

## Key themes from *The Sudden Storm* to expand on

The following are themes and prompts from the podcast that you may wish to raise for discussion with your class:

### War and gender and role of women

- Female leadership - Irene Drummond's words to her nurses. Would a man say the same thing? (Pt 1)
- Values - Fortitude, courage, endurance, and grace. Plus duty – it is not just a male attribute (Pt 1).
- Professor Christina Twomey said that the story about the women *challenges ideas about what war is and who can be part of it* (Pt 2).
- The language of war is gendered, men with battlefield and women with the home front. (Pt 2).
- When women veer on to the battlefield as these women did, it challenges the idea that women should be protected from war and not part of it (Pt 2).
- Women being taken prisoner was problematic...women were meant to be on the home front protected away from conflict (Pt 2). Consider the reaction of the rescued male POWs when they first saw the evacuated sisters in Singapore hospitals.
- Challenges the understanding of what the of women is during war (Pt 2).
- The whole notion of reputation and shame. The possible cover-up about whether the nurses were raped on Radji beach – changing attitudes over time towards women and sex and sexual abuse (Pt 2).
- Annie Sage bringing the women lipsticks – student reactions? (Pt 2).
- Nurses were 'fattened up' in Singapore rather than being immediately returned to Australia. Why?
- Media's reaction to the women (Pt 2). Look at this article by the Australian Women's Weekly and how the women were portrayed, there's even fat shaming in it!  
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/55465571>. A copy of the article with the text can be found here in resources.
- Make comparisons to the role of women in society today and women in service.

### Society and Privilege

- The lifestyle of an 'expatriate' living in colony (Pt 1). What issues does this raise?

### Commemoration

- Why should we remember? How should we? The podcast explores the many ways and places where the nurses are commemorated, yet it is still not a well-known story.
- Role of the RSL (Pt 4)
- Communities commemorating their 'own' (Pt 4, Pt 5, Pt 6). Why is this seen as important?
- What do you think is the legacy of the nurses? This is discussed by numerous contributors throughout the podcast. Do you agree with their opinions?