

V.

**THE CANON, LITERARY TEXTS AND POPULAR CULTURE:
COMMANDING THE AFFECTIVE IN STUDENT TEACHERS**

i) Aims and Rationale

This chapter uses data from the survey questionnaire and focus groups to explore the nature of literary affective experiences in relation to various texts. Comparisons and contrasts between types of texts more or less conducive to affective experiences, and trends or patterns are investigated. Analyses utilise data from respondents in the PTG and STGa groups so that a focus upon literary affect *today* may be maintained. It is interesting to explore the nature of literary experience in terms of textual variables for each group, noting disparities and congruence in data trends. This will facilitate further investigation into the phenomenon and nature of the literary aesthetic affective, in light of previous findings for the PTG and STGa. Investigating affect specifically in relation to texts and categories of text, for example ‘canonical’ or ‘popular culture’, will also allow this case study chapter to probe textual capacities for affect, and relates directly to concerns illuminated by the literature review; that is, dispute around texts studied under the new NSW English syllabus and their literary value. This will provide a sound basis for investigations in Chapter VII, which focuses directly upon affect in education and English syllabi past and present.

Group dynamics have already been established in the previous chapter, as the same groups, PTG and STGa are being used for case study. Thus, there is no need to redefine these groups.

ii) Issues under Consideration

There are a number of issues to consider in relation to texts and their commanding of the phenomenon of literary affect, and in terms of specific texts and their incitement of affective experiences:

- 1) Which texts are cited as having affective capabilities?
 - Are there any trends in the types of text, e.g. Shakespeare, popular culture, adult fiction etc. that are more or less conducive to the affective experience, or more or less significant in readers' lives?
 - Which texts are cited as not providing engaging or affective experiences?
 - What elements of literary texts do participants (dis)engage with?
- 2) How do the affective experiences for certain texts manifest themselves?
- 3) What are the contrasts and comparisons between the PTG and STGa groups?
 - Are there differences or similarities between the groups in frequency of certain types of texts that do /do not evoke affect?
 - Are there differences or similarities between groups in terms of literary affective experiences?

As a logical progression from analyses in Chapter IV, a focus-down to detailed analysis of specific literary texts and their capacities for affect for each group is conducted. This section supports the previous analyses, providing specific examples, illustrating similarities and differences between groups, and imparting detailed exploration of specific textual affect. As previously stated, survey responses to questions two and three facilitate this analysis.

iii) Commanding Affect: Textual Analysis

As briefly touched upon previously in Chapter IV, question two in the questionnaire survey requires respondents to list three specific texts that they remember from adolescence that had impact (affect) upon them, and to state whether these texts were from school, or were personal choice. This analysis concentrates on specific texts cited. Subsequently, respondents are asked in question three to comment upon the ways in which these three texts affected them. Thus, this data provides examples of the affect attached to particular texts, as experienced by participants of the PTG and STGa. The data are first illustrated in the following tables, which illustrate specific texts cited and the percentage of times they were cited for each group. To investigate general trends, the 'Category' section of the chart codes the texts into the following groups:

- 1 – Contemporary Literary Texts (including children's adolescent and adult texts)
- 2 – Contemporary Popular Culture Texts (including children's adolescent and adult texts, and popular genre texts e.g. fantasy and popular media texts)
- 3 – Canonic or Classic Literature (including canonic, Shakespeare and modern classics)
- 4 – Art House Film Texts
- 5 – Contemporary Non-Fiction Texts (including autobiographies and scientific texts)

Table 5.1 Texts Cited by the PTG and STGa

<u>Text</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>PTG %</u>	<u>STGa %</u>
A Father's Promise (D. Hess)	1	0	1.5
Alana The Lioness series (T. Pierce)	1	0	1.5
American History X (T. Kaye)	2	0	1.5
At Mornington Poem (G. Harwood)	3	0	3
Austen – Emma	3	2	0
Austen – Pride and Prejudice	3	2	3
Autobiography of Ernie Dingo (E. Dingo)	5	0	1.5
Avenger (P. Ernst)	2	2	0
Babysitters Club series (A.M. Martin)	2	2	0
Brave New World (A. Huxley)	1	2	3
Briar Rose (Bros. Grimm)	1	0	1.5
Bridge to Terabithia (K. Vicarel)	1	0	1.5

Bridget Jones' Diary (H. Fielding)	2	2	0
Catcher In the Rye (J. Claro)	3	0	1.5
Chronicles of Narnia (C.S. Lewis)	1	0	1.5
Conversations With God Book 1	2	2	0
Diary of Anne Frank (A. Frank)	3	0	1.5
Edward the Emu (S. Knowles)	1	2	0
Green Monkey Dreams (I. Carmody)	1	0	1.5
Harry Potter series (J.K. Rowling)	2	2	1.5
Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy (D. Adams)	2	0	1.5
Horse and His Boy (C.S. Lewis)	1	0	1.5
I Am David (A. Holm)	1	0	1.5
I, Safiya (S. Hussaini Tungar Tudu)	5	2	0
I Want To Go Home (G.Korman)	1	2	0
Jessica (B. Courtney)	2	2	0
Jillaroo (D. McCall)	2	2	0
John Donne Poetry	3	0	1.5
Life Is Beautiful Film (R. Benigni)	4	0	1.5
Little House on the Prairie (L. Wilder)	1	2	0
Looking For Alibrandi (M. Marchetta)	1	16	6
Lord of the Flies (W. Golding)	3	2	1.5
Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock (T.S. Eliot)	3	0	1.5
Maestro (P. Goldsworthy)	1	0	1.5
Mediator series (M. Cabot)	2	0	1.5
Nancy Drew (C.G. Keene)	1	0	1.5
Pink Balloons (B. McGregor)	5	2	0
Rabbit Proof Fence (J. Marsden)	5	0	1.5
Rexcellent, The Adventures of Pea & Bean (P. Ball)	2	0	1.5
Red Curtain Trilogy Films	4	0	1.5
Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner (S.T. Coleridge)	3	0	1.5
Rowan of Rin (E. Rodda)	1	0	1.5
Shakespeare – A Midsummer Nights Dream	3	0	1.5
Shakespeare – Hamlet	3	2	3
Shakespeare – King Lear	3	0	1.5
Shakespeare – Macbeth	3	5	0
Shakespeare – Merchant of Venice	3	0	3
Shakespeare – Much Ado About Nothing	3	0	1.5
Shakespeare – Othello	3	0	1.5
Shakespeare – Romeo and Juliet	3	2	1.5
Shakespeare - Taming of the Shrew	3	0	1.5
The 50 th Gate (M.R. Baker)	5	2	0
The Bluest Eye (T. Morrison)	1	2	0
The Bronze Horseman (P. Simons)	2	0	1.5
The Children of the Earth series (J.Auel)	1	2	0
The Club (D. Williamson)	1	2	0
The Crucible series (S. Douglas)	1	0	1.5

The Eye of the World (R. Jordan)	2	0	1.5
The Faraway Tree (E. Blyton)	1	5	0
The Hobbit (Tolkein)	1	0	6
The Lady of Shallott (A. Tennyson)	3	0	1.5
The Science Encyclopaedia	5	2	0
The Trouble With Angels (J. Trahey)	2	0	1.5
The Witches (R.Dahl)	1	2	0
To Kill A Mockingbird (H. Lee)	3	0	1.5
Tomorrow When the War Began series (J. Marsden)	1	9	9
Tyrant (M. Brand)	2	0	1.5
Unmentionable Series (P. Jennings)	1	5	0
Unzipped	1	0	1.5
Who Sank the Boat? (P. Allen)	1	2	0
Wind in the Willows (E. Miles)	1	0	1.5
Wuthering Heights (E. Bronte)	3	0	4
No Response	-	7	1.5

The response list is quite extensive and extremely varied, which is testament to the diverse and complicated nature of literary affect. To draw out any trends or patterns more clearly and to investigate the balance between affective experiences derived from classical or canonic texts as compared to popular culture texts for each group, categories of literary texts that have incited affective experiences are illustrated in pie charts. These provide clear illustrations of contrast and comparisons between the groups:

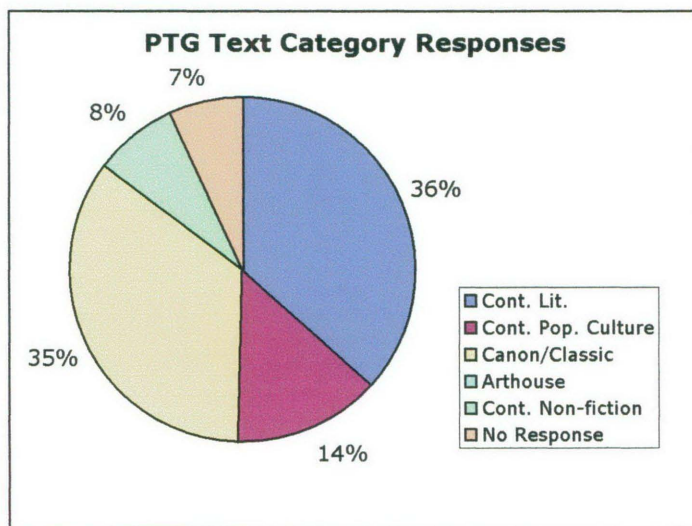
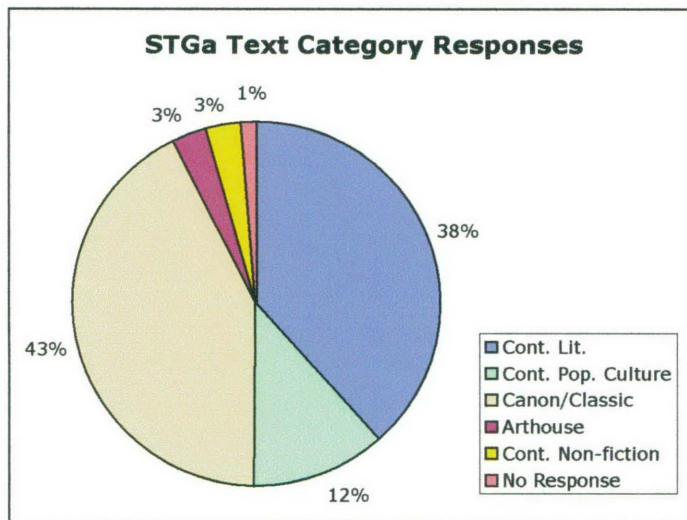


Figure 5.1 PTG Text Responses

For the PTG, contemporary literary texts and canonical or classical text categories attract the highest percentage of responses. Contemporary popular culture texts, in stark comparison, illustrate a significantly lower per cent, dropping from 35 % for canon /classic texts, to only 14% popular culture texts.



Results for the STGa illustrate a similar trend to that of the PTG, with contemporary literary texts and canonic /classic literature categories being privileged. Again, percentage of responses for popular culture texts drops significantly, to 12%. This trend is significant in both groups.

Figure 5.2 STGa Text Responses

Data in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 illustrate certain trends to note at the outset:

- Firstly it is extremely interesting to note that the majority of texts cited (with the exception of a few film texts) are reading texts. Although participants were not limited to written literature, the vast majority nevertheless found that impact or affect was primarily derived from written texts.
- Shakespeare texts find significant place in participants' affective experiences in both groups. From the PTG, nine per cent of participants cite Shakespeare texts, whilst in the STGa this figure is even more considerable at fifteen per cent.

There still however remains the question of the affective experience, and how it has manifested itself in relation to cited literature. In the survey, question three asked respondents to comment upon how the three texts cited affected them. These responses were coded for each of the three texts. A general analysis of texts one, two and three in terms of their coded literary affect was first conducted for each group, to look at any patterns in affect derived from these texts.

iv) Commanding Affect: The Nature of Affective Experiences

The following table illustrates in categorical terms the nature of affective experiences derived from texts cited by participants. As shown, there are a variety of affective dimensions.

Table 5.2 How Texts Cited Affected PTG Participants

<u>Category</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Did not Respond	22
Provided me with Striking Insights into Reality	13.3
I Enjoyed Reading	11
Identity formation – Related to Characters	9
Offered me Alternative Perspectives	8.6
Helped me deal with Personal Situation	6.7
Affected my Religious Views	6.7
Shaped my future Career / Recreation Decisions	6.7
Identity formation – Related to Themes	4.6
Challenged my Social Constructs and Understanding	4.6
Increased my self esteem	2.3
Provoked my Interest in Theme / Topic	2.3
Created Passion within me	2.3

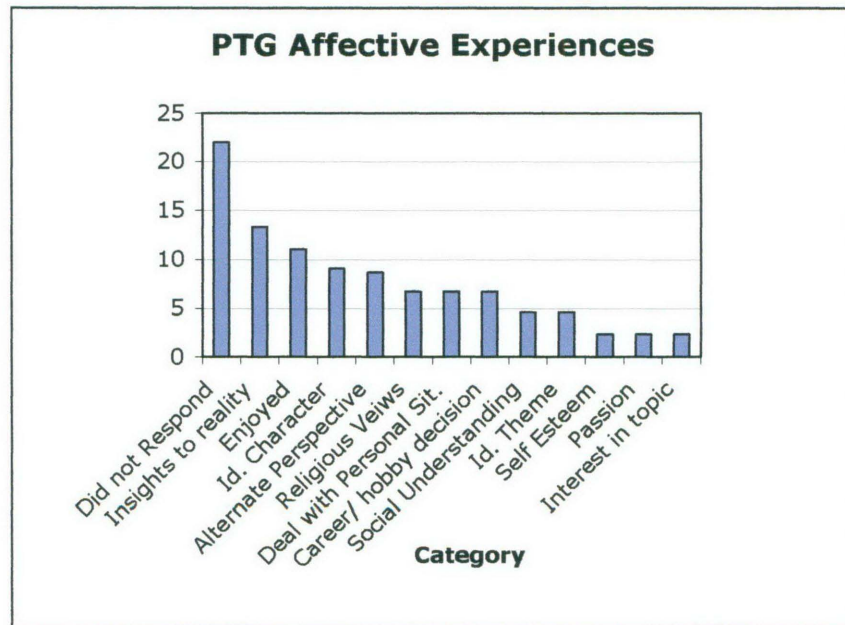


Figure 5.3 Bar Chart Illustrating PTG Affective Experiences

Although there was a high percentage of no response for this question, the table and chart illustrate a bias in the affective experiences of participants in the PTG, towards ‘provided striking insights into reality’ (13.3 per cent) and ‘enjoyed reading’ (eleven per cent) categories. The following investigations draw upon qualitative data in the form of direct quotes from participants, to unwrap the nature of these experiences further.

- Provided me with Striking Insights into Reality – Responses falling into this category demonstrated literary affect through learning, where literary texts have provided opportunity to become aware of and explore issues and others’ realities, to which respondents would not otherwise have access:

Pink Balloons This was a text I read in Y6, about a little girl who had AIDS. It influenced me because I didn’t know about this issue – it opened my eyes emotionally. (Female, completed HSC 2002)

The Bluest Eye Opened my eyes to racist views in the world and the impacts that this can have on the individual. This manifested in the way I view the world.
(Male, completed HSC 2003)

Responses also reflected the ability of literary texts to portray reality, experiences and feelings, past and present, to provide others with understanding and insights through affective engagement:

Lord of the Flies This parable of the human race offered insights into spiritual beliefs, and gave metaphors of society that stay with me.
(Female, completed HSC 2001)

Little House on the Prairie Made me realise how easy we have it in today's' society...
(Female, completed HSC 2002)

- Enjoyed Reading – Enjoyment of literary texts relates to the aesthetic dimension affect, where participants find pleasure or satisfaction in their engagement with text. This 'enjoyment' ranged in its capacities and qualitative responses varied, for example, the first quote below highlights enjoyment and relation to the text, whereas the second quote highlights 'love' or pleasure in relation to characters in the text:

Tomorrow When the War Began I really enjoyed, as I could really relate to the text.
(Female, completed HSC 2003)

The Witches This was a vivid reading experience (for Year 3), and the strong characters gave me a love of reading.
(Female, completed HSC 2001)

Exploration now turns to the STGa, analysing these data in the same manner as PTG responses to offer insights, comparison and contrast in texts and resulting affective experiences.

Table 5.3 How Texts Cited Affected STGa Participants

<u>Category</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Identity formation – Related to Characters	14.3
I Enjoyed Reading	10
Aided understanding by information and empathy	8.8
Offered me Alternative Perspectives	8.8
Ignited my imagination / creativity	8.8
Allowed me self-expression	7.5
Did not Respond	7.3
Helped me deal with Personal Situation	6
Identity formation – Related to Themes	4.5
Challenged my Social Constructs and Understanding	4.5
Provided striking insights into Reality	4.5
Increased my self esteem	3
Provoked my Interest in Theme / Topic	3
Created Passion within me	3
Shaped my future career / recreation decisions	3
Affected Religious views	1.5
Offered escape	1.5

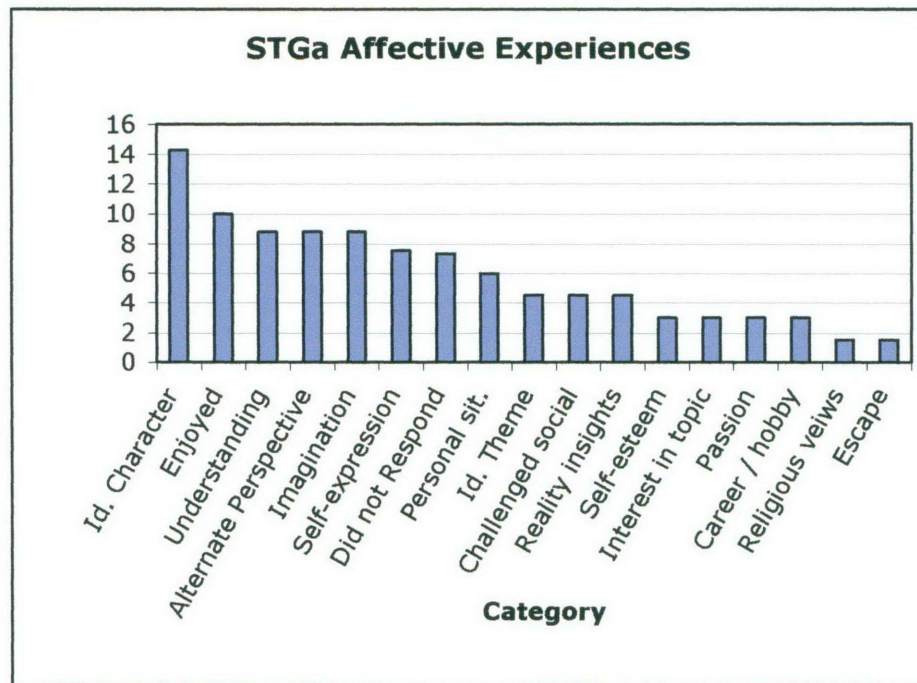


Figure 5.4 Bar Chart Illustrating STGa Affective Experiences

Categories attracting the highest per cent responses for the STGa differ from those for the PTG, illustrating distinct affective experiences for each group. This supports previous analyses, which demonstrate the differing nature of literary affect and affective and aesthetic experiences between the groups.

Data analysis highlights 'Identification, related to characters' and 'Enjoyment' categories as the most experienced affective dimensions, with fourteen and ten per cent respectively. The identification with characters category abounds with qualitative data that links affective experiences with personal development, emotional and cognitive. Such responses are testament to the ability of the literary to provoke affect that facilitates identity creation and empathy between respondent and textual characters; and learning or gaining understanding through provision of alternative perspectives:

The Lady of Shalott I learnt about love, a woman's role, tragedy and adventure, and companionship from the characters.

(Female, completed HSC 2000)

Wuthering Heights The strong characterisation in *Wuthering Heights* intrigued me and got me interested in literature again after the middle years slump.

(Female, completed HSC 2003)

The Bronze Horseman For the most part, the text affected me emotionally as the characters became friends.

(Female, completed HSC 2001)

Diary of Anne Frank The character encouraged me to re-evaluate what was important in life and develop my own identity...

(Female, completed HSC 2002)

In comparison to the PTG, need for enjoyment attracts the second highest percentage of responses. Enjoyment as an affective experience is indicative specifically of the aesthetic dimension of affect, where respondents are more affected and engaged with literary texts that give them pleasure. Again, the STGa has emphasised aesthetic affect as an essential element in pursuit of the phenomenon of literary affect. Qualitative response further support this notion, offering accounts such as:

Harry Potter I loved! It ignited my imagination and really made me sympathise with him, so much so that I want to go to magic school!

(Female, completed HSC 2005)

Much Ado About Nothing Made me love Shakespeare, it's so funny, I really appreciated Shakespeare after that! (Female, completed HSC 2002)

John Donne poetry Was the true cause of the 'sea change' of my attitude to literature because it was the first time I... truly enjoyed reading and sharing with others... (Male, completed HSC 2003)

Referring back to the comparative pyramid tables for the PTG and STGa on page thirty-one of the previous chapter, which illustrate responses for what is important to participants in literary texts in a hierarchical manner, further comparisons may be made. The PTG, whose affective experiences record 'provide insights into reality' as attracting the highest percentage, place the 'imaginative' feature as most important to them in literary texts. At first glance this may seem somewhat of a paradox, however, closer investigation of the 'imagined' in literary texts, for example in fantasy literature, illuminates the ability of imagined or created to offer reality, presenting it in such a way as to compel further understanding and engagement. Indeed it was Aristotle's proclamation that, 'the friend of wisdom is also the friend of myth' (Aristotle, quoted in Bettelheim, 1991:35).

The imagined or created hold reflections of 'universal truths' and understanding. Far from offering fleeting escapism from the reality of the modern world, the imagined in literary texts in fact deals with realities on many levels. Events and situations often have significant relation to reality, offering alternative worlds to the reader. Alternative selves, lives, worlds and adventures supplement daily experience, making it more interesting. The fact that the PTG highlighted 'imagination' as being most important to them in literary texts, and that the majority of their affective experiences 'provide insights into reality' is thus significant. It illuminates the affective experience of for this group as being achieved primarily through imaginative literature, which in turn produces an intellectual affect; that is, an 'insight' into reality or the world. This is an external or

'worldly' affect, which has capacity to develop learning and understanding, and incite changes in attitude, thought or perspectives. Again, the PTG have highlighted the affective experience in particular in relation to learning or understanding about the world. Here, it is evidentially best achieved in reader connection (real insights) through disconnection (the imagined). As such, these responses suggest that reality and insights must be gained through lifting oneself out of life, into the imagined or created, and that learning or 'insights' occur externally or worldly. Such is the nature of the primary affective phenomenon for the PTG.

In contrast to the PTG, the STGa, whose affective experiences pertain most commonly to 'identity formation, related to characters', place 'reflects personal experiences' as the important feature of literary texts. These two features go hand-in-hand and all emphasis is placed upon the personal within the literary. For the STGa, it is the internal or personal that provokes affective experiences and attracts importance through reader identification with characters. This is a comment upon the ability of the affective phenomenon to operate internally and consequently, individually according to ones aesthetic. The affective dimension is that of the psyche, where affect operates on an internal level, with capacity to create and develop identity, to move emotions and to incite understanding or result in cognition. In contrast to the worldly outer affective dimension privileged by the PTG, occurrence of affect in the STGa pertains rather to the personal inner. This reflects previous findings in this chapter and acknowledges differences in the occurrence of the affective experiences for the two case study groups.

v) Final Comments

Although the question of whether literary affect is alive or dead produces evidence that it is very much alive, there are differences in the phenomenon that have been extremely interesting to explore and document. These insights have also briefly illuminated the nature of the literary affective aesthetic in relation to primary and secondary student teachers. As stark as contrasts between the groups are, one may subsequently question

whether the nature of literary experience, as determined for each group, in turn affects the decision to teach at primary or secondary school level. Where primary teachers have a commitment to a vast array of topics and knowledge that are by no means limited to English, secondary student-teachers commit to subject English above all other subjects. To juxtapose this with findings for each group in their literary affective engagements, the PTG, who will be teaching a wide variety of topics, value the learning and understanding or intuitive in literary texts. Their affect has primarily privileged experiences that have offered learning or worldly insights. In contrast the STGa, whose focus will be solely subject English, require and prize the internal and personal in literary texts. This deeper penetration into the psyche and individual seems to better connect the reader with the literary, and thus it may be assumed that this factor proves significant in the decision to specialise in subject English; and indeed this assumption is also supported in data analyses in Chapter IV.

VI.

AFFECT AND AESTHETICS: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE NATURE

AESTHETICS AND AFFECT IN STUDENT TEACHERS

i) Introduction

As previously explored in the Literature Review (Chapter II), certain scholars are welcoming the return, or emergence, of a new form of aesthetics for the literary. This analytical chapter is a closer exploration of what this new aestheticism looks like in the student teacher groups in this research study. The chapter explores the nature of aesthetic affective experiences in further depth, concentrating primarily upon qualitative data from focus groups, which are richer in content than rigid survey responses. Discussions in the focus groups were largely controlled and directed by participants, and as such these data reflect what participants *really* want to say about literary affect and their engagement and experiences. Focus groups were not conditioned by responding to set questions and discussion topics were largely flexible. However, the chapter commences by exploring some data from the survey questionnaire in relation to high and low modality responses, and responses which look inner or outer in relation to the question of specific affective experiences. It is necessary to first qualify what is meant by ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ and ‘high’ and ‘low’ modality terms attached to participant responses. The table on the following page defines these terms for purposes of study.

Table 6.1 Definitions of Applied Analytical Terms

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Inner	Responses that look inner pertain to the psyche, the emotional, thought or spiritual in the participant. Such responses are indicative of internal change, or challenge to the participant's being. The affect manifests internally, linking to the participant's individual core or spirit.
Outer	Responses that attract the label 'outer' are in direct opposition to those inner reflections. These responses pertain to the world outside the individual's personal being, and often mention learning or understanding about the world or society whilst being individually detached. These responses evidence affective experiences that are received, but do not touch the grain of the individual's being. As such they are not unique <i>events</i> but rather are affective experiences of text as detached from the reader.
High Modality and Low Modality	These terms are applied to individual words or phrases used by the participant to describe affective experiences. High modality words are employed to express more profound affective experiences, where participants might, for example, use 'love' 'life changing', or 'awe', in contrast to low modality words, which are less passionate and may include 'interesting' 'made me think' and 'challenge'. The tone between high and low modality words is different, where high modality words intensify the comment and low modality words simply maintain the integrity of the comment.

By extracting case study examples from the discrete groups in this study (PTG and STGa), analyses explore affective experiences in light of these terms. Additionally, analyses introduce and explore responses from mature participants who sat their English HSC *prior* to the 1999 changes. This offers comparison with those participants who studied the new 1999 NSW English HSC and commences initial examination of the third

case study group in the study. This group will be treated to further analyses in the following chapter, which will also deal with the group's dynamics. Here however, it is suffice to simply introduce the group, as the nature of analyses in this chapter is purely qualitative, based on case studies of individual comments; this non-statistical treatment of data does not require exploration of collective group dynamics. This pre-1999 group in this chapter is referred to as 'PRE'. Participant comments explored will be coded according to sex, case study groups, primary or secondary study and specific year HSC was sat, as demonstrated in the following legend:

<u>Code</u>	<u>Label</u>
M	Male
F	Female
PRE	HSC sat prior to 1999
POST	HSC sat post 1999
P	Primary student teacher
S	Secondary student teacher
e.g. 1982, 1999, 2002	Specific year HSC was sat

Thus for example, the code 'M PRE S 1992' would denote a male participant in the pre-1999 case study group, who is studying to be a secondary school English teacher and who sat his HSC in 1992. Coding also illustrates participant comments in terms of being 'inner' or 'outer' and 'high-' or 'low modality', by highlighting relevant phrases or words in quotes taken from participant responses. The following colour key demonstrates the coding strategy employed:

Colour Coding Key

	Looks Inner		High Modality
	Looks Outer		Low Modality

ii) A Closer Look at Aesthetic Affect: The Survey Data

Exploration of survey responses highlighted various strands of affect occurring in participants' literary experiences. Where the affect produced looked outward, the primary focus was acquisition of learning and understanding about the world and humanity. Literary texts provoking such responses related to learning through the literary, where respondents' affective experiences resulted in alterations in attitude, thought or psyche, mainly due to being offered alternative viewpoints and understanding. Such responses were present in all case study groups, although were more prevalent in the PTG, whose members had particularly high regard for teaching and learning through the literary:

...I believe that a sound knowledge and varied experiences regarding literature enhance learning all round. (F POST P 2001)

Literature offers knowledge, skills and lessons. So much of the essence of humanity lies in literature. (F POST P 2003)

The Bluest Eye opened my eyes to racist views in the world and the impacts of this. (M POST P 2003)

I enjoy reading stories that extend me in thoughts and concepts. (M POST P 2003)

Reading literature always makes me evaluate my life and evokes thoughts about the lives of others...literature allows people to become more informed about the world and themselves, giving the tools to think critically and informatively. (F POST P 2002)

The above responses highlight primary student teacher affective experiences that look outer, which are expressed through low modality words and phrases. They demonstrate literary affect through learning, where literary texts have provided opportunity to become aware of and explore issues in others' realities, to which respondents would not otherwise have access. Participants in the STGa and PRE groups also illustrate such affective experiences. However, responses from these two groups that look outer are intrinsically linked to statements that suggest the affective experience simultaneously looks inner. Moving beyond an awareness that literary affect produces knowledge and understanding, these responses demonstrate application of learning to personal being, which is intrinsically altered. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

Literature helps us to decipher but also escape our world... it is hugely important in securing lifelong learning. (F POST S 2003)

April Fools Day by Bryce Courtney was a personal reassurance that other people experience the same situations and react in the same ways. It challenged my perceptions of 'normal' and 'right and wrong'. (F POST S 2002)

Reading many Aboriginal texts introduced me to a world that I could not access in suburban Sydney. As a result I moved to central Australia in 1987. (F PRE S 1982)

The literature I read is ultimately affirming in some way of humanity as a whole... these acts of creation psychologically awe me (M PRE S 1990)

Responses from the PRE and POST Secondary student teacher participants highlight the interrelationship between *outer* learning affective experiences, and the *inner* application of this affect, which in turn has produced unique and individual affective experiences. This is in contrast to responses from POST Primary student teacher participants, whose statements simply acknowledge affect in relation to the outer learning dimension. In addition to this, secondary student teachers from the PRE and POST groups tend to employ more high modality words and phrases to describe their affective experiences, suggesting a more penetrative affective experience going to the core of individuals to draw out responses including words such as, ‘awe’, ‘escape’ and ‘ultimately affirming’.

Where responses highlighted affect that looked inner, there was a prevalence of high modality words, especially in the secondary student teacher groups (both PRE and POST), whose participants demonstrated the most amount of ‘inner’ affective experiences. Responses that looked inner dealt primarily with identification, personal love of the literary, and escape into the imagined. Over all the groups, ‘escapism’ is mentioned sixteen times; ‘identification with characters’ is mentioned twenty-one times, and a ‘love’ of certain literary texts is testified thirty times. However, although these themes were extracted, the range of responses nevertheless illuminated the unique and unlimited nature of personal literary affect and aestheticism, and its longevity in contemporary student teacher case study groups. This remains true even for the POST Primary student teacher group, who demonstrated the least amount of inward affect:

I love reading and relating to the characters in books. I really enjoy being wrapped up in a book and looking into the lives of characters and reflecting them to my own life experiences. (F POST P 2002)

I love it when a book sucks you in, you can't put it down and it consumes your day, linking to your emotions. (F POST P 2003)

For the two POST Secondary student teacher groups, comments of this nature were even more emphatic and diverse, and elaborated on specific texts:

Harry Potter completely ignited my imagination and really made me empathise with him, so much so that I really want to go to magic school!
(F POST S 2005)

Having experienced a death of a friend myself, *Hamlet* allowed me to explore the nature of life and death, and not feel alone in my grief.
(F POST S 2002)

[I read] *Looking For Alibrandi* at a time where a great change was occurring; it mirrored my experiences and generally moved me to tears... this kind of literature made me feel more comfortable in my own skin.
(F POST S 2002)

John Donne's poetry was the true cause of the sea change of my attitude... because I truly enjoyed reading and sharing it with others from all backgrounds. I could not list in my lifetime what I have drawn from such literature, and music! They expose weaknesses, make us stronger people and... make us worldlier.
(M POST S 2003)

Indeed, this ascertation that literary texts 'make us stronger people' is echoed in a number of responses in the POST Secondary student teacher group, whose participants also call upon literary texts that have given strength in tough times of identity crisis (F POST S

2001) and have 'kept me sane when I thought the world was falling down on me' (F POST S 2002). The unique and penetrative nature of literary affect that looks inner is thus powerfully evidenced, especially through high modality expressions, which are testament to the depth of literary affect and its authority over individuals. This conclusion remains true in analysis of PRE group responses, whose affective and aesthetic literary experiences are equally as exceptional:

The Book of John was the first time I read the Bible and realised how affecting it was – it was a very spiritual time for me... Haruki Murakami's *Dance, Dance, Dance* still encourages me when I feel stuck or lost. (M PRE S 1979)

[I read texts by] Ayn Rand and it was a period of character building for myself; I could identify with the female heroine in each [text] and I took on the aspects of their personalities that I needed to help build my own... they helped me to survive and build my own strong character and belief system. (F PRE S 1986)

Catch 22 left me completely emotionally drained by its frustrations but equally laughing because of its humour. (M PRE S 1971)

Literature has helped me to make sense of the greyness in our own moral lives. (M PRE S 1975)

Another theme that pronounced itself was that of literary engagement as personal *experience*, rather than being merely received or absorbed by readers. Collectively, the groups' responses highlighted this literary 'experience' twelve times, often employing extremely high modality words and phrases, as well as self-confessed 'grandiose' statements. Literary engagement as an event or experience is evident in the following quotes, and relevant phrases are underlined:

Literature is an experience that can provide solace, comfort... It is ultimately affirming in some way of humanity as a whole. I'm not usually given to grandiose statements like this, but it is in some way (M PRE S 1990)

It is hard to qualify the impact [literary texts] have had on me. I love the stories and being transported by them into an experience. (F PRE S 1988)

Literature has provided me a path that has led to many wonderful new experiences! (F POST S 2003)

I love reading, I read EVERYTHING! I love letting my imagination run wild when I read, I love being in the worlds of books. (F POST S 2001)

I love reading stories about people and other times and situation, countries, places and ideas that I would never experience other than through books. (M POST S 2002)

Literature has been a huge part of my life... I have the experience of imaginative worlds. (F POST P 2003)

As demonstrated in this qualitative analysis of a variety of survey responses, literary affect in the student teacher groups is individually unique, and although certain themes are ascertainable, the contexts of these themes are, again, personal. The nature of the literary aesthetic affective experience is inherently indefinable, and one finds the need to portray a wide variety of responses not to decode an ultimate conclusion or topic, but rather to illustrate the varied and commanding multitude of individual literary affective experiences. To conclude this section that has explored survey data, the following table highlights some additional comments by participants worth noting to further capture the extent of affective experiences, and that serve as testimonies to the powerful capabilities of literary affect:

Table 6.2 Final Survey Comments on Literary Affect

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Comments</u>
F POST S 2001	I found peace in Pierce's <i>The Lioness</i> series
F POST S 2002	Without literature my life would be dull and lifeless
F POST S 2002	Literature is linked to my personal being, it is my passion
F POST S 2002	I turn to certain books for my comfort
F POST S 2001	The characters in my books become my friends
F POST S 2001	I express myself through literature. It makes me feel empowered, I can't imagine not writing – I wouldn't feel whole if I didn't
F PRE S (yr. not stated)	Literature helps to tame the wild beast within

Having explored survey data, analyses turn to focus group data, to try and expand on and offer more depth to the nature of aesthetics and literary affect. As previously mentioned, analyses are qualitative, however, certain themes have been identified and coded accordingly. Responses from the focus groups maintain the integrity of explorations of survey responses, however, the profoundness of responses is heightened, as the chapter analyses unfold and journey deeper into the catacombs of personal literary affective and aesthetic experiences.

iii) A Closer Look at Aesthetic Affect: The Focus Group Data

Before analyses commence, it is necessary to acknowledge that only secondary student teachers (from both POST and PRE groups) participated in focus group interviews. There are no data from primary student teachers, and therefore this group is redundant in this section of study. Data collected from the secondary student teachers, however, was fascinating and offered much insight into aestheticism and literary affect, affirming once again that aesthetic and affective qualities in literary texts are very much alive.

Although it was necessary to conduct two separate focus group interviews, the groups are not, and it was not intended that the groups were, comparable in their constitution. Two separate groups were called because of external limitations; some participants studied internally whilst others studied externally at the university, which meant participants were available on campus at different times of the year. Also, it was agreed that groups would be kept to a limit of eight participants, to encourage richness of data and maximum contribution from all individuals. The groups were established as case studies of individual's affective experiences. Analyses continue with the coding system that identifies individual characteristics (i.e. F POST S 2001, refer to page 125). Over the two focus groups, there were ten participants, three of whom sat the HSC post-1999 and seven of whom sat the HSC prior to 1999. Interesting data from these individuals is documented in this section. However, in order to further analyses, there is first consideration of Thomson's (1987:360) 'Response to Literature Developmental Model', which is illustrated on the following page. Thomson's model maps a progressive trajectory of responses to literature, allowing the placement of subjective participant data against a theoretical approach.

<u>Process Stages: Kinds of Satisfaction</u>	<u>Degree of Intensity of Interest</u>		<u>Degree of Sophistication of Response</u>		<u>Process Strategies</u>
	Weak Passive	Strong Active	Simple and Rudimentary	Developed and Subtle	
<i>Requirement for satisfaction at all Stages: enjoyment and elementary understanding</i>					
1. Unreflective interest in action	←————→		←————→		(a) Rudimentary mental images (stereotypes from film /television) (b) Predicting what might happen next in the short term
2. Empathising	←————→		←————→		(c) Mental images of affect (d) Expectations about characters
3. Analogising	←————→		←————→		(e) Drawing on the repertoire of personal experiences, making connections between characters and one's own life
4. Reflecting on significance of events (theme) and behaviour (distanced evaluation of characters)	←————→		←————→		(f) Generating expectations about alternative possible long-term outcomes (g) Interrogating the text, filling in gaps (h) formulating puzzles, enigmas, accepting hermeneutic challenges

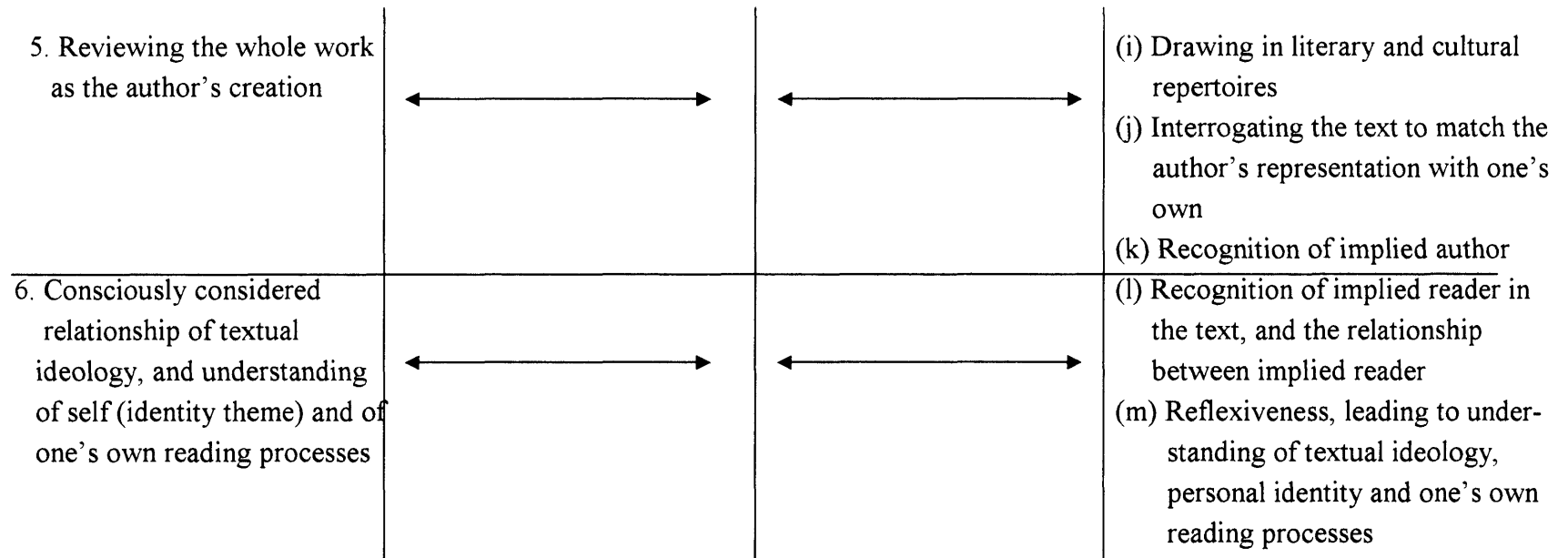


Figure 6.1 Thompson's Response to Literature: Developmental Model (Thomson, 1987:360)

The following data analyses draw upon Thomson's (1987) model, illuminating the various theoretical stages of literary development whilst providing valuable insights into the specific reality of literary affect and aesthetics. Discussions in focus group interviews centred about a set of very flexible issues (Appendix Three), which intended to further probe questioning from the survey. However, as previously stated in the methodological approaches in Chapter III, participants were free to lead and move discussions to areas they wished to explore; it was thus presumed that individuals would recall their most affective experiences.

The 'kinds of satisfaction' exhibited by participants in the focus group data span all categories (1-6) of the Developmental Model (Thomson, 1987:360). Such data illustrate the individual development of sophistication of response to literature, which has produced affective literary experiences. As response grows more mature, case study responses highlight the congruent movement of affect, which broadens and deepens in the individual. For example, in one recount of affective experiences that were derived from engagement with William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, the participant vividly reveals the progressive nature of his ongoing experience:

When I was at school, I really enjoyed *Lord of the Flies* and I still like, it still interests me, today. I read it when I was sixteen and at that time it was just good to experience a book that didn't dull anything and was very raw...different to what I was used to. Now I still enjoy it, every time I read it I find something new that makes me think of its possibilities and usually is revealing about human nature and how society works. It kind of shaped my literature path, I continue to seek and enjoy raw literature that doesn't mask life. Like, I'm trying to resolve things in my head and work things out, and *Lord of the Flies* does too, I mean the characters, but also the book... it never really finds resolve because of the death and human weaknesses it exposes.

(M POST S 2003)

As illustrated by the above data, progressive affect is evident. Experience recalled by the participant moves along a trajectory, which can be mapped quite easily alongside Thomson's Model. However, data also illustrates that the stages (1-6) of Thomson's Model need not occur in sequence (thus the attainment of any type of satisfaction is not dependent upon its precursor) and can in fact occur multiple times. The following diagram illustrates these data conclusions for the case study example, where the numbers 1-6 reflect the process stages in Thomson's Model.

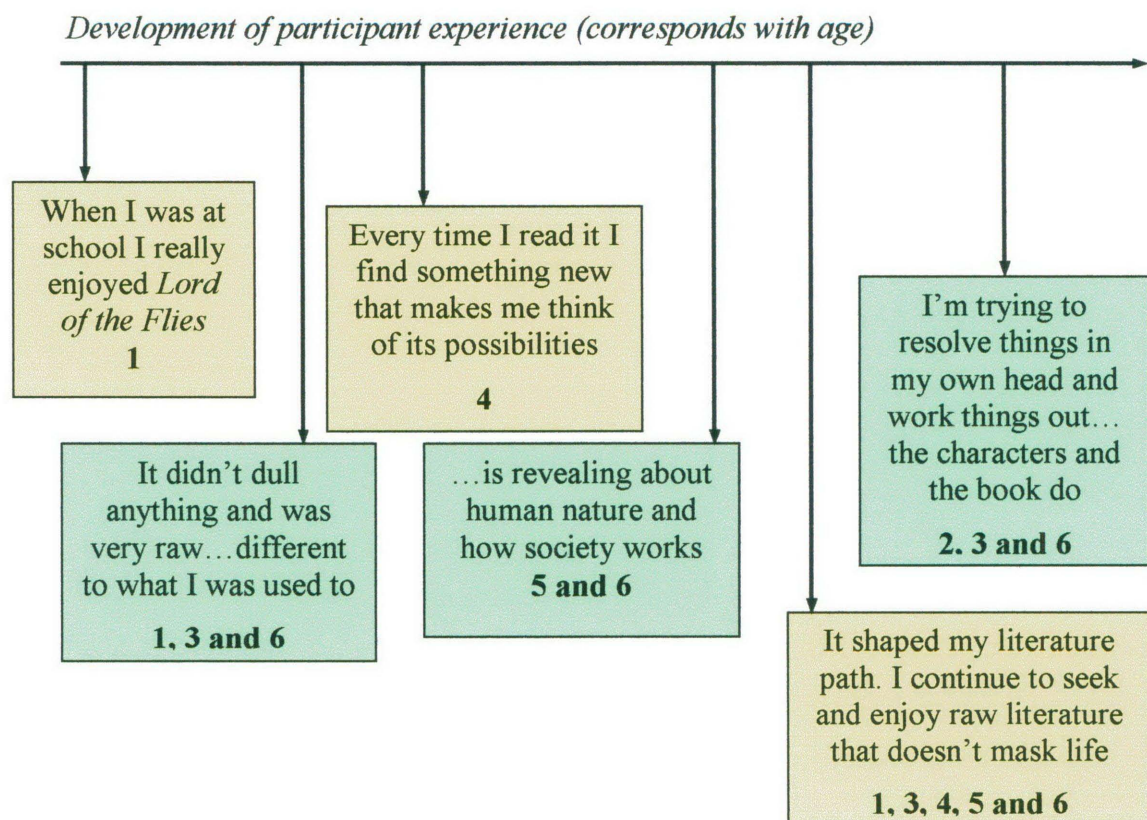






Figure 6.2 Diagrammatic Representation of case study response imposed onto Thomson's Developmental Model (1987:360)

As illustrated, the case study response can be easily transposed into Thomson's process stages, offering practical insights to support the theoretical model. As previously noted however, the affective progression is not linear through each stage, which indicates the fluid nature of literary affective experiences where the reader remains receptive of various affect throughout their engagements with and reflections on the text. Data from other participants may be similarly corresponded to Thomson's model, as exhibited in the following response:

I was probably under twelve years old and I was heavily into films. We watched a Hayley Mills film and I immediately became a big fan of everything she did. It kind of began a love affair with film that lasted all my life, just seeing one movie like that that I matched to my own life. *Tiger Bay* really affected me as well and gave me a deep love and respect for the genre, which I'm really happy about. It was quite sad and I think I cried for the first time at a movie...it was so powerful and I identified with the character, I filled the story into my own life...I was the youngest of four sisters and Hayley Mills could have been any one of my sisters, so I felt a bonding with her. I took the story, the ideology I suppose, for myself...the characters were English, so am I... they immigrated to New Zealand like I did...it really connected to me. (F PRE S year not specified)

The two above case study data respond to the question of literary affect by recalling four essential details, which in this and the majority of other focus group responses, present as primary thoughts for participants when considering literary affect. These details are: the text(s), the affect, the reason(s) why it was affective, and the result(s) of the affective experience. The presence of these details in most participant responses indicates that, in deep affective engagements, the participant experiences and actively acknowledges these key elements. The following data illustrate this conclusion, using the legend below to highlight the four elements.

Legend

-  Texts
-  The Affect
-  Why the text was affective
-  Result of the affective experience (how has the participant changed?)

I really enjoyed seeing *Edward Scissorhands* and in year 11 we did *Apocalypse Now*. At that time I was listening to a lot of that kind of music, which highlighted the dark side of human journey, like *Rage Against the Machine*, *Nine Inch Nails*, that kind of stuff, so I was kind of going down that kind of darker side of human nature, and it just really appealed to me. I also saw *American History X* around that time and that was another movie that really appealed to me... again going along with that, just that raw reality that I enjoyed. Not just movies have that raw reality but they are really well directed and really filmatic in the way they convey those kinds of messages. They made me observe and think about humanity and the struggle we face, not only in the world but within ourselves and coming to terms with who we are, and how we fit into the world... these texts showed how things can lead to dark places and events, where we have to choose a path.

(M POST S 2003)

Texts help you to decipher what is important in life. *American Beauty* challenges you to consider life a lot. Salinger also, a lot of his short stories are geared towards examination of capitalist society and people's expectations and the pressure it puts on the individual. When you're a teenager, you're considering what is important to you and these texts offer different spins – a different perspective – that goes some way to influencing attitudes in personal life. *American Beauty* definitely gives you something to think about and makes you consider what is important to you towards your family. (F POST S 2002)

Such affective experiences that provoke the reader's awareness of these four elements manifest in complete alterations to character, which is cognitively exhibited. As one participant recalls:

Oh, for me it's *Bridget Jones' Diary* – all the way! That book was just great, I loved it. Her attitude towards life is so dramatic, and I was in year nine and I also became extremely dramatic [laughs]. Life was very...drama, drama, drama all the way it was so funny. I read it with a friend, she had the book and we'd sort of read a chapter and then swap really quickly so we could read it at the same time. We were probably the two most ridiculous people in school for about a month, just *Bridget Jones* crazy! The language is great... she's such a girlie character, like we all were, and something so small would happen but it'd be a huge tragedy, then something terrible would happen and she was, really flippant, then it'd be over in a second...it is very much the way year nine girls are...but I used to be really shy and after that I wasn't, and am still completely silly! (F POST S 2003)

As illustrated, these four components form responses regarding literary affective experiences. Through focus group interviewing, participants were evidently able to expand their responses, producing statements that reflect penetrative and lasting literary affective and aesthetic engagements. These data allow the study to peer into the specific nature of affect in participant case studies, which reveals the seemingly limitless capacities of literary texts to produce unique, passionate and timeless affect. Participant responses exhibited extremely profound levels of affect, and experiences expressed in the focus groups were full of enthusiasm and a sense of pleasure. As participant researcher, I too was able to participate to some degree and, upon reflection, note that group discussions created an atmosphere of pleasure and passion that filled the room with energy. It seemed that simply talking about literature and recalling affective experiences to share with others ignited and renewed the engagements, allowing the obvious deep love that participants had for various literary texts to be expressed. This 'touch' between literature and reader creates the most affective experiences, as illustrated in the various participant responses below. Particularly significant comments that reflect profound affective experiences are highlighted.

My **passion** is literature...my favourite novel is *The Magic Mountain* by Thomas Mann. It's hard to be specific about why it impacted on me, it's beautifully written and I get real pleasure in the language... it's a lovely text and the philosophical debate between the characters **really touches me**.

(F PRE S 1992)

I just adore books and I would love to pass it on. I love all the old classics, old Russian literature, Dickens...I am really passionate about those long-winded classics. I was really impacted by *Wuthering Heights* as I'd never read anything with such a dark character...**it just sucked me in**...and as it doesn't work out the way the characters want it to, that's so exciting... it's just wonderful!

(M PRE S 1990)

The Great Gatsby is like literary alcohol, it's just amazing...I love the language and I love the imagery. The text that really made me love English and want to teach it was *Catcher in the Rye*. When I was going through adolescence... a lot of boys feel that connection with this text, it had massive impact on me. (M PRE S year not given)

Reading a lot of texts that are quite alternative, made me want to travel and see cultures first-hand. The more you travel, the more you see cultures are framed by the media in some way... literature lets you access something other than what people want you to see... it's completely liberating. It's a pathway to engaging with something that's a bit more real than what you're living... more real for more people. (M POST S 2002)

I always go back to *Catch 22*. I feel I can read it every year, I can just pick it up and read from any chapter, the characters are amazing, it's one of those books where you can't help but laugh out loud, and probably embarrass yourself... I always expect from that book, and I'm never disappointed. (M PRE S year not given)

Literature is a way to relate to each other, so you can realise what's really going on out there. I get courage and empathy from texts, understanding... it's a safe way to experience things. *1984* just blew me away, the power playing between characters – that text should be compulsory! I love texts that explore human emotions, after all we're complex creatures and all so different. (F PRE S 1985)

Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance –I loved analogy between two stories...I can't describe how it affected me, but I felt *that something*...

(M PRE S 1992)

Horror gives a subversion of 'norm' and the unlikely win. Like *Carrie* and *It*, these are really about childhood so it links to reality but is very disconnected...I became obsessed with *The Silence of the Lambs*, its an all time great film, really unique in many ways, especially with ideas about subverting expectations, especially on gender... That's what good horror does. Stephen King's got it... I don't know what it is, but he does tap into something unnameable that puts him apart from others... he's not got the most sophisticated plot lines or anything, he just has something, that X factor in his horror, he creates a fantasy world where battles can take place, but its linked to reality.

(M PRE S year not given)

Lord of the Rings although it's popular... I really loved it. There's an element of escapism, it takes us out of our lives...it offers us something that's really important to us, that's missing. For example, what I really liked is the idea of heroism and struggle for what's right, and fellowship with other people. Our world seems so mundane and dull...it's not possible to have these great struggles anymore. In a way, I don't know why I have a desire to have this, why I feel a loss, but I do and I really connect with this in some way. It's just something that's not possible in the ordinary world. At the moment I'm obsessed with *Beowulf*. I have a connection with those types...I don't think it's a coincidence that those kinds of texts that have an emotional impact on me and that I can connect with. I became attached to them...its rally kind of a deep essential human longing, a desire for something else that's not being met in modern society.

(F PRE S 1992)

The thing about great literature, it's when you read, and immediately then want to read it again. And that was my experience with *The Magic Fountain* y'know, you finish it and, oh God, you want to just start again...and *Beowulf* at the moment, I can't read anything else when that it happens.

(F PRE S 1992)

Literature takes you to places where you never thought you would be able to go.

(F PRE S 1985)

These responses are central to this research, their testimonies revealing not only the survival of affect and aesthetics in contemporary times, but also the extent of aesthetic affect, which is evidently able to incite in readers enormous passion and love of literature. The high amount of responses exhibiting 'pleasure' or 'love' specifically highlights the contemporary aesthetic impulse, which strongly prevails in participants in this study. The return of aesthetics, that is, the renewed interest in the study and appreciation of aesthetics (which is clearly evidenced in this study), and occurrence of literary affect is extremely powerfully evidenced. Analyses thus turn to the final consideration, that is: affect and aesthetics in the specific arena of education pre- and post- 1999 NSW HSC English syllabi developments.

VII.

EDUCATION, AFFECT AND THE AESTHETIC: THE NSW HSC PAST AND PRESENT, WHAT HAS CHANGED?

i) Introduction

This chapter explores the nature of the aesthetic and literary affective experiences, specifically within the educational environment. Analyses draw upon participant data from survey questionnaire and focus groups, focusing on responses that reflect participant school experiences under the new and old NSW HSC English syllabi, utilising data from all respondents. However, there are four distinct groups within this sample population; those respondents sitting the HSC pre- and post- 1999 developments, and within the whole post-1999 group, those studying to be either primary or secondary school teachers. It is thus interesting to explore the nature of the literary experience in terms of textual variables for each group, noting disparities and congruence in data trends. This will facilitate further investigation into the phenomenon and nature of the literary aesthetic /affective in light of recent disputes surrounding the 1999 NSW HSC English syllabus, which has attracted criticism in some circles, derived from a perceived loss of literary aesthetic affect and a reduction of 'high' art in education. In other arenas, it is championed for its variety, which embraces popular culture and which recognises literary value in an abundance of textual forms and genres. This chapter probes such contentions by comparing responses to literary texts from the post- and pre- 1999 respondents, and also takes into consideration differences already recorded between those studying at primary and secondary teacher level by maintaining this division in the post-1999 group. (This is not a consideration in the pre-1999 group as all participants in this group are studying to be secondary teachers.) It is necessary to note that all participants in the post-1999 group by definition are different, as they constitute the only group that had the opportunity to study film and multimedia texts (prior to 1999 this was not possible); thus the nature of literary affect is explored with this observation in mind.

Although sample sizes for these four groups are too small to make generalisations, interesting trends for the groups, in light of contemporary criticism, are noted. In particular:

- Affective /aesthetic literary experiences, derived of cited texts (particularly those labelled by participants as texts from their school experiences), are equally common under old and current syllabi.
- Canonical, classical or 'high' literature do not attract less attention under the new syllabus in terms of participants' citing such literature or attributing their affective experiences to it.
- Participant observations and confessions regarding aesthetics, affect and popular culture texts are particularly interesting and in abundance in both groups.

The four groups for analysis are:

- 1) All student-teachers who studied the English HSC post-1999

This group is sub-divided into:

- 2) Student-teachers who studied the English HSC post-1999 and are currently studying to be primary teachers, and;
- 3) Student-teachers who studied the English HSC post-1999 and are currently studying to be secondary teachers.
- 4) Student-teachers who studied the English HSC pre-1999 and are currently studying to be secondary teachers

In this chapter, these four groups will be referred to as 'POST', 'PPOST' 'SPOST' and 'SPRE', respectively. Profiles of each group are first explored to determine demographic comparability between groups. As the profiles for the PPOST (formally PTG) and SPOST (formally STGa) have already been determined in Chapter IV these two profiles will only be briefly recapped.

It is necessary to note here that, as the SPRE group did not have access to 'new' texts (film, multimedia), one would assume that this group would exhibit a significantly higher capacity for literary affect particularly in relation to canonical, classic and contemporary

literary texts. A significantly higher capacity for literary affect would therefore be demonstrated in responses produced by the SPRE group, in comparison to responses from the POST group and its two sub-groups, PPOST and SPOST. However analyses have produced interesting results, which do not suggest concentration of literary affect occurring in only the SPRE group, and in fact illustrate high percentages of affect in both groups, derived primarily from canonical, classic and modern literary texts. This is explored further later.

ii) The Whole Post 1999 Student Teacher (POST) Group

The profile for the POST group is as follows. The independent variable of age means that all participants in this group are between 19 and 25 years of age. All participants sat the HSC in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 or 2005; a minimum of two years after the 1999 changes were introduced. Thus, for the POST group and its subdivisions (PPOST and SPOST groups), it is assumed that participants experienced the English syllabus in its full capacity, without interference from any establishment issues that commonly occur during the immediate aftermath of implementation of new policies or documents. For example it is assumed that pedagogical alterations have been largely overcome, and educational institutions have embedded new requirements in resources, practice and pedagogical understanding. Data therefore accurately reflect affective experiences in relation to various texts. There was a gender bias in the group, which is illustrated as a pie chart on the following page:

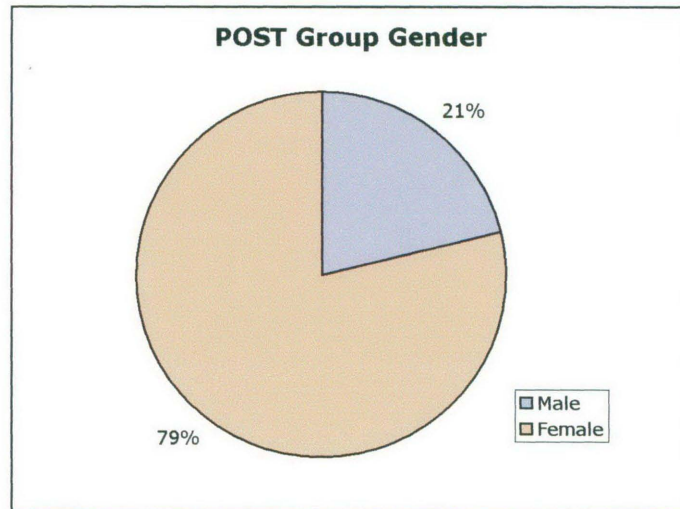


Figure 7.1 POST Group Gender Percentages

iii) The Post-1999 Primary Student Teacher (PPOST) Group

All participants are 19-25 years of age and studied the NSW HSC under the new 1999 English syllabus. All participants in the PTG are studying internally at the University of New England, having enrolled in 2003, 2004 or 2005. There was a gender bias in the group of twenty per cent male to 80 per cent female.

iv) The Post-1999 Secondary Student Teacher (SPOST) Group

As in the PPOST group, all participants are 19-25 years of age and studied under the new 1999 English syllabus. All study internally, having enrolled in 2003, 2004 or 2005. The gender bias is comparable to the PPOST, at 22 per cent male, 78 per cent female.

v) The Pre 1999 Secondary Student Teacher (SPRE) Group

The profile for the SPRE group follows. The age range for the group is 26 to 60 years of age. All participants sat the English HSC under old syllabi, between the years 1971 and

1994. They enrolled at the University of New England in 2003, 2004 or 2005. There was a gender bias in the group:

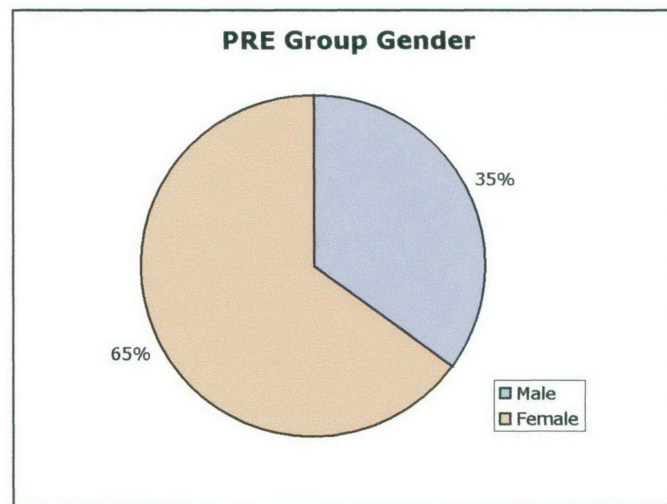


Figure 7.2 SPRE Group Gender Percentages

All four groups are thus rendered directly comparable due to similarities in relevant areas in the group constitutions. Analyses take consideration of both survey and focus group data, and the above group dynamics include all respondents to both data collection tools. However, it is to be noted that in the POST group, only eleven per cent of participants took part in focus groups, all of whom were from the sub-group SPOST (secondary level); in the SPRE group, this figure was more significant at thirty-five per cent. As focus groups involved more in-depth discussions around literary affect, a bias may operate in favour of the SPRE group. This must be taken into consideration, and thus when exploring focus group data, it is necessary to consider not the quantity of responses, but the relative quality of response for each group.

vi) Issues Under Consideration

There are a number of issues to note and consider which are derived from Literature Review investigations and which facilitate exploration of participant responses in light of current contentions around the new HSC syllabus:

- 1) The new NSW HSC English syllabus has and continues to be the subject of much criticism, especially from the press, government and public (King 2002; Donnelly 2005a & 2005b; Slattery 2005).
- 2) Such criticisms arise from a perceived, but hotly debated, decline in standards (Donnelly 2005a), which is believed to be derived from two factors:
 - The introduction of popular culture and multimedia texts for study
 - Learning via critical literacy approaches to literature (Donnelly 2005b)
- 3) Scholars and the English Teachers Association (ETA) of NSW defend the syllabus, advocating the value of popular culture and multimedia texts, and of critical literacy approaches.
- 4) Critics of the syllabus believe that literary affect and literary aesthetics are impossible to achieve under the new syllabus that studies Shakespeare and *Star Wars* alongside one another. This is believed to be a decline from old syllabi, which supposedly facilitated affective aesthetic experiences in students more readily; with this view, it is assumed that students of the new syllabus are engaging less with literature (Slattery 2005).
- 5) There is consequently a need to explore affect and aesthetics in terms of its occurrence under the new syllabus, in comparison to experiences under the old syllabi and also in comparison to 'personal' texts, which are not studied in school.
- 6) There is a perceived return to aesthetics and affect, although this is a 'new aestheticism' (Joughin & Malpas 2003). Explorations of student-teacher experiences may facilitate some identification of the new face of aesthetic affect.
- 7) Implications arise from comparative data for new and old NSW HSC English syllabi, and recent disputes about the value of the new syllabus.

vii) Analysis of Data: Positive and Negative Literary Experiences

The first data to logically explore are responses to survey question one, which asked participants whether their school literary experience was positive or negative. If the phenomenon of the literary aesthetic or affective has been reduced under the new syllabus, it is reasonable to assume that there will be a reduction in percentage of 'positive' responses for the POST group, as pleasurable or positive experiences are associated with the aesthetic. Data for the PPOST and SPOST subgroups are also included:

Table 7.1 Positive and Negative School Literary Experiences: All Groups

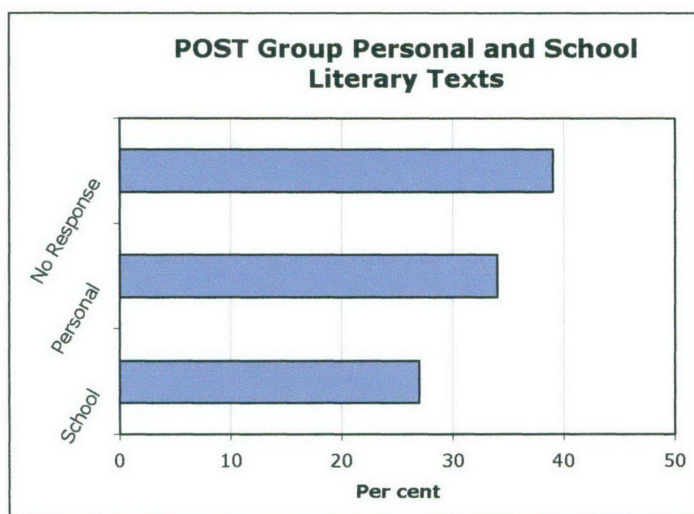
	<u>Positive%</u>	<u>Negative %</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>PRE Group</u>	79	21	100%
<u>POST Group:</u>	80	20	100%
- PPOST Group	66	34	100%
- SPOST Group	88	12	100%

As illustrated, whether participants sat the English HSC before or after the 1999 changes, the percentage of students having a positive or negative experience remains very similar, the insignificant one per cent alteration being anyway in favour of positive experiences *post*-1999. This is in direct opposition to point four above, which refers to a perceived reduction of student engagement with the literary under the new syllabus. In relation to the PPOST and SPOST subgroups, as previously noted in Chapter V, the secondary student teachers demonstrate a higher percentage of positive experiences with the literary in school.

Having established similarities for the POST and SPRE groups in relation to the percentage of participants having positive school literary experiences, analysis inevitably turns to whether there is a difference between affect in school compared to personal environments. Exploration of survey question two, which asks participants to name three texts that affected them and to state whether these texts were from private or school reading, establishes the arena for affect and whether it is biased towards either environment.

viii) Analysis of Data: Texts and Literary Affect in Private and School Domains

POST Group



The POST group had a particularly high 'no response' rate for this question. Although there is a difference between 'personal' and 'school' literary texts, this is not particularly high, at only an 8 per cent difference. This bias is in favour of 'personal' texts.

Figure 7.3 POST Group Locations for Literary Affect

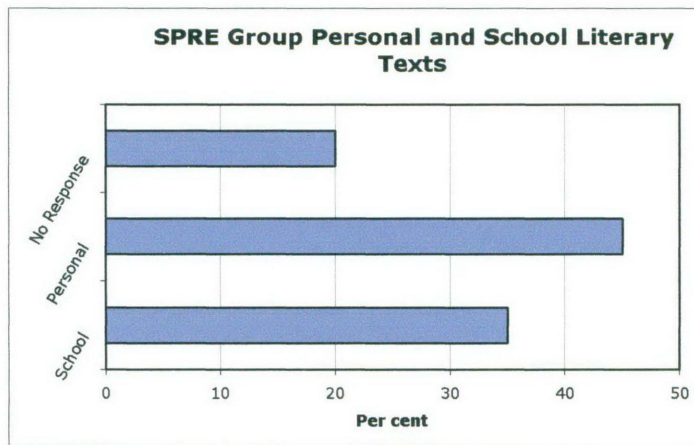
SPRE Group

Figure 7.4 SPRE Group Locations for Literary Affect

The SPRE group data illustrates a similar trend to that of the POST group, however the per cent of 'no response' is far less. The balance between 'personal' and 'school' texts however is comparative, at 10 per cent difference in favour of personal texts.

Collective percentage distributions of the two groups between 'school' and 'personal' literary texts that have produced affective experiences is 31 and 38 per cent, respectively (the final 31 per cent being 'no response'). Although there is a skew in favour of personal literary texts, this is not particularly high, at only seven per cent difference. Figures advocating 'school' literary texts as affective texts are in fact encouraging for the new English syllabus, as the trend has remained very similar, despite introduction of the new 1999 syllabus. This is supported by data from the question of whether school experiences with the literary were positive or negative, where in the POST group, 80 per cent of responses reported 'positive' experiences, and in the SPRE group this figure was comparable at 79 per cent. These initial analyses map the analytical trajectory, testifying at the outset to occurrence of affective literary experiences both in and out of the educational environment, and a high percentage of pleasure, or the aesthetic, in school literary engagement prior to and after the 1999 syllabus developments. Analyses thus move to explore the nature and manifestations of affect, and whether its occurrence is evoked or restricted under pre- and post-1999 syllabi.

The first part of survey question two asked participants to name three specific affective texts from their adolescence. Exploration of these texts is carried out through initially

categorising the texts to investigate trends, and to explore which categories of texts (if any) are cited most often, illustrating the occurrence and patterns of affect for the SPRE and POST (encompassing secondary and primary teachers) groups. In the same analytical procedure as in Chapter V for the PTG and STGa, texts are sorted into categories which were given the following numerical values:

- 1 – Contemporary Literary Texts (including children’s adolescent and adult texts)
- 2 – Contemporary Popular Culture Texts (including children’s adolescent and adult texts, and popular genre texts e.g. fantasy and popular media texts)
- 3 – Canonic or Classic Literature (including canonic, Shakespeare and modern classics)
- 4 – Art House Film Texts
- 5 – Contemporary Non-Fiction Texts (including autobiographies and scientific texts)

The table also denotes where texts have been included in English education, either at HSC or lower school levels. This data will be explored later.

Table 7.2 POST and SPRE Groups Cited Texts

<u>Text</u>		<u>Category</u>	<u>POST %</u>	<u>PRE %</u>
1984 (Orwell)	HSC	3	0	5.56
A Father’s Promise (D. Hess)		1	0.87	0
A Good Friday Was Had By All (B. Dawe)	HSC	3	0	1.85
A Separate Peace (J. Knowles)	HSC	3	0	1.85
Alana The Lioness series (T. Pierce)		1	0.87	0
Alice In Wonderland (L. Carroll)		1	0	1.85
American History X (T. Kaye)		2	0.87	0
At Mornington (G. Harwood)	HSC	3	1.75	0
Atlas Shrugged (A. Rand)		2	0	1.85
Autobiography of Ernie Dingo (E. Dingo)		5	0.87	0
Avenger (P. Ernst)		2	0.87	0
Babysitters Club series (A.M. Martin)		1	0.87	0
Black Beauty (A. Sewell)		3	0	1.85
Bliss (P. Carey)		2	0	1.85
Book of John (Bible)		3	0	1.85
Brave New World (A. Huxley)	HSC	1	1.75	1.85
Briar Rose (Bros. Grimm)	HSC	1	0.87	0
Bridge to Terabithia (K. Vicarel)		1	0.87	1.85

Bridget Jones' Diary (H. Fielding)		2	0.87	0
Catcher In the Rye (J. Claro)	Yr.11	3	0.87	0
Charlotte's Web (E.B. White)	Yr.7	1	0	1.85
Chronicles of Narnia (C.S. Lewis)	Yr.6-7	1	0.87	0
Conversations With God Book 1		2	0.87	0
Darkness At Noon (A. Koestler)		3	0	1.85
David Copperfield (Dickens)		3	0	1.85
Death of a Salesman (A. Miller)	HSC	3	0	1.85
Diary of Anne Frank (A. Frank)	Yr.9	3	0.87	1.85
Dice Man (L. Rhinehart)		2	0	1.85
Dickens (all)	School	3	0	1.85
Dr Zhivago (B. Pasternak)		3	0	1.85
East Of Eden (J. Steinbeck)		3	0	1.85
Edward the Emu (S. Knowles)		1	0.87	0
Emma (J. Austen)	HSC	3	0.87	0
Green Monkey Dreams (I. Carmody)		1	0.87	0
Harry Potter series (J.K. Rowling)		2	1.75	0
Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy (D. Adams)	HSC	2	0.87	0
Horse and His Boy (C.S. Lewis)		1	0.87	0
Huckleberry Finn (M. Twain)	HSC	1	0	1.85
I Am David (A. Holm)	Yr.8	1	0.87	0
I, Safiya (S. Hussaini Tungar Tudu)		5	0.87	0
I Want To Go Home (G. Korman)		1	0.87	0
Jessica (B. Courtney)		2	0.87	0
Jillaroo (D. McCall)		2	0.87	0
Jill's Gymkhana (R. Ferguson)		2	0	1.85
John Donne Poetry	HSC	3	0.87	0
Life Is Beautiful Film (R. Benigni)	HSC	4	0.87	0
Little House on the Prairie (L. Wilder)	Yr.7	1	0.87	0
Little Women (L.M. Alcott)		3	0	1.85
Looking For Alibrandi (M. Marchetta)	HSC	1	9.65	0
Lord of the Flies (W. Golding)	Yr.10	3	1.75	0
Lord of the Rings (Tolkien)		2	0	1.85
Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock (T.S. Eliot)	HSC	3	0.87	0
Machine Gunners (R. Westall)	Yr.8	1	0	1.85
Maestro (P. Goldsworthy)	HSC	1	0.87	0
Mediator series (M. Cabot)		2	0.87	0
My Name is Asher Lev (C. Potok)		2	0	1.85
Nancy Drew (C.G. Keene)		1	0.87	0
New adventures of Mad Scientist's Club (B. Brinley)		2	0	1.85
Old Man and the Sea (E. Hemingway)	Yr.11	3	0	1.85
Persuasion (J. Austen)	HSC	3	0	1.85
Pink Balloons (B. McGregor)		5	0.87	0
Pride and Prejudice (J. Austen)	HSC	3	2.63	0
Rabbit Proof Fence (J. Marsden)	HSC	5	0.87	0

Rexcellent, The Adventures of Pea & Bean (P. Ball)		1	0.87	0
Red Curtain Trilogy Films	HSC	4	0.87	0
Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner (S.T. Coleridge)	HSC	3	0.87	0
Rowan of Rin (E. Rodda)	Yr.7	1	0.87	0
Shakespeare – A Midsummer Nights Dream	School	3	0.87	0
Shakespeare – Hamlet	School	3	2.63	1.85
Shakespeare – Julius Caesar	School	3	0	1.85
Shakespeare – King Lear	School	3	0.87	1.85
Shakespeare – Macbeth	School	3	1.75	3.7
Shakespeare – Merchant of Venice	School	3	1.75	0
Shakespeare – Much Ado About Nothing	School	3	0.87	0
Shakespeare – Othello	School	3	0.87	0
Shakespeare – Romeo and Juliet	School	3	1.75	1.85
Shakespeare – Taming of the Shrew	School	3	0.87	0
T. S. Eliot Poetry	HSC	3	0	1.85
The 50 th Gate (M.R. Baker)		5	0.87	0
The Bluest Eye (T. Morrison)		1	0.87	0
The Bronze Horseman (P. Simons)		2	0.87	0
The Earth's Children series (J. Auel)		1	0.87	0
The Club (J. Heller)		1	0.87	0
The Crucible (A. Miller)	HSC	3	0	1.85
The Crucible series (S. Douglas)		1	0.87	0
The Eye of the World (R. Jordan)		2	0.87	0
The Famous Five (E. Blyton)		1	0	1.85
The Faraway Tree (E. Blyton)		1	1.75	0
The Fountain Head (A. Rand)		2	0	1.85
The Hobbit (Tolkein)	Yr.7	2	3.51	0
The Lady of Shallott (A. Tennyson)	HSC	3	0.87	0
The Leopard (G. di Lampedusa)		2	0	1.85
The Power and the Glory (G. Greene)	HSC	3	0	1.85
The Science Encyclopaedia		5	0.87	0
The Trouble With Angels (J. Trahey)		2	0.87	0
The Wife of Bath's Tale (Chaucer)	HSC	3	0	1.85
The Witches (R.Dahl)	Yr.6	1	0.87	0
To Kill A Mockingbird (H. Lee)	Yr.10	3	0.87	5.56
Tom Sawyer (M. Twain)	Yr.8	1	0	1.85
Tomorrow When the War Began (J. Marsden)	Yr.7-9	1	8.77	0
Too Late the Phalarrore		3	0	1.85
Travels With My Aunt (G. Greene)		3	0	1.85
Tyrant (M Brand)		2	0.87	0
Unmentionable Series (P. Jennings)	Yr.6-7	1	1.75	0
Unzipped	Yr.6-7	1	0.87	0
War and Peace (Tolstoy)		3	0	1.85
We The Living (A. Rand)		2	0	1.85
Who Sank the Boat? (P. Allen)		1	0.87	0

Wind in the Willows (K. Grahame)	Yr.7	1	0.87	0
Wuthering Heights (E. Bronte)	HSC	3	2.63	1.85
Z For Zachariah (R.C. O'Brien)	Yr.9	1	0	1.85
No Response		-	4.4	1.85
TOTAL			100%	100%

As in Chapter V, these data are now broken down by category of text and illustrated in pie charts. To facilitate intended distinction between the POST group subdivisions of PPOST (formerly PTG) and SPOST (formerly STGa), results obtained for these groups in Chapter IV will also be drawn upon.

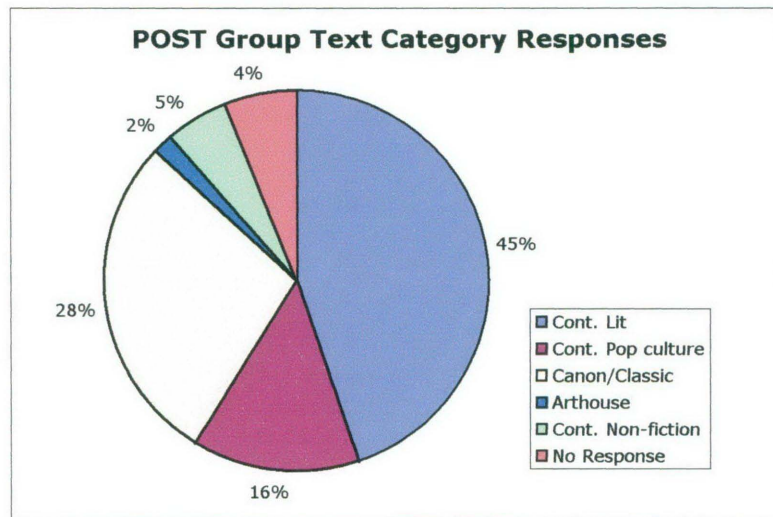


Figure 7.5 POST Whole Group Text Choices

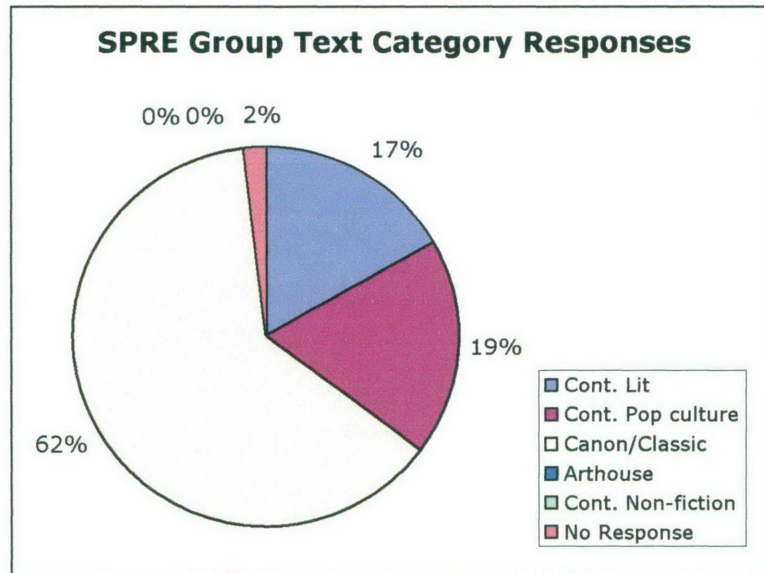


Figure 7.6 SPRE Group Text Choices

As demonstrated by the pie charts, data for each group are quite diverse, with the assumption that the SPRE group would exhibit more capacity for affect in the 'Canon/Classic' text category being sustained; 62 per cent for the SPRE group, compared to 28 per cent for the POST whole group. Having said this, however, this category does not take into account contemporary literary texts, which have literary value but do not form the traditional 'canon' or 'classics' list. In direct contrast to data for 'Canon/Classic' texts, the percentage of participants demonstrating a capacity for affect in contemporary literary texts is far greater in the POST whole group than the SPRE group, at 45 and 17 per cent, respectively. If these data are integrated under the general category of 'literary texts' (i.e. texts judged to be of literary value, exhibiting traditional aesthetic values), data for the groups looks somewhat similar, where the POST whole group exhibits 73 per cent and the SPRE group 79 per cent; figures that are not significantly different. Thus, in terms of the affect derived from literary texts versus popular culture texts, data for each group are not significantly different. Current contention, worrying that students of the 1999 NSW English HSC no longer experience as much aesthetic affect, particularly of the nature borne from valued literary texts, thus appears unfounded in light of these data

analyses. And this is more significant if we return to the initial observation that the SPRE group were not *able* to study popular culture texts, were limited to traditional prose, poetry and drama and were more strictly tied to canonical and classical literature in their education. Although the POST group has had opportunity under the new 1999 syllabus to broaden horizons in text types and genres in education, still participants demonstrate aesthetic affective experiences from *literary* texts and indeed from canonical and classic literature.

As stated previously, distinction between student teachers of primary and secondary education is also taken into consideration in data results, as Chapter IV revealed disparities in the groups in the nature of and capacity for affect. As all participants of the SPRE group are student teachers of *secondary* education, it is necessary to derive comparisons between the SPRE and POST groups by only employing data from the SPOST sub-group. This eliminates bias and, in light of findings in Chapter IV, is a necessary division. Indeed, results alter somewhat significantly when the PPOST group data are eliminated.

The following pie charts illustrate the SPRE and SPOST group data from the previous table (Table 7.2), demonstrating the percentage of participants in each group who attribute affect to certain categories of text.

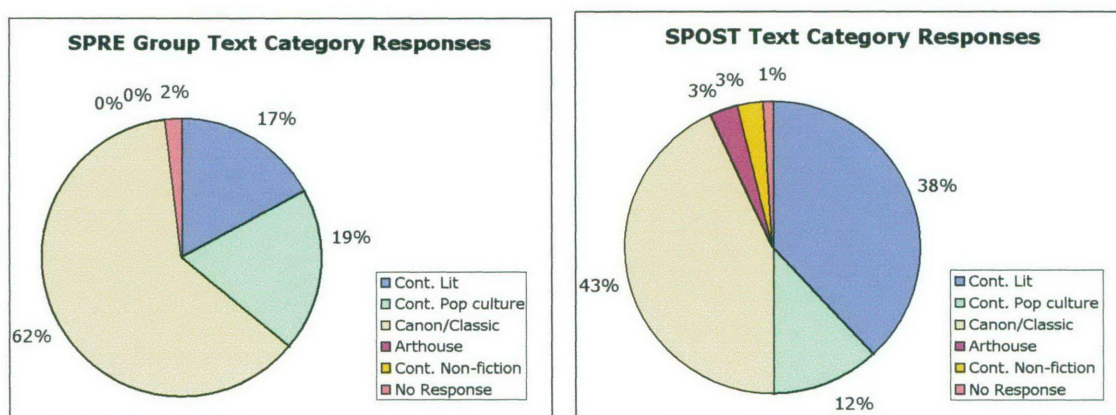


Figure 7.7 Comparison of SPRE and SPOST Text Choice Data

With primary student teacher data extracted, results look somewhat different for the SPOST group. As is demonstrated above, there is a significant percentage increase for 'Canon/Classic' texts, and the percentage for 'Contemporary Literary Texts' drops only slightly. If results are viewed in light of the 'literary versus popular culture' debate, the SPOST group in fact demonstrates a high percentage capacity for affect derived from literature as opposed to popular culture texts. The cumulative total for 'Canon/Classic' texts and 'Contemporary Literary Texts' for the SPOST group is 81 per cent, whilst the SPRE group amounts to 79 per cent. The SPRE group also has a higher percentage attributed to 'Popular Culture Texts', at seventeen per cent in contrast to the SPOST group at twelve per cent. In contradiction to current conflicts that hail the diminishment of literary aesthetic affect experienced by students of the new 1999 NSW HSC English syllabus, these data in fact support a continuing level of affective literary engagement. Furthermore, where assumptions would pertain to the SPOST group demonstrating a higher level of affect from popular culture texts, in fact the opposite is occurring, where the SPRE group attributes five per cent more to this category than the SPOST group.

This is not to deny, however, that there appears to be an overall swing towards affective experiences in relation to more contemporary literary texts in the POST group, whether the group is divided into its subgroups or not. This may be indicative of changes endorsed by the 1999 syllabus, as students study a much broader range of literary text than the previous syllabus, which adheres primarily to canonical and classical literature (NSW BOS 1982 and 1999b). To explore this notion further, the previous table is analysed to draw out texts mentioned that do, or have previously, been part of NSW HSC English syllabi, or part of lower school English syllabi. Such exploration also enables further comment upon the role that education plays in generating affect and the relationship between private and school literary experiences for current and past students of the HSC. Comparative analyses will then be permitted between groups.

The previous table specifically highlights which texts currently or have previously formed part of the HSC or lower years English education. This is an extrapolation of and further support for previous analysis in this chapter, which explored the divide between

'personal' and 'educational' texts cited. As shown, capacity for affect occurring in the educational environment is significant, participants of both groups collectively citing 56 texts that have appeared or currently appear in English education. This constitutes 51 per cent of total texts cited. However, analysis now goes beyond merely establishing the occurrence of literary affect in relation to personal and educational experiences. Extrapolating these observations, exploration now turns to participants' specific experiences with texts in education. The nature of affect and its capabilities in the school environment is thus discovered, in relation to students of past and current English HSC syllabi. This has provided case study observations around the nature of affect and 'new aestheticism'. Further, in direct opposition to current contentions around the new 1999 syllabus, analyses reveal a high level of affect and literary engagement in the contemporary English classroom, which is at a level that maintains pre-1999 integrity.

Questions seven and eight, and question ten from the survey were designed to capture participants' perceptions and attitudes towards literature in school and current and/or past HSC English syllabi. It is thus to these questions that attention turns.

ix) Participant Responses to the HSC English Syllabi

Question seven requires that participants state which HSC English syllabus they are familiar with (e.g. current, past or interstate) and respond to subsequent parts of the question with the cited syllabus in mind. The subsequent parts of the question ask, 'Did any text, literary or otherwise, from this syllabus: a) Excite you? b) Concern you? c) Shock you?'. The participants are required to state which text(s) and to briefly explain why. Responses to this question were extremely varied, exhibiting an unfortunate weakness of the question, that the terms 'excite' 'concern' and 'shock' were open to interpretation by participants. Quantification of this data was therefore impossible and analyses consequently employ only qualitative, contextualised data. However, treatment of data in this way maintained full value in responses, rendering some interesting and rich

conclusions. Analyses uphold participant group divisions and offer contrasts and comparisons.

It is necessary to first comment upon the categories, 'excite', 'concern' and 'shock', asserting at the outset that these chosen terms are in no way exhaustive of affect; they only seek to offer examples and specific insights into participant attitudes or thoughts regarding HSC English syllabi. The terms are derived from psychological testing using the 'Affect Scale', which lists twenty different feelings and emotions, by which psychologists test participant's mood or state of mind. The scale is included as Appendix Six. For this research, the listed 'feelings and emotions' on the Affect Scale were grouped under three headings, subsequently employed for survey question seven, to draw out participants' reactions to syllabi and the texts they contain. The following table demonstrates how the Affect Scale listed terms were categorised:

Table 7.3 Defining 'Excite', 'Concern' and 'Shock' According to the Affect Scale

<u>Excite</u>	<u>Concern</u>	<u>Shock</u>
<i>Terms applied from the Affect Scale:</i>		
Interested	Distressed	Scared
Excited	Upset	Hostile
Enthusiastic	Irritable	Ashamed
Proud	Nervous	Guilty
Alert	Jittery	Afraid
Inspired	Afraid	-
Determined	-	-
Attentive	-	-
Active	-	-
Strong	-	-

These three categories are thus justified by the Affect Scale psychological testing, which is directly applicable to this study on Literary Affect. However, as previously stated, participant interpretation of categories remained open on the survey, producing diverse data. It was interesting to explore various interpretations and the texts cited by participants as a result of these interpretations, where such interpretations are testament to the problematic and individually unique nature of literary affective experiences.

x) SPRE Group Responses to HSC English Syllabi

The following tables for ‘excite’, ‘concern’ and ‘shock’ offer summaries of responses given by the SPRE group. The table outlines texts cited, the syllabi participants referred to and reason(s) given by participants as to why the cited texts excited, concerned or shocked them. From these reasons, participant interpretations of ‘excite’, ‘concern’ and ‘shock’ may be probed, offering further insight into individual affective experiences through contextualisation.

Table 7.4: Texts that Excite the SPRE Group

Text(s)	HSC Syllabi	Reason(s) for Excitement
Pride and Prejudice (Austen)	NSW 1999	‘Mr Darcy and Elizabeth’s parrying, the interplay between characters which created humour’
Great Expectations (Dickens)		‘Pip’s kindness to Magwitch, his steadfastness, his shame of Joe, and Joe’s ultimate goodness.’
Rabbit Proof Fence (J. Marsden)	NSW 1999	‘It is a great movie and one that all Australians should see due to the terrible injustices committed against Aboriginal people in particular the stolen children generations which has been so hidden – a big bad secret.’

Looking For Alibrandi	NSW 1999	'I found a lot of Australian novels didn't relate to any experiences I'd had – we 'wogs' were always on the outer. I liked seeing something that embraced and acknowledged the multicultural I grew up in and some of the issues involved.'
Hamlet (Shakespeare)	QLD 1990	'The old father – son thing and wanting to knock off your old uncle, pretty wild stuff for a young boy; the madness, etc.'
Sea Change		'Was contemporary and relevant'
Billy Elliot (Film)	NSW 1999	'An interesting choice'
Non-Fiction Media choices (speeches)		'This was a great collection, relevant and moving'
Brave New World		'A classic sci-fi future horror, thought provoking'
Strictly Ballroom (film)	NSW 1999	'Tests the conventions of film style'
A Simple Plan (film)		'A great tale of morality'
Witness (film)		'This is a beautiful look at the gulf between cultures - extremely relevant'
Lord of the Flies (W. Golding)	NSW 1999	'Teaches us – being right or rational isn't always enough'
The Shipping News	QLD 1990	'It is quirky, weird realism, maybe not relevant to Australia and had some subtle themes that probably escaped some students'
The Skull Beneath the Skin (P. D. James)	VIC 2005	'It's a great read and a good way into the revenge dramas and Shakespeare'
Deadly Unna		'It exposes students to a better understanding of certain Aboriginal issues and it exposes Australian racist attitudes'
Great Expectations (Dickens)	NSW 1999	'I absolutely loved this book, Dickens is so detailed, so descriptive and to the heart'

Pride and Prejudice (Austen)		'I loved the contrast of how times have changed and relationships are interesting compared to now'
Contact (Film)	NSW 1999	'This movie addresses THE big issues – our place in the universe, our operation within a huge system most of us are unaware of and the sense of unity that as a species we <u>should</u> have'
Life Is Beautiful		'Addresses issues of how suffering is created by ourselves and how we can chose not to suffer, not to worry about 'being in the now''

As demonstrated by the above table, the majority of responses refer to the present NSW 1999 HSC English syllabi, despite the fact that the SPRE group sat their HSC prior to the 1999 changes. This is because participants are studying the present syllabus as an integral part of their degree and thus they are more familiar with it than the syllabus they sat years ago. However, there are three participants who refer to interstate syllabi past and current, whose responses offer some case study comparisons. Nevertheless, the primary focus of this research study, and indeed the majority of responses, is the NSW syllabi; thus this is the point of concentration.

Responses given to the question of textual excitement in the syllabi illustrate certain themes in types of affective experiences participants encountered, which resulted in 'excitement' for or about the text. First it is interesting to note that participants reveal that they are excited about a diverse range of canonical texts, modern literary texts and film texts. The SPRE group, for whom it was assumed that responses would pertain more towards affect derived from canonical literature and classic literary texts, actually mention nearly as many film texts and one media text, as productive of excitement. Reasons given why cited texts produce excitement are diverse, although trends towards character identification and empathy, personal development through challenging perspectives and gaining of knowledge and psychological and spiritual development are

clearly emphasised. In this nature, participant responses engage with the emotions and situations of characters, where character experiences transpose easily into the readers' own experiences:

I found a lot of Australian novels didn't relate to any experiences I'd had – we 'wogs' were always on the outer. I liked seeing something that embraced and acknowledged the multicultural I grew up in and some of the issues involved. (Female, on *Looking For Alibrandi*)

Participants also clearly find excitement in texts that offer learning and challenge perspectives through exposition of contentious issues. Among these, participants name understanding gained from *Deadly Unna*, which exposes racist attitudes; illumination of the 'gulf between cultures' that is apparent in the film text, *Witness*; and provoked awareness of the 'terrible injustices committed against Aboriginal people' in *Rabbit Proof Fence*. On the psychological or spiritual dimension of affect, participants were excited by texts which deal with the human condition, the spiritual questions that have accompanied human existence since the dawn of time, that is, our relevance in the universe. The films *Contact* and *Life is Beautiful* are specifically mentioned for their attention to 'the big issues' of the universe and human suffering, respectively.

It is strongly evidenced that both canonical and contemporary literary texts, including film texts, play significant part in stimulation of affective experiences at psychological, emotional and spiritual levels. These participants evidently found it easy to comment upon affect derived from texts on the new 1999 NSW HSC English syllabus, and to contextualise and qualify that affect by explaining the nature of their engagement. Excitement, that is, the stimulation, enthusiasm, inspiration and interest (terms from the Affect Scale) found in these texts strongly exemplifies the survival of affect today, and its ability to creep into perceived 'non-literary' texts, as well as canonical texts. The product

is a multitude of meanings, affects and stimulation amongst readers, whose affective experiences obviously alter their being in profound ways.

Analyses now turn to texts cited by the SPRE group that ‘concern’ participants. The following table outlines the texts cited from specific syllabi, and the reasons given for their ‘concerning’ affect.

Table 7.5 Texts that Concern the SPRE Group

Text(s)	HSC Syllabi	Reason(s) for Concern
Deadly Unna The Rabbits	NSW 1975	‘Because of its’ contentious issues of abuse, domestic violence and racism’ ‘Because it gives a side of Australian history that in a way lessens the true impact of our history as it is only part of the picture. It’s a little patronising towards the white Anglo Saxons of Australia.’
Rabbit Proof Fence (film)	NSW 1999	‘It raises a lot of contentious and emotional issues that are very current.’
Alexander Pope poetry	NSW 1988	‘I remember doing Alexander Pope when I was at school and never touching on how sexist the language was or the context of the poems.’
The Trial The Devil’s Advocate (film)	NSW 1999	‘Katka’s tale was really scary – the hero/ protagonist’s plain helplessness.’ ‘As an ex-priest, the story shows the vulnerability of a species I considered above the frailties of others.’
1984 (Orwell) Huckleberry Finn (M. Twain)	NSW 1999	‘It was depressing but still retains its relevancy and control.’ ‘Surely a similar journey of self-discovery can be found in recent books.’

My Place (J. Morgan)	NSW 1999	'Because of the controversy about the truthfulness of her life story.'
Clueless (film)	NSW 1999	'Yikes! Is this a message we want to continue?'
Film texts (general comment)	NSW 1999	'The use of film texts that illustrate violence or sexual exploitation as a dominant theme to teach students concerns me, especially looking at teaching in Christian schools, as it conflicts with values and principles.'

As the table illustrates, most concern is derived from literary texts deemed 'contentious' or that conflict with participant values. These reactions are in response to specific textual content, where participants are obviously worried about the presence of controversial issues in texts, and exposure to such issues through their study on the HSC syllabus. Conversely, however, there is also comment upon lack of exposure to topical issues and in particular, abstention in dealing with 'sexism' in the language of Alexander Pope's poetry. In similar concern, one participant suggests the redundancy of *Huckleberry Finn* in portraying the values of the journey of 'self-discovery', commenting that, 'surely a similar journey of self-discovery can be found in recent books'.

Clearly there is concern about some of the issues that are, or are not, implicitly dealt with through literary experience in the HSC. In relation to this study, this is merited in terms of the affective capabilities of literary texts, which have caused these issues to be considered by participants, and in turn have evidently produced psychological affect. Clearly in employing a varied and rich range of literary text, the HSC English experience is producing students who are aware of contentious issues and who are active participants in socio-cultural and political matters. In a similar nature, data for texts that 'shock' participants highlight contentious issues in literary texts as productive of affect through their shock factor. The following table highlights responses.

Table 7.6 Texts that Shock the SPRE Group

Text(s)	HSC Syllabi	Reason(s) for Shock
1984 (Orwell) The Rabbits (J. Marsden)	NSW 1975	'I found the idea of 'big brother' really terrible.' 'The page that says 'they took away our children' is the truth and is a way to get a serious message across to kids.'
Black Rock (film)	QLD (year not disclosed)	'I am shocked and horrified by the text that became the movie <i>Black Rock</i> – that some writers have the licence to modify horrific reality and turn it into art which is taken into schools to dissect for its special effects qualities makes me vomit in fact.'
Dickens (all)	NSW 1988	'When I was at school it shocked me that we would do something as dull as Dickens. I appreciate that if it was taught in context etc. it may be interesting, but to me it was a brick and bookend only.'
1984 (Orwell) <i>and</i> Brave New World	NSW 1982	'I am shocked that in this current political climate these books are still allowed.'
Brighton Rock (G. Greene)	NSW 1999	'The raw brutality of people seemingly arguing about their business and deleting a life with callous casualness.'
Texts such as Big Brother, The Simpsons, Buffy.	NSW 1999	'The introduction of these texts as a teaching tool can be dangerous and can be used to marginalise.'

As with texts that were deemed to 'excite' and 'concern' participants, data for 'shock' are just as diverse and reflective of very personal affect. It seems however, that 'shock', in comparison with 'concern', goes hand-in-hand with morality and controversial issues in texts. It is thus affect derived from the challenging of participant values, or the awakening

of contentious issues through literary engagement that produces ‘shock’ and indeed the ‘concern’ factor in participant case study SPRE group.

xi) POST Group Responses to HSC English Syllabi

Analyses also explore the nature of the ‘excite’, ‘concern’ and ‘shock’ affective in the POST group to investigate comparisons and contrasts. The data tables maintain distinction between the primary and secondary student teachers (PPOST and SPOST, respectively) and this is indicated by a division in the table.

Table 7.7 Texts that Excite the POST Group

Text(s)	HSC Syllabi	Reason(s) for Excitement
<i>Primary Student Teacher Group (PPOST)</i>		
Looking for Alibrandi	NSW 1999	‘I related well to this text at school age and I still love it!’
Witness (film)	NSW 1999	‘It was old but explored the Amish religion and beliefs.’
Emma (Austen) and Clueless (film)	NSW 1999	‘It was really interesting to compare <i>Emma</i> with <i>Clueless</i> .’
50 th Gate	NSW 1999	‘This texts shows how events of the past affect families across generations.’
Frontline	NSW 1999	‘It had interesting ideas, relevant to modern society.’
Looking for Alibrandi	NSW 1999	‘This is a very positive text for adolescence, allowing students to take an understanding and apply this to life.’
Brave New World	NSW 1999	‘Made me consider how much as a population we are controlled and surveyed and how easy it is to end up that way in society.’
Looking for Alibrandi	NSW 1999	‘A great book, I could relate to it and it was well written.’

<i>Secondary Student Teacher Group (SPOST)</i>		
Hamlet (Shakespeare)	NSW 1999	'It's Shakespeare what more need I say!? The pain/ looking inside Hamlet's psychological makeup was amazing.'
Pride and Prejudice (Austen)	NSW 1999	'I'd never experienced that world in my reading and I was very drawn into its mysteries and realities.'
Bruce Dawe's poetry	NSW 1999	'I related well to this and became really engaged.'
Emma (Austen) and Clueless (film)	NSW 1999	'The study of the two texts and how they relate and correspond to each other was one of the most interesting things I did at school.'
Julius Caesar (Shakespeare) Blade Runner (film) and Brave New World	NSW 1999	'I loved Julius Caesar and Blade Runner /Brave New World comparison. They were complex texts and really encouraged critical and analytical thinking and I got a lot out of that. They were challenging and confronting texts to study.'
Frontline Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead	NSW 1999	'Was exciting for its ability to appropriate and satire the real.' 'A great way to study postmodern appropriation in practice.'
The Truman Show (film)	WA 2001	'This was interesting, challenging and a good popular culture text.'
Emma (Austen) and Clueless (film) Brave New World	NSW 1999	'Contrasting the two texts helps with studying Austen.' 'Great book with lots of ideas on society that people should have an idea about – it gets you thinking.'
Ted Hughes poetry	NSW 1999	'I found his poetry really moving and liked dissecting them and finding alternative meanings to the literal.'
Looking for Alibrandi	NSW 1999	'It was relevant to my age group and experiences.'
The <i>range</i> of texts (general comment)	NSW 1999	'I was very excited about all types of texts, especially television, film and

		reproductions of classic texts. It's exciting to have a large range of different text types to engage with.'
--	--	--

In comparison with the SPRE group, the range of texts cited that cause 'excitement' is great, from classic literature (Shakespeare, Austen and Ted Hughes) to contemporary film texts such as *Blade Runner* and *Clueless*. Inclusion of such a broad range of text type and 'class' of literature (from Shakespeare to popular culture) only exemplifies the value and joy that students are extracting from literary texts today. *These* are the texts that excite the student teachers in this study, leaving no question of the occurrence of aesthetic affect and engagement that students receive from a range of texts on HSC English syllabi. The data only suggest the paramount importance of inclusion of such a broad range of texts, where students find it 'interesting', 'engaging' and 'exciting' to compare and contrast for example Austen's *Emma* with the popular culture film, *Clueless*. Far from a neglect of the classics and retreat from aesthetics and affect, the testimonies of these student teachers illustrate the worth of such exercises and receiving of popular culture texts, where 'contrasting the two texts [*Emma* and *Clueless*] helps with studying Austen'. Engagement and affect is vividly evident, and is derived from various factors that participants find endearing in literary texts.

For the PPOST group, primary stimulants for gaining the affective experience of excitement from literary texts appear to be acquisition of knowledge or understanding, and the ability of individuals to relate to the text. Participants experience affective excitement derived from explorations of the 'Amish religion', 'how events of the past affect families across generations', and 'interesting' literary texts that are 'relevant to modern society'. Two participants also claim their affective excitement is a result of personal identification with a 'well written' text and a text that 'I still love!'

In contrast to the PPOST group, the excitement affect for the SPOST group seems to stem from other, more diverse, factors. Differences already established between these two groups are evidently inherent in all analyses and are certainly confirmed in all analysis

chapters. For the SPOST group no vivid trends are identifiable, however, the excitement affect seems rooted in deeper psychological arenas, where literary texts have infiltrated the psyche. Comments such as, 'I'd never experienced that world in my reading and I was very drawn into its [*Pride and Prejudice*] mysteries and realities', and 'I found his [Ted Hughes] poetry really moving' are testament to the literary penetration that has occurred to create the excitement affect. There are also comments that relate to acquisition of knowledge and understanding, the ability of a text to make the individual 'love' it, the relatability and relevancy of texts, and the interest and engagement that texts induce, which subsequently results in the excitement factor.

Addressing responses to the issue of literary texts that 'concern' participants, similar disparities between the PPOST and SPOST groups are found. The following table displays data on 'concern' and is again divided to illustrate results for each group.

Table 7.8 Texts that Concern the POST Group

Text(s)	HSC Syllabi	Reason(s) for Concern
<i>Primary Student Teacher Group (PPOST)</i>		
The Tempest (Shakespeare)	NSW 1999	'I see little relevance in learning Shakespeare. He is a great writer, but in the 21 st Century I found it very difficult to understand his texts and felt time would be better spent on something else.'
Go Ask Alice	NSW 1999	'Because it showed how easy it is for everything to go completely wrong.'
John Donne poetry	NSW 1999	'I didn't understand his poetry. Shakespeare was hard enough and he wrote before that! I didn't like that you had to understand religion to understand many of his poems.'

<i>Secondary Student Teacher Group (SPOST)</i>		
Speeches Over Time	NSW 1999	'Exceedingly boring and difficult to engage with. If you can't engage with it how can you learn from it?'
Strictly Ballroom (film)	NSW 1999	'Surely Australia has better films to share with the youth than this!'
American Beauty (film)	NSW 1999	'Because it challenged contemporary lifestyles and values but did not offer any alternatives.'
The Fortunate Few	NSW 1999	'The ending concerned me where the girl – Bella? – dies. It made me really wonder how much of it went on in sports. It concerned me that some people are so callous.'
King Lear (Shakespeare)	NSW 1999	'Because of the fatalities associated with family dysfunction – my family had a few problems at this stage.'
Wilfred Owen poetry	NSW 1999	'It was depressing and the poems we studied were quite descriptive of battle fields and can darken others' views of the world.'

As highlighted, concern in the PPOST group primarily stems from the participant's inability to understand the cited text, rather than concern for the text itself. However, these participants do not challenge placement of the text on the syllabus as too demanding, but rather question the relevance of early literature in contemporary education. This may be a concern for the HSC syllabus, however, in context of data that proclaims so many older literary texts as 'exciting', it is suggested that it is lack of student understanding of the text, rather than its publishing date, that is the 'concerning' matter. Remaining comment for the PPOST group is similar to responses from the SPOST group, where subject matter of the text provokes concern. In comparison to SPRE group data, this highlights the affective capabilities of these literary texts to provoke concern in their topics, and to affect individuals' psyche. The SPOST group data illustrates a wide variety of texts that achieve this affect, again from contemporary film to

the poetry of Wilfred Owen and Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Responses highlight the ability of these texts to offer viewpoints, challenge perceptions and give valuable insights (however bleak) into the otherwise unknown.

Analyses move to the final affective dimension of 'shock' for the POST groups. It is necessary to note that responses somewhat diminished by this point, and surveys rendered only one response from the PPOST group and six from the SPOST group. However, these comments were valuable and interesting. The following table, divided into PPOST and SPOST, illustrates this data.

Table 7.9: Texts that Shock the POST Group

Text(s)	HSC Syllabi	Reason(s) for Shock
<i>Primary Student Teacher Group (PPOST)</i>		
Let the Celebrations Begin (picture book)	NSW 1999	'Our topic was the holocaust and I found the picture book was not suitable for children. I'm more educated and I understand the multiple levels of a text/picture book now.'
<i>Secondary Student Teacher Group (SPOST)</i>		
Othello	NSW 1999	'The murder is senseless! I was shocked by that as a teenager, but I really enjoyed the text.'
Tranter poetry	NSW 1999	'The surprise ending of the series in which you find that the main character is actually female and a lesbian rather than a man as assumed is shocking, but in a good way. I think that shock made me more interested in studying it in depth.'
For Esme With Love and Squalor (D. J. Salinger)	NSW 1999	'Some very intense and shocking moments with interesting social commentary.'

Z for Zachariah	NSW 1999	'Omigod! Do you know how easily that could happen? It freaked me out, it was like looking into the future.'
Brave New World and Blade Runner	NSW 1999	'Due to the fact that human freedom has been compromised and that people may eventually be able to control nature and personality cloning.'
Life is Beautiful Cloudstreet	NSW 1999	'Such a brave take on a touchy subject.' 'Wow! Such a smart novel, even just some of the images were so confronting.'

Again data for texts that 'shock' participants are varied. However, the uniting trend for this set of data is the founding reason for this 'shock', which is evidently derived from textual content. Although responses are diverse, the underlying theme that induces shock is the issues dealt with by the literature in question. In comparison to data for 'concern', this again illustrates the affective capabilities of these texts, to evoke understanding, offer insights and different perspectives, and reveal new worlds for its readers, who otherwise would not have access. The 'shock' affective is thus ignited by the ability of literary texts to penetrate the psyche. Evidently, texts on the HSC syllabi are capable of and are inducing such affect, clearly providing its students with aesthetic affective experiences at psychological levels. This study now moves to offer final conclusions on the whole report.

VIII.

Conclusions

This ultimate chapter offers final analysis and conclusive comment on data recovered by the research study. It returns to the initial questions proposed at the outset, to demonstrate how these issues have been probed through exploration of participants' experiences with literary affect and aesthetic engagement. To facilitate this, the research questions are first reiterated.

i) Research Questions

The main research questions that formed the focus of this study were:

- 1) Is literary affect occurring in readers' lives and if so, what form(s) does it take?
- 2) Has literary affect been a significant part of readers lives:
 - In private domains?
 - In the educational environment?
- 3) Are there any differences in the literary affective experiences of student teacher participants who are studying to be primary school teachers, compared to those studying to be secondary English school teachers?
- 4) Are there any differences between young and mature age groups' experiences of the literary and its affective capabilities?
 - Are there disparities of literary affect in students of the old NSW HSC, compared to the new syllabus?
 - What issues in relation to literary affect and aesthetics are identified by students of the old, compared to the new, syllabus?
- 5) How do findings relate to current debates surrounding the postmodern nature of literary study and subject English?

Conclusions that follow attempt to address these questions, as well as speculating on interesting information that emerged from survey and focus group data.

ii) Is literary affect occurring in readers' lives and what form(s) does it take?

All data analysis chapters dealt with the issues of literary affect and aesthetics, and went beyond this to explore the nature of this affect in participants' lives. Based upon analyses, the occurrence of affect and its survival in contemporary times can indeed be confirmed. Data from both the survey by questionnaire and focus group interviews vividly portray significant affective experiences and engagement with the aesthetic in literary texts, highlighting affect and aesthetics as intrinsic elements of the study and appreciation of literature. Evidently, the decline of aesthetics (Eagleton, 1990) is over; contemporary arenas embrace and nurture a renewed interest in aesthetics and a return to aesthetic affect in young and mature readers' literary engagements.

In attending to survey question one, which asked participants whether their school literary experiences were positive or negative, it is significant to note that despite ten participants overall recalling a negative experience, this did not prohibit the occurrence of affective experiences. Regardless of the answer to this question, all participants were able to cite up to three texts that they had a particular affinity with (survey question two), and go on to elaborate on reasons for this affective capacity (survey question three). Such persevering engagement, in the face of negative experience, is a great achievement for affect and aesthetics, one that supports their unique ability to captivate and survive in individual engagements regardless of negative experiences. Such a conclusion also touches on the nature of literary affect and aesthetics in that they conjure limitless individual reactions. As acknowledged in the Literature Review (Chapter II), ultimately the nature of aesthetic and affective engagements is indefinable, being wrapped up in individual's psyche and in the unique relationships that each reader of literature possesses with the text, its author and specific context. It is in this way that the negative experience may be overridden, even to such extent that one may find positive experience in reliving

a previously negative literary engagement. The literary *event* (Attridge, 2004), the new aestheticism and literary affective, is transformatory, and is not bound to specific circumstance. As one participant notes:

Tess of the D'Urbervilles I couldn't focus on because it was too hard for the stage I was at (yr.8). I re-read it again during my degree though and it is now a personal favourite. (Female, completed HSC 2002)

Also emerging from the case study data of the fifty-six participants in this study is a sense that, when affect or aestheticism embraces an individual in literary engagement, there is no longer a 'receiving' of the text but more an event that *happens to* the reader. This essential alteration in individual psyche, characteristic of affective experiences (Stein, 1991), propels the reader into what Attridge (2004:109) terms a 'performance', where meaning is not only formed but is *performed*. Coupled with these notions however, affect and the aesthetic impulse evident in participant data illustrate the importance of individual preconditions (of psyche or experience), which are fused with the 'performance' to create a new event. Participant data highlights literary texts that lift or *disconnect* the reader from life, offering (as 76 per cent of participants in the study state) 'escape' whilst congruently probing at an individual *connection*, a familiar ground, upon which identification is built. This event is a *connection through disconnection*. Coupled with the literary reading as an event, the *eventee* is now able to perform a new event into which s/he is intrinsically linked (*connection*) and yet is, as Attridge (2004) states, 'surprised' by (*disconnection*). Without disconnection, the event cannot take place; the reader must be 'surprised' or liberated, lest the experience is already his/her own and not, therefore, evoked purely by the literary engagement. The high percentage of comments that related to 'identification' as well as 'escape', to 'freedom' as well as 'truth and understanding' are testament to this connection through disconnection aesthetic, the quality of which is an individual performance event which renders the eventee connected (to reality) through disconnection (to the imagined). Through enactment the individual finds a piece(s) of his/her reality *within* the imagined world of the text. Thus, participant

data suggest that the alleged decline of aesthetics over the past twenty-five years may be declared over or perhaps not to have occurred at all; aesthetics is very much alive in a revised form, centring student experiences and their 'performance' in literary engagement. This aesthetic moves beyond reader response, into reader experience, where affect is not derived merely from reaction to literary texts, but from the occurrence of individual-in-text events. This is the 'X factor' of literary experience, which left some participants in this study at a loss as to how to describe the impact of certain texts, only being able to translate the affect as, for example, a 'touch' an 'experience' or a 'pulling in'. As one focus group participant stated, 'I don't know what it was...it just [shudders]...*gets* you... I can't describe it, it takes over your being'.

Data analyses also went further to reveal more specific detail on the forms that affect takes and the nature of student aesthetic affective experiences. Through coding, affective experiences were categorised to produce significant conclusions, which strongly hint at the implications for literary affective experiences as tools of personal and social development, inspiration and liberation. There emerged two distinctive modes of affect, which related to the inward and outward direction of the affective experience, coupled with two categories of expression in participant use of high or low modality words and phrases. Such discovery allowed a 'grading' of affective experience, where the more inward (or high modality) the deeper the personal affect, and the more outward (or low modality), the less penetrative the personal affect.

iii) Has literary affect been a significant part of readers' lives in private and educational domains?

As a key interest for critics of the new NSW 1999 HSC English syllabus, who contend that contemporary English curricula are not providing affective engagements, it was important to investigate whether literary affect was occurring in educational arenas. To do this, data pertaining to affect borne of the educational environment was pitched against affect in private domains, where one would expect most affect to occur by virtue

of the fact that individuals choose their private literary engagements based on aesthetic preference or pleasure.

The data, however, do not seem to support contentions and literary affect finds accommodation as much in education as in the private lives of participants. Attention to survey question two revealed that, of the texts cited by participants, forty-five per cent overall (discluding 'no response' category) were educational texts, to which participants attached significant literary affective and aesthetic experiences. Accounting for just under half of participant affective experiences, there is clearly a large role for literary engagement in education, with such events constituting a very significant part of readers' lives. The respectable balance between percentage data for private compared to educational literary experiences of affect suggests almost equal importance attached to each domain. Thus, conclusions are compelled to pay attention to the possibility of a *need* for affect derivative of each environment. To extrapolate this conclusion further, it may also be suggested that this is not only an essential but a complementary partnership, where the benefits gained from literary engagements in each domain actively support and enhance affective experiences: educational domains teach students ways in which they might respond to literary texts, whilst private engagements allow individuals to develop their personal aesthetic and heighten affect through increasing awareness of personal preferences. These skills interrelate and are transferable between each environment, enhancing affective engagement. Of course, such conclusions are open to further investigations, yet they are supported by school efforts to encourage home reading, and vice versa by school teaching of critical literacies, which allow students to personally access a broader range of literary texts.

Thus conclusions suggest that literary affect derived from both educational and private engagements form very significant parts of readers' lives. However, as stated, the type of affective experience is also significant, where data shows that affect may be directed inward or outward and may be expressed using high or low modality words and phrases. Participant responses exhibit both inward and outward, and high and low modality, experiences in both private and educational domains. The significance of literary affect in

each environment is once again confirmed, and it can again be concluded that the nature of these experiences in both domains are comparable in their affective extent. The following table demonstrates this comparison, asserting the significance of literary affect in each environment.

Table 8.1 Expressing Literary Engagement

	Inward Affect, High Modality	Outward Affect, Low Modality
Educational literary engagement	I read <i>Looking For Alibrandi</i> at a time where a great change was occurring; it mirrored my experiences and generally moved me to tears... this kind of literature made me feel more comfortable in my own skin.	Having experienced a death of a friend myself, <i>Hamlet</i> allowed me to explore the nature of life and death, and not feel alone in my grief.
Private literary engagement	The literature I read is ultimately affirming in some way of humanity as a whole, these acts of creation psychologically awe me.	<i>The Bluest Eye</i> opened my eyes to racist views in the world and the impacts of this.

- iv) Are there any differences in the literary affective experiences of student teacher participants who are studying to be primary school teachers, compared to those studying to be secondary English school teachers?

This question was dealt with in Chapter IV analyses. It was evident from the data that, although affective experiences were occurring in both the primary and secondary student teacher groups, the nature of this affect was significantly different, resulting in disparities between groups. These disparities go some way to suggesting preconditions for affect in participants' decisions to teach full time English at secondary level, or a range of subjects including English, at primary level.

From data analyses, a number of conclusions are drawn. First to note is the significant disparity between groups in their positive literary experiences at school. Secondary student teachers (specialising in subject English) demonstrated more positive experiences, overall claiming 91.5 per cent, whilst primary student teachers fell short at only 67 per cent positive. In exploring participants' career decision to teach this disparity is reflected, where 74 per cent of secondary student teachers attribute their decision to teach English as a result of their literary affective experiences, compared to only forty per cent of the primary student teacher group. A link between positive literary affective experiences and future teaching decisions is thus suggested: it seems that literary affect and aesthetics are able to incite a career decision that keeps the individual close to literature and its affective qualities, and that enables him/her to foster enthusiasm for literary experience (that sometimes becomes a passion) in others. This conclusion is firmly supported by comments from secondary student teacher participants, such as:

I'd like to share literature with other people and get them to make literature come alive for themselves – when literature worked for me it was the best thing ever!

I fell in love with books, novels, plays, film, the drama and characters. I want to share that with others. I want to show people a way of discovering the world and life through books.

Lack of affect in terms of literary engagement inciting primary student teacher career decisions is not, however, accounted for by an overall lack of affect in this group, but by data pertaining to the nature of affective experiences. Primary student teacher participants recall a significant amount of literary affective experiences, but the majority are fundamentally different to the types of experiences expressed by the secondary student teacher group. Primary student teacher participants demonstrate external or 'outward' affect and awareness of the importance of literary study and teaching as a tool for understanding and knowledge. These responses relate to teaching goals of subject English and lack indication of deeper or inward personal affective experiences with the literary. For example:

I feel that students should learn English/ literature as it is an important aspect of school. Allows students to move beyond ordinary literature by analysing and critiquing the underlying concepts (also about life).

Contrary to this, secondary student teacher participant responses pertain very strongly to the personal (inward) affective dimension of the literary. They offer insight into why literary experiences have been affective, providing explanations of literature's capacity to provide 'escape', to 'expand the mind' and 'enrich' one's life. In contrast to primary student teachers, comments are for example:

Without literature my world would be dull and lifeless. Literature has taught me an awful lot about life and the world, and I want to show students how literature and English can enhance their worlds.

In concluding, however, one cannot ignore the forty per cent of primary student teacher participants who stated that their literary affective experiences *did* influence their decision to teach. Although this figure is not as high as for the secondary student teacher group, it is nevertheless significant. These participants, however, maintained a focus upon literature *in*, and *as*, education, where personal affective experiences supported a need to *teach* literature. Such comments embrace the outward direction of literary affect, for example:

...everyone needs to learn it to live and succeed in our country, and I understand that taking on the job as a teacher I must teach students English and that is why it is important to me. Because I realise that to be literate will help you your whole life and it is the job of teachers to help students learn English.

I want to have a positive influence on my students' experiences with literature – to develop a lifelong love of reading and their critical literacy skills.

The differing percentage results between personal and educational texts that student teacher groups mention as having generated affective experiences is also significant. Again, disparity between groups was found, where secondary student teachers attributed 62 per cent of texts from personal reading, compared to 53 per cent in primary student teacher participants. Personal choice suggests a more aesthetic dimension of affect, as individuals personally choose that which is appealing to them in their private literary engagements. In contrast, the higher percentage of educational affective literary texts mentioned by primary student teacher participants is reflective of a higher appreciation for the literary *in education*. However, purely within the primary student teacher group, the balance still favours personal choice texts. This suggests that affective experiences overall across the groups are more likely to occur when personal choice is considered, or

when individual aesthetic needs are met. However, this conclusion does not denote that aesthetic affect is not occurring in educational arenas. As previously stated, a collective total of forty-five per cent of affective texts are attributed to 'school choice', demonstrating that affective and aesthetic needs are clearly being met in the educational environment.

Analyses of primary and secondary student teacher data also allow conclusions to be drawn as to the specific nature of literary experiences, when looking at the question of how literature has been important in participants' lives. Of the varied responses given, there were abundances in both student teacher groups of answers in the category, 'my literary affective experiences offer escape/ alternative worlds/ freedom'. This aesthetic, which Jackson describes as an infatuation with the imagined 'widest space' (Jackson, 1981:22), evidently contributes to a significant proportion of literary affective experiences. However, it is also interesting to note that data from secondary student teacher participants are more varied, demonstrating other factors that are important affective outcomes. Categories featuring only in the secondary student teacher group include, 'emotional development' 'exploration of personal weaknesses', 'personal strength', 'development of the imagination' and 'self-expression', and are reflective of intrinsic personal development. These data suggest the affective event is instilling psychological alterations and evoking a sense of freedom. Such reported abilities of literary texts further confirm occurrence of literary affect in psychological and cognitive forms, and highlight disparities between groups.

To offer concluding comments, it is evident that data illustrates disparities between secondary and primary student teacher groups. Most significantly, the nature of literary affective experiences is fundamentally different in each group. Primary student teacher participants demonstrate that their affective literary experiences are inherently linked to the educational environment and outwardly affective outcomes. Emphasis in these responses is upon teaching and learning, acquisition of knowledge and understanding. Extensions into personal literary spheres are suggested as almost secondary concerns. In contrast, secondary student teachers favour 'inner' dimensions of affect, where focus is

upon the psyche and intrinsic elements of the self. Conclusions from such data highlight the importance of the nature of literary affect in individual career choices in case study groups, and essentially, overall value of literary affective experiences in personal development and understanding.

v) Are there any differences between young and mature age groups' experiences of the literary and its affective capabilities?

Conclusions to this question are based on data analyses from Chapter VII and take into consideration two sub-issues:

- Are there disparities of literary affect in students of old compared to new syllabi?
- What issues in relation to literary affect and aesthetics are identified by students of the old compared to the new syllabus?

Conclusions drawn from data analyses illustrate a level of discrepancy between young and mature age participant group data. The majority of disparity, however, derives from the inclusion of primary and secondary student teachers when regarded as one group of 'young' participants (having sat the HSC post-1999) for purposes of analysis. However, this was acknowledged and accordingly, the post-1999 group was sub-divided into primary and secondary student teacher groups. The data suggests that there is significant comparison between *secondary* post-1999 and pre-1999 (who are all secondary) student teachers. Again, the majority of difference emerges between primary and secondary student teachers, and is evidenced by reduction of disparity between groups if the discrete primary group data is removed from analyses. As conclusions have previously dealt with differences between primary and secondary student teacher data, concentration is now, as far as is possible, upon analyses that included secondary student teachers only in post- and pre-1999 groups. Such conclusions provide sound foundation for the final issue under consideration, which relates to the study of English, literary affect and aesthetics in the postmodern epoch.

Particularly significant in light of critical assertions that the new NSW 1999 HSC English syllabus is failing students (Donnelly 2005; Slattery 2005), striking comparisons between data analyses of students of the old, compared to the new, syllabus, were also made. Both groups demonstrated high percentages of 'positive' literary experiences at school, at 79 per cent for the pre-1999 group and, quite significantly higher, 88 per cent for post-1999 participants. Data that explored whether affective experiences derived from personal or educational literary texts were also similar for the two groups, where in both groups there was a skew in favour of personal choice texts, although this difference was only seven per cent. Again, this highlights the importance of the personal aesthetic in promoting affective experiences, whilst affirming the high level of affect generated by school literary texts.

Exploration of texts cited as providing significant affective experiences suggest significant conclusions regarding the types of texts that generate such experiences. Data highlight the occurrence of affect derived from both 'literary' and 'popular culture' texts. The post-1999 group demonstrates 81 per cent whilst the pre-1999 group exhibits 79 per cent of responses pertaining to 'literary' texts provoking affect. To draw out more specific conclusions regarding affective experiences, data analyses explored texts in their capacity to 'excite' 'concern' and 'shock' participants. Participants in both groups revealed excitement found in a diverse range of canonical texts, modern literary texts and popular culture film texts. The pre-1999 group, for whom it was assumed responses would pertain more towards affect derived from canonical literature and classic literary texts (due to the exclusion of popular culture texts under the old syllabus), actually mention nearly as many film texts and one media text, as producing excitement. Reasons for this affect in the pre-1999 group are diverse, although trends towards character identification and empathy, personal development through challenging perspectives, the gaining of knowledge, and psychological and spiritual development are clearly emphasised. In this nature, participant responses engage with the emotions and situations of characters, where character experiences transpose into the readers own experiences, whilst at the same time offer new perspectives and events (connection through disconnection). Spiritually, participants were excited by texts that deal with the human

condition and humanity's relevance in the universe. Excitement in the post-1999 group concludes similar patterns, where texts from Shakespeare to *Blade Runner* are cited. Conclusions illustrate the paramount importance of inclusion of such a broad range of texts, where students find it 'interesting', 'engaging' 'helpful' and 'exciting' to compare and contrast: for example, Austen's *Emma* with the popular culture film, *Clueless*. Far from a neglect of the classics and retreat from aesthetics and affect, the testimonies of these student teachers illustrate the worth of such exercises and receiving of popular culture texts.

The issue of 'concern' also raised some interesting conclusions. Concern in both pre- and post-1999 groups is derived from literary texts that are deemed 'contentious'. Reactions are in response to specific textual content, and participants express worry about the presence of controversial issues in texts and exposure to such issues through their HSC study. However, there is also comment upon *lack of* exposure to topical issues: for example, not dealing with 'sexism' in the language of Alexander Pope's poetry. A similar concern is evident in one statement that suggests the redundancy of *Huckleberry Finn*: this participant comments, 'surely a similar journey of self-discovery can be found in recent books'. Nevertheless, data illustrates a wide variety of texts that achieve concerning affect, again from contemporary film, to the poetry of Wilfred Owen and Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Responses highlight the ability of these texts to offer alternative viewpoints, to challenge perceptions and to provide valuable insights (however bleak) into the otherwise unknown. Data for the 'shock' affective are just as diverse and reflective of very personal affect. Data for 'shock', in comparison with 'concern', goes hand-in-hand with morality and controversial issues in texts. It is thus affect derived from the challenging of participant values, or the awakening of contentious issues through literary engagement that produces 'shock' in participant case study groups. Although responses are diverse, the underlying theme that induces shock is the issues dealt with by the literature in question. In comparison to data for 'concern', this again illustrates the affective capabilities of these texts to evoke understanding, offer insights and alternative perspectives, and reveal new worlds for its readers. The 'shock' affective is thus ignited by the ability of literary texts to penetrate the psyche. Evidently, texts on

NSW HSC English syllabi are capable of and are inducing such affect, clearly providing its students with aesthetic affective experiences at psychological levels.

vi) How do findings relate to current debates surrounding the postmodern nature of literary study and subject English?

Current debates around subject English and literary texts focus upon the employment of critical literacy in the classroom and the introduction of postmodern popular culture texts, both of which have been criticised for inciting a dumbing down (Slattery 2005) of the new 1999 NSW HSC English syllabus. Conclusions from research data however provide interesting implications for criticism, which is substantially weakened in the wake of explorations into affective experiences of student teacher case study groups. First and foremost, the terrific amount and sheer diversity of affective experiences expressed in research data more than substantiates the occurrence of affective and aesthetic experiences in contemporary arenas; the founding research question of whether literary affect is alive or dead has certainly found its reply. In direct opposition to current contentions around the new 1999 syllabus, analyses reveal a high level of aestheticism, affect and literary engagement in the contemporary English classroom, which is at a level that maintains pre-1999 integrity.

The percentage of students having positive school literary experiences remains very similar in student teachers of the pre- *and* post-1999 syllabi, the insignificant one per cent difference being, in fact, in favour of positive experiences *post*-1999. This is in direct opposition to criticism, which predicted a reduction in student engagement with the literary under the new syllabus. In addition to this, data advocating 'school' literary texts as affective texts are encouraging for the new English syllabus, and the balance between private and educational texts as producing affect remains very similar pre- and post-1999. This testifies at the outset the occurrence of affective literary experiences both in and out of the educational environment, and a high percentage of pleasure, or the aesthetic, in

school literary engagement prior to and after NSW 1999 HSC English syllabus developments.

Furthering these conclusions, data illustrating the types of text that incite affect are also encouraging for the new syllabus, and further weaken attacks from critics. The percentage of affect derived from *literary* texts more than maintains the pre-1999 percentage, where concluding percentages for the pre- and post-1999 groups were 79 and 81 per cent, respectively. This data illustrates a two per cent increase in literary affective experiences derived from purely 'literary' texts (as opposed to, for example, popular culture texts). Current contention, worrying that students of the 1999 NSW English HSC no longer experience as much aesthetic affect, particularly from valued 'literary' texts, thus appears unfounded in light of these data analyses. This is more significant if it is taken into account that pre-1999 participants were not *able* to study popular culture texts and were limited to canonical prose, poetry and drama texts. Although post-1999 participants had opportunity under the new NSW 1999 HSC English syllabus to broaden their educational literary experiences to include popular culture and media texts, still participants demonstrate the majority of aesthetic affective experiences from *literary* texts and indeed from canonical and classic literature. At the same time, the value of popular culture and media texts is duly noted, where the pre- and post-1999 groups attribute seventeen and twelve per cent, respectively, of affective events to these texts. Thus, in contradiction to current conflicts that flag diminishment of literary aesthetic affect experienced by students of the new 1999 NSW HSC English syllabus, these data in fact support a continuing level of affective literary engagement. However, conclusions also reveal an overall swing towards affective experiences from more contemporary (rather than canonical) literary texts in the post-1999 group. This reflects changes endorsed by the NSW 1999 HSC English syllabus, where students study a much broader range of literary text than the previous syllabus, which adheres primarily to canonical and classical literature (NSW BOS, 1999 and 1982). Clearly in employing a varied and rich range of literary text, the HSC English experience is producing students who are aware of contentious issues and who are active participants in socio-cultural and political matters.

These results confirm the value of twenty-first century English curricula, providing documented support for advocates of the new English syllabus. Despite contemporary controversy, participants of this study specifically underline the affective aesthetic in their educational as well as private environments, which are evidentially providing opportunities for literary affect, aesthetic experiences and personal learning development.

vii) A comment on the UK Group in light of present findings

Despite the significant differences between the study group and the UK group of students, it is worth briefly commenting upon the UK group situation post research. Data and conclusions from this present study do not support the initial pre-research observations made in the UK. The deep love or and passion for literature exhibited in participant responses is a far cry from the lack of affect exhibited by the UK Group. This is a positive finding; obviously engagement and literary affect *is* possible in postmodern times, albeit in a very different study group and environment. Further research might probe the reasons for the discrepancy between the UK Group and present study groups, and indeed in general, between students in the UK and Australia. As the present study explored data from participants who had already sat their HSC, instead of students who were in the middle of their GCSEs (as were the UK Group), investigations into the time taken for affective experiences to manifest, or the implications for affect in English study in the UK may also provide further conclusions.

viii) In Summary

Participant data evidence that literary affect is very much alive in contemporary arenas. Differences emerge as to the nature of affective experiences, in particular between student teachers of primary and secondary education. Nevertheless, affective and aesthetic experiences are given acclamation by participants, who demonstrate susceptibility to a wide range of literary affect. Such varied affective events, many of

which involve personal aesthetics, support the return or emergence of a revised form of aesthetics, and additionally, offer specific illustrations as to what this new aestheticism looks like in contemporary arenas. It is vividly illustrated that both canonical and contemporary literary texts, including film texts, play significant part in stimulation of affective experiences at psychological, emotional and spiritual levels. Participants of this study evidently found it easy to comment upon affect derived from personal texts and texts on the new 1999 NSW HSC English syllabus, and to contextualise and qualify that affect by explaining the nature of their engagement. Excitement, that is, the stimulation, enthusiasm, inspiration and interest (terms from the Affect Scale) that participants found in these texts, strongly suggests the survival of literary affect and its ability to creep into perceived 'non-literary' (e.g. popular culture) texts, as well as canonical texts. Study data are testament to the multitudes of meanings, knowledge and stimulation borne from such affective and aesthetic engagements with the literary, and suggest that literary affect is very much alive in the postmodern epoch, capable of profound influence upon readers. As one participant notes:

You know, you may think you're not affected by literature, but sometimes it just sits in your brain, and further down the track it springs back again and keeps coming back until you're compelled to do something with it...you shouldn't underestimate the power of texts, of the word of literature, however you see, read or hear it.

Reference List

- Albon, S. 1993, *Human feelings: Explorations in affect development and meaning*, The Analytic press, London.
- Andrews, R. 2001, *Teaching and learning English: A guide to recent research and its applications*, Continuum, London.
- Aristotle, cited in Bettelheim, B. 1991, *The Uses of enchantment: The meaning and importance of fairy tales*, Penguin Books Ltd, London.
- Armstrong, I. 2000, *The radical aesthetic*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford and Massachusetts.
- Arnold, M. 1889, *Essays in criticism*, Macmillan and Co., London.
- Arnold, M. 1910, *Reports on elementary schools 1852-1882*, Macmillan and Co., London.
- Attridge, D. 2004, *The singularity of literature*, Routledge, London.
- Babbie, E. R. 2004, *The practice of social research*, 10th edn, Thomson / Wadsworth, Belmont.
- Ball, S. & Lacey, C. 1984, 'Subject disciplines as the opportunity for group action: A measured critique of sub-cultures', in *Classrooms and staffrooms* ed. A.H.P. Woods, Open University Press, Milton Keynes.
- Banham, G. 2003, 'Kant and the ends of criticism', in *The new aestheticism* eds J. J. Joughin & S. Malpas, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.
- Beaumont Bissell, E. 2002, *The question of literature: The place of the literary in contemporary theory*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

- Beavis, C. 2006, 'English at a time of change: Where do we go with text?' *English in Australia* vol.41, no.2, pp.61-68.
- Bennett, A. 2006, *The history boys: The film*, Faber and Faber, London.
- Bennett, M. & Sani, F. (eds) 2004, *The development of the social self*, Psychology Press, East Sussex.
- Berkowitz, L. 2000, *Causes and consequences of feelings*, Cambridge University Press, England.
- Bettleheim, B. 1991, *The Uses of enchantment: The meaning and importance of fairy tales*, Penguin Books Ltd, London.
- Bogdan, R. & Biklen, S.K. 1998, *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.
- Bonnycastle, S. 2002, *In search of authority: An introductory guide to literary theory*, 2nd edn, Broadview Press, Ontario.
- Borg, W. R. & Gall, M. D. 1989, *Educational research: An introduction*, 5th edn, Longman, New York.
- Boswell, B. 2002, 'The exploration of a concept that has gone off the HSC rails', *Sydney morning herald*, 21 October.
- Bowie, A. 2003a, *Aesthetics and subjectivity from Kant to Nietzsche*, 2nd edn, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- Breuer 1892, *Sketches for the preliminary commission of 1983*, SE.
- Bruner, J. 1990, *Acts of meaning*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts.
- Cariney, T. 2004, 'Literature and life: How text can shape lives and build communities of interest and belonging', *Get real and all that spiel*, Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Sydney.

Christie, F., Devlin, B., Freebody, P., Luke, A., Martin, J.R., Threadgold, T. and Walton, C. 1991, *Teaching English literacy: A project of national significance on the preservice preparation of teachers for teaching English and literacy*, Department of Employment, Education and Training, Canberra.

Clifford, J. 1991, *The experience of reading: Louise Rosenblatt and reader response theory*, Boynton/Cook, Upper Montclair.

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. 1994, *Research methods in education*, Routledge, London and New York.

Collingwood, R. G. 1958, *The principles of art*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Collins, A. 2005, 'Reflections on cultural crossroads: 'Empowering' students in a critical literacy classroom' *English in Australia*, vol.143, Spring, pp.48-59.

Cooper, D. (ed.) 1992, *A companion to aesthetics*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

Cox, B. 1989, *English for ages 5-16*, Department for Education and Science, London.

Cox, B. 1991, *Cox on Cox: An English curriculum for the 1990s*, Hodder, London.

Crawshaw, D. 2007, 'PM lashes 'sludge' taught in schools', *The Australian*, 8th February.

Doecke, B. Homer, D. & Nixon, H. 2003, *English teachers at work: Narratives, counternarratives and arguments*, Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Wakefield University Press, Australia.

Donnelly, K. 2005a, 'Cannon fodder of the culture wars', *The Australian*, 9th February.

Donnelly, K. 2005, 'Teach the simple joys of reading', *The Australian*, 26th July.

Doyle, B. 1989, *English and Englishness*, Routledge, London and New York.

During, S. 2004, cited in Hillis Miller, J. 2002, *On literature*, Routledge, London and New York.

Durrant, C. & Beavis, C. (eds) 2001, *P(ICT)URES of English: Teachers, learners and technology*, Wakefield Press, South Australia.

Eaglestone, R. 2003, 'Critical knowledge, scientific knowledge and the truth of literature', in *The New Aestheticism*, eds J. J. Joughin & S. Malpas, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.

Eagleton, T. 1967, *Shakespeare and society: Critical studies in Shakespearean drama*, Schocken Books, New York.

Eagleton, T. 1983, *Literary theory an introduction*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

Eagleton, T. 1984, *The function of criticism*, Verso, London and New York.

Eagleton, T. 1990, *The ideology of the aesthetic*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

Erikson, Florio & Buschman 1980, cited in Borg, W. R. & Gall, M. D. 1989, *Educational research: An introduction*, 5th edn, Longman, New York.

Fish, S. 1980, 'How to recognise a poem when you see one', in *Is there a text in this class?: The authority of interpretive communities*, ed S. Fish, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts and London, England.

Freesmith, D. 2006, 'The politics of the English curriculum: Ideology in the campaign against critical literacy', *English in Australia*, vol.41, no.1, pp.25-30.

Gale, T. 2006, 'How did we ever arrive at the conclusion that teachers are the problem?: A critical reading in the discourses of Australian schooling' *English in Australia*, vol.41, no.2, pp.12-26.

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. 1967, *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*, Aldine Publishing Company, Chicago.

- Glover, R. 2002, 'Ghost of postmodernism haunts the corridors of literature yet', *Sydney morning herald*, 26th October.
- Goodwyn, A. & Powell, M. 2003, 'Canonical texts, critical literacy and the classroom: The case of the *Lady of Shalott*', *English in Australia*, vol.138, Spring, pp.51-55
- Gubrium, J. F. & Holstien, J. A. 2002, *Handbook of interview research: context and method*, Sage Publications, London.
- Harris, T. & Maiden, S. 2005, 'You failed your voting test, kids, and teacher's to blame' *The Australian*, 9th February.
- Her Majesty's Stationery Office 1963, *The Newsom report: Half our future*, HMSO, London.
- Hillis Miller, J. 2002, *On literature*, Routledge, London and New York.
- Holden, J. & Schmit, J. (eds) 2002, *Inquiry and the literary text: Constructing discussions in the English classroom*, National council for the teaching of English, USA.
- Holland, N. 1968, *The Dynamics of Literary Response*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Holland, N. 1975, *5 readers reading*, Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Hull, G. & Schultz, K. 2002, *School's out: Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice*, Teachers College Press, New York.
- Iser, W. 1989, *Prospecting: From reader response to literary anthropology*, The John Hopkins University Press, London.
- Jackson, R. 1981, *Fantasy: The literature of subversion*, Routledge, London.
- Jauss, H. R. 1982, *Toward an aesthetic of reception*, Translated by T. Bahti, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Jetnikoff, A. 2006, 'Combatting Cyclops: Critical approaches to media literacy and popular culture in senior English', *English in Australia*, vol.41, no.1, pp.37-45.

Joughin, J. J. & Malpas, S. 2003, 'The New Aestheticism: an introduction', in *The New Aestheticism*, eds J. J. Joughin & S. Malpas, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.

King, J. 2002, 'This is not a headline, it's an HSC exam text', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3rd September.

Langer, J. 1995, *Envisioning literature: Literary understanding and literature instruction*, Teachers College Press, New York.

Lankshear, C. & McLaren, P. (eds) 1993, *Critical literacy: Politics, praxis, and the postmodern*, State University of New York Press, Albany New York.

Lewis, S. & Salusinszky, I. 2006, 'PM canes rubbish postmodern teaching', *The Australian*, 21st April.

Lofland, J. and Lofland, L. H. 1995, *Analysing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis*, Wadsworth Publishing Company, California.

Luke, A. 1993, 'Genres of power? Literacy education and the production of capital', in *Literacy in society*, eds C. Hasan & G. Williams, Longman, London.

Manuel, J. 2002, 'Making its debut: What teachers think of the new higher school certificate English syllabus in New South Wales', *English in Australia*, vol.134, July, pp.67-77.

Marshall, C. and Rossman, G. B. 1995, *Designing Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications, London, California and New Dehli.

Matthews, R. 2002, *Fantasy: The liberation of imagination*, Routledge, London.

McGraw, K. 2005, 'HSC English in the media: The reporting of conventions and controversies', *English In Australia*, vol.143, Spring, pp.27-35.

Merriam, S. B. 1988, *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*, Jossey-Bass, San Fransisco.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, M. 1984, *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills.

Misson, R. & Morgan, W. 2006, *Critical literacy and the aesthetic* National Council of Teachers of English, Illinois.

Morgan, W. 1997, *Critical literacy in the classroom the art of the possible*, Routledge Press, London and New York.

Muspratt, S. Luke, A. & Freebody, P (eds) (1997) *Constructing Critical Literacies: Teaching and Learning Textual Practice*, Allen and Unwin, London.

NSW Board of Studies 1982, *Stage 6 syllabus English: Preliminary and HSC courses*, Board of Studies, Sydney NSW.

NSW Board of Studies 1999a *K-10 curriculum framework & NSW English Yrs 7-10 syllabus*, Board of Studies, Sydney NSW.

NSW Board of Studies 1999b, *Stage 6 syllabus English: Preliminary and HSC courses*, Board of Studies, Sydney NSW.

NSW Board of Studies 1999c, *Stage 6 prescriptions*, Board of Studies, Sydney NSW.

NSW Board of Studies Senior English Review Committee 1997, *Report on the draft English stage 6 syllabus consultation*, Board of Studies, Sydney NSW.

Nietzsche, F. W. 1956, *The birth of tragedy and the genealogy of morals*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York.

Nietzsche, F. W. 1882, *The gay science*, B. Williams (ed.), translated by J. Nouckhoff, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Peel, R. Patterson, A. & Gerlach, J. 2000, *Questions of English: Ethics, aesthetics, rhetoric, and the formation of the subject in England, Australia and the United States*, Routledge Falmer, London.

Punch, K. 1998, *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*, Sage Publications, London.

Purves, A. Rogres, T. & Soter, A. 1990, *How porcupines make love III: Readers, texts, cultures in the response-based literature classroom*, Longman Publishers, USA.

Regan, S. 1998, *The Eagleton reader*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Richards, I. A. 1924, *Principles of literary criticism*, Kegan Paul, Tranch & Trubner, London.

Robson, C. 1993, *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Rosen, H. 1983, *Stories and meanings*, National Association for the Teaching of English, Sheffield.

Rosenblatt, L. 1978, *The reader, the text, the poem*, Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale, Illinois.

Rosenblatt, L. 1995, *Literature as exploration*, Modern Language Association, New York.

Rubin, H. and Rubin, R. 1995, *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*, Sage, California.

Ryan, M. 1999, *Literary theory: A practical introduction*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford and Massachusetts.

Ryan, J, 2005, 'Young people choose: Adolescents' text pleasures', *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, vol.28, no.1.

Said, E. W. 1983, *The world, the text and the critic*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge and Massachusetts.

Said, E. W. 1993, *Culture and Imperialism*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Sawyer, W. 2006, 'The condition of music: The aesthetic turn in English' *English in Australia*, vol.41, no.2, pp.27-34.

Sawyer, W. Watson, K. & Gold, E. 1998, *Re-Viewing English*, St Clair Press, Sydney.

Scruton, R. 1991, 'Recent aesthetics in England and America', *Aesthetics and arts education*, eds R. Smith & A. Simpson, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago.

Slattery, L. 2005, 'Fading theory has no place in schools', *The Australian*, 23-24 July.

Stanley, G. 2001, 'The Bard lives – in a high school near you', *Sydney morning herald*, 3rd May.

Stein, R. 1991, *Psychoanalytic theories of affect*, Praeger, London.

Tolstoy, L. 1960, *What is art?*, Liberal Arts Press, The Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., New York.

Thomson, J. 1987, *Understanding teenagers' reading: Reading processes and the teaching of English*, Methuen and Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Ryde, NSW.

Wallen, N. E. 1991, *Educational research: A guide to the process*, McGraw-Hill, New York.

Welch, D. 2006, 'PM blasts rubbish books in schools', *The Sydney morning herald*, 20th April.

Whitehead, F. 1969, 'Why teach English?', in *Directions in the teaching of English*, ed. D. Thompson, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Widdowson, P. 1999, *Literature*, Routledge, London.

Williams, R. 1958, *Culture and society, 1780-1950*, Columbia University Press, London and New York.

Williams, R. 1961, *The long revolution*, Columbia University Press, London and New York.

Willinsky, J. 1990, *The new literacy*, Routledge, London and New York.

Wyndham, H.S. 1957, *Report of the committee appointed to survey secondary education in NSW*, Report Number 49, Parliamentary Paper, Sydney.

Yin, R. K. 1993, *Case study research: Design and methods (applied social research methods)*, Sage Publications Inc., London, California and New Dehli.

Zajonc, R. B. 1980, 'Feeling and thinking: preferences need no inferences', *American psychologist*, vol. 35, pp.151-175.

Zuidervaart, L 2003, 'Theodor Adorno' *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*, Winter edn., ed. E. N. Zalta. Retrieved 16th November 2006 from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/adorno/#6>

Appendices

APPENDIX ONE **Student Questionnaire**

Personal profile sheet

Name (optional) _____

Gender (please tick) male female

Age (please tick) Under 20 yrs 20-25 yrs 26-30yrs
 31-35 yrs 36-40 yrs 41-45 yrs
 46-50 yrs 51-55 yrs 56-60 yrs
 60+ yrs

Type of Secondary School attended:
(please tick all relevant statements from the categories below)

1. Private Public

2. Large country town Small country town City North suburbs
 City West suburbs City East suburbs City South suburbs

3. Comprehensive Single sex

4. Senior Selective

5. Central school (primary & secondary combined)

Year Completed HSC (please state) _____

University Attending (please state) _____

Thank you!

Please leave this page attached & turn over for the questionnaire

Questionnaire

- Q1. Was your experience of literary texts at high school... *(tick)* Positive
 Negative

*Why? (please **briefly** explain)*

- Q2. Can you list three texts you remember from your childhood and/or adolescence that had an impact on you? These can be from private or school reading (please state which)

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

- Q3. In what capacity did these texts affect you? Please briefly describe *(what issues or themes influenced you, which characters impacted on you; how did they affect you – emotionally? Your attitude or thoughts? Your development? Spiritually?)*

- Q4. Can you name a few texts that you didn't like to engage with *(for example that you didn't finish reading, didn't enjoy, found hard to focus on)?*

*Why? (please **briefly** explain)*

Q5. What is important to you in a literary text? (*List as many things as you wish*)

Q6. What made you decide to become a teacher of English?

Q7. Are you familiar with either recent or current Y12 English syllabuses or text lists? (*please tick the relevant box(es)*)

- Current New South Wales HSC
- Previous New South Wales HSC
- Other (*please specify*) _____

Did any text, literary or otherwise, from this syllabus / these syllabuses:

Excite you? (*which text(s) and why? please **briefly** explain*)

Concern you? (*which text(s) and why? please **briefly** explain*)

Shock you? (*which text(s) and why? please **briefly** explain*)

Q8. Do you think that English and the study of literature at Y12 HSC has changed in recent years? How? What is your reaction to this?

Q9. Can you think of any time(s) in your life where literature has been (either positively or negatively) important? This could be physical changes, emotions, thoughts, ideas or attitudes, psychological or ideological? *(Please answer as fully as possible and cite particular texts if possible)*

Q10. Why are literature and teaching English important to you?

Thank you!

APPENDIX TWO

Literary Affect: Alive or Dead?

Information Sheet for Participants

THANKYOU! For your participation in this study. The following information provides more in-depth understanding as to the nature of the study and its goals. I hope you enjoy partaking in the research; your input is much valued and appreciated. Thanks!

The Overall Research Question

Is literary affect occurring in students of the old and new HSW HSC English syllabi?

Our Aims for the Project:

- To identify the affects of literary texts upon students of the NSW HAS English syllabi. Exploration will be into the types of texts that provoked reader identification, looking at which literature was more or less influential and for what reason(s).
- To investigate the subsequent affects of these texts upon personal understanding and behaviour, and on personal, social and cultural identity formation, in relation to the changing face of the syllabus.
- To analyse any differences in the affect of various literary texts.
- To explore the similarities and differences of affective experiences between primary and secondary student teachers and between students who sat their HSC prior to and post-1999.

Value of Our Study

The research will inform literature and education studies. It will offer insights to the nature of personal identification with literature and will provide opportunity to reflect on the 'value' of literature. Educationally, these reflections may go some way to better engagement with literature in school; choosing the texts that pupils are more likely to be interested in may yield better student appreciation of their literature experience, attaining the 'pleasure' element of the English syllabus. The

value of literature in contemporary and historic syllabuses may inform future progress of the English syllabus.

What do the Focus Group Interviews Involve?

Focus groups and interviews allow a deeper exploration of some of the issues raised in the questionnaires. They will require you to give some personal information about your background, in order to support the aims of the study. The questions and discussions of the focus groups and interviews will be very flexible, and will be lead by myself. It will be a very informal atmosphere and the most important thing is to enjoy the discussions and feel comfortable chatting about literature and your experiences! Focus groups will not last for longer than an hour and will aim to finish after 40 minutes.

What will happen to my Responses?

The outputs from questionnaires and focus groups will be collaborated and analysed in light of the research question and the aims of the study. These analyses will then inform the thesis project, which will attempt to answer the questions posed. The results of the questionnaires will remain both anonymous and confidential, and the focus groups and interview outputs will remain confidential.

I will endeavour to make participation in groups and interviews as interesting and enjoyable as possible, with a relaxed environment where we can enjoy talking about literature!

Thank you again for your help.

APPENDIX THREE

Focus Group Outline

Discussion in the focus groups will hinge upon the questions already posed in the questionnaires, exploring these issues in further depth.

Also, the focus groups will explore:

- 1) **Responses to and experiences of literary texts**
 - a) What texts do participants remember from childhood and adolescence, and what experiences have they attached?
 - b) Affect: participants will be asked to think of time(s) in their lives when literature has played a part
 - c) Why participants think literature is important / why it is important to them personally

- 2) **The school English lesson / curriculum**
 - a) The differences between school and university experiences of literature
 - b) Reasons participants liked / disliked English at school
 - c) What makes literature successful / rejected by pupils?
Why do some pupils engage whilst others disengage, looking at themes and topics, types of text

- 3) **Personal career choices & professional issues**
 - a) What are participant's reasons for wanting to teach English
 - b) To what extent participants agrees with

[statements from literature review / other literature to be inserted] .
Participants will then be asked to attribute any personal experiences with these statements in relation to their agreement / disagreement level (which will be likert scale)

Consent Form for Participants

Literary Affect: Alive or Dead?

A research project to investigate the affective dimension of the adolescent literary experiences of student teachers.

Persons Responsible

Emma D. Thomas (02) 6773 5054 email: ethoma20@une.edu.au

Dr David Baxter (02) 6773 3812 email: dbaxter@une.edu.au

Dr Corinne Buckland (02) 6773 3847 email: cbucklan@une.edu.au

In signing below, I (print full name) agree that I have read the information in the information sheet for participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, realising that I may withdraw at any time. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published, provided my name is not used.

I am 18 years of age or older.

I agree to participate in the questionnaire.

Participant signature

I am willing to attend a focus group and I understand that the focus group interviews that form part of this research project will be audio taped.

Participant signature

OR

I am willing to participate in a Web CT discussion and understand responses will be printed off.

Participant signature.....

Investigator signature

Please retain the *Information Sheet for Participants* and return this consent form with the completed questionnaire to Emma Thomas, School of Education, Milton Building, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2350. If you are on university premises you may place the forms under the door of my room, LG23, in the Milton Annexe, or in internal mail with the above address.

APPENDIX FIVE

Survey Codebook

Survey Item	Coding Categories for quantification of data
Q2. List three texts you remember from childhood /adolescence that had impact on you	1) Contemporary literature 2) Contemporary popular culture texts 3) Canonical or classic literature 4) Art house film texts 5) Contemporary non-fiction 6) No response
Q3. Briefly describe in what capacity these texts affected you	1) Identity formation – related to characters 2) Provided me with striking insights into reality 3) I enjoyed reading 4) Aided understanding through info. and empathy 5) Offered me alternative perspectives 6) Ignited my imagination / creativity 7) Allowed me self-expression 8) Helped me deal with personal situation 9) Identity formation – related to themes 10) Affected my religious views 11) Challenged my social constructs and understanding 12) Shaped my future career / recreation decisions 13) Increased my self esteem 14) Provoked my interest in topic / themes 15) Created passion within me 16) Offered escape 17) No response
Q5. What is important to you in a literary text?	1) Theme 2) Relatable characters 3) Language style 4) Descriptive / strong imagery 5) Fluid / interesting plot 6) Relate to text 7) Reflects personal experiences (identify) 8) Offers learning 9) Changes / challenges perceptions or views 10) Easy to understand 11) Imaginative / creates mystery/suspense/ engages 12) Operates on many levels 13) Moves you emotionally

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14) Contains pictures 15) Contains love / relationship theme 16) Deals with human nature 17) Explores values / morality
<p>Q9. Can you think of any time(s) in your life where literature has been really important?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Literary texts have been educationally important 2) Literary texts provide a lens through which the world is explored 3) Literary texts have aided my emotional development 4) Literary texts have provided me with socio-cultural awareness 5) Literary texts offer me escape, alternative experiences and/or freedom 6) Literary texts reassure me I am not alone / provide friends 7) Literary texts aid my psychological /spiritual development 8) Literary texts have affected my religious beliefs and views 9) Literary texts have been personally relevant 10) Literary texts challenge my perceptions 11) Literary texts enable me to explore my weaknesses 12) Literary texts make me a stronger person 13) Literary texts aid imaginative and creative development 14) Literary texts allow me self-expression

APPENDIX SIX

Psychological Testing: The Affect Scale

The words below describe different feelings and emotions. Please put a number from 1 to 5 to the left of each word to describe how you feel in general. Use the following five-point scale:

- 1 = very slightly or not at all
- 2 = a little
- 3 = moderately
- 4 = quite a bit
- 5 = extremely

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| ___ 1. interested | ___ 11. alert |
| ___ 2. distressed | ___ 12. irritable |
| ___ 3. excited | ___ 13. inspired |
| ___ 4. upset | ___ 14. ashamed |
| ___ 5. strong | ___ 15. determined |
| ___ 6. guilty | ___ 16. nervous |
| ___ 7. scared | ___ 17. jittery |
| ___ 8. hostile | ___ 18. afraid |
| ___ 9. enthusiastic | ___ 19. attentive |
| ___ 10. proud | ___ 20. active |