searlegrew up around the Cooks River, in the southwest suburbs of Sydney, where he still lives. He is best known for his large paintings in oil on canvas, depicting the suburban and industrial areas of a number of Australian cities. He has also painted the landscapes of the Western Desert and of the southern coastline. A self-taught artist, in the mid 1970s Ken Searle began regularly exhibiting works at Watters Gallery in Sydney, where he has held fifteen solo exhibitions.

I found this book whilst browsing through the Australian History section at my local public library. My first impression was to flip through the book and seriously consider buying it. And I did. This is the history book that eclipses any and every Australian history book written for children. As you read my review please understand that I am only part way through the book. Ideally I would have liked to have finished the book prior to submitting a review, but it's going to take a few months for me to get to the end. For followers of Charlotte Mason among you, this is definitely a 'living book'. Chapters span a period of tens years, with concise introductions explaining the political and social climate of the era, in an easy to understand, conversational style. Wheatley truly does a fantastic job at painting word pictures, with rich language (ie not dumbed down) and brief but memorable mini biographies that are only a page long. One can easily sit down with a mob of children and read through one or two pages in twenty minutes without losing focus. As mentioned above, the layout of the book is fantastic. The watercolour illustrations just add to it's beauty, without distracting from the written content. Additionally, it contains artwork of the era and other pertinent historical illustrations, eg. a newspaper cartoon persuading families to emigrate to the Australian colonies. It is wonderful to have suitable primary resources presented for the children to explore and pore over. Each chapter concludes with a brief timeline of events. I really do love this book. Really, truly. The author has done a fantastic job from start to finish. I am learning a lot and my children, who range from middle primary to lower middle school, can all listen and comprehend on their own level. She manages to tell the darker aspects of our history with sensitivity. However I do have some criticisms. Firstly, there is an emphasis on the negative aspects of colonisation. My intention is not to

defend the manner in which Australia was colonised, or want for a white washed version of history. I just think it is a shame that people are going to get the impression that the Colonialists and the indigenous tribes were always antagonistic towards one another. Perhaps balance comes further on in the book. I will read on and see. Secondly, I cannot give this book to my children to read on their own. Rape and sex are mentioned, as is the first Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras...and I'm only part of the way through the book. Again, I don't dismiss the truth of it, I just don't think it's appropriate to include so overtly in a children's book, particularly when there is no introductory warning. My seven year old daughter can read this book, but I don't want to have to explain what rape is, let alone sex. It was rather confronting for me. I wouldn't have minded so much if these aspects had been alluded to rather than defined as such. Call me a conservative prude, I don't care! From what I have read, this is a liberal, leftist perspective of Australian history. There will be those who love it and those like me who, whilst embracing most of it, have reservations and am disappointed by what has been omitted. But you get that with History, don't you? This book has heart and humanity, which is why I can disagree with aspects but nevertheless endorse it. yes. Buy the book. But don't let it be your only source of Australian history. I'm sure even Wheatley would agree with me on that.

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