

# HISTORY EXTENSION

## Political Historiography of the Apology to the Stolen Generations

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# PROJECT PROPOSAL

## Chosen Topic Area:

The **Apology to the Stolen Generations** (from the 1930s)

## Focus Area:

The controversial contention reflected in the long awaited Apology, on behalf of the Indigenous subjects of the Stolen Generations by the Australian Government and Australian nation as a whole.

Examine the contextual and political reasons behind the delay in the 'Apology' and the resulting impacts on Indigenous peoples through portrayals and interpretations of Aboriginal history up until the present.

## Focus Question:

**'In what nature does the historian's political and subjective characteristics influence the historian's writings, recordings and interpretations of the past?' in relation to 'Why has a national Australian Apology for the Stolen Generations taken so long?'**

Analyse the influence of historians within the field of this historical debate, and how the subjective nature of these historians and their varying interpretations, have in turn, influenced the writings of the past within political history. Analyse the subjective interpretations of historians, whether sympathisers or detractors, and how their subjective nature and primarily, political ideologies, have influenced the recordings of the past. Explore these historical concepts in relation to the subjective nature of history, as the meaning and responsibility for the creation of subjective; contextual, political and cultural perspectives and interpretations within the recordings of historical documents.

## Preliminary Research Issues:

- Injustices experienced by the Stolen Generations (including the policy of 'Assimilation'), and hence, the resulting reasons for the requirement of an Apology from the Australian Government and nation
- Definition of a cultural 'Apology' from an Indigenous perspective
- Reasons addressed in PM Kevin Rudd's national Apology to the Stolen Generations
- What may be the contextual reasons and political agendas for the delay in an Australian national Apology to the Stolen Generations?
- What may have been the conflicting political agendas and personal subjective factors of historians, creating differing interpretations and perspectives regarding views on the willingness to pursue a national Apology?
- Can the delay of this Apology prejudice a genuine and reasonable acceptance on behalf of the Stolen Generations? (Has the Apology to the Stolen Generations been conducted too late?)
- Has the attitude and portrayal of the Stolen Generations changed within the conscious awareness of historical writers and personalities, as to the potential vs. factual impacts upon Aborigines up until the present?
- Which historians (of the past, modern and contemporary) have written about the Stolen Generations and their desire and cultural need for an apology? (How have their attitudes changed over time?) What evidence and beliefs have been presented by Stolen Generation sympathisers and detractors?
- What views, efforts, arguments and attitudes have been presented by politicians, the Australian Government and Apology detractors, in regards to recognition of the Stolen Generations and Reconciliation (and how have these changed over time)? What attitudes, efforts and arguments have Indigenous Australian sympathisers expressed towards Reconciliation and Apology?

## Resultant Enquiry Questions:

- What is history?
- Why and how; is history recorded?
- Who are the dominant historians (Indigenous or Non-Indigenous?) writing within this field of historical debate? (How have subjective factors and understandings of historians influenced interpretation and attitude over time?)
- Why have many (past and modern) historians and political leaders chosen to support, ignore or oppose aspects of the Stolen Generation?
- What arguments have been presented by Stolen Generation sympathisers and detractors? (Through what evidence has this been conveyed?) How has this influenced the portrayal and attitudes towards an Apology for the Stolen Generations to be changed over time?
- How has the media (e.g. films, newspaper articles, etc.) influenced political opinion within the historical context of the Stolen Generations? Are these historical sources subjectively questionable?
- Why were negative and detracting attitudes presented by politicians and the Australian Government, in regards to recognition of the Stolen Generations and Reconciliation (and how have political perspectives and agendas of historians changed over time within the recordings of the past)?
- **What influence does the subjective interpretations of historians within this historical debate have on the recordings of political history? Is the nature of history and writings of history influenced by historians' varying interpretations and subjective nature? -- (How has this changed over time within the recordings of the past?)**
- **Support this argument by referring and linking this concept back to historians of the past and interpretations regarding the purpose of political history.**
- **In what nature does the historian's political, contextual and subjective characteristics influence the nature of the historian's historical writings, recordings and interpretations of the past?**

## Resources Identified to Date & Bibliography of Sources:

- 'Australia' [Film], (2008), Directed by Baz Luhrmann, Release Date (Australia): 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008
- AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT, Department of Education, Science and Training, The National Centre for History Education, "Removal", <<http://hyperhistory.org/images/removal.jpg>>, Copyright 2002.
- Awabakal Newcastle Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd, 38a Samdon Street, Hamilton NSW 2303, Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC)
- BERGEN Community College, Sydney Silverman Library, "Primary vs. Secondary", <<http://www.bergen.cc.nj.us/pages/2443.asp>>, August 2005/July 2008, Copyright 2008.
- CLAUSEN, Lisa, "Resurrection Day", Time, Australia Magazine, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008
- ENIAR, "Only understanding will bring down the fence dividing a nation", Source: The Observer, <<http://www.eniar.org/news/rabbit2.html>>, Copyright 2008.
- FAIRFAX Media, The Herald, "Stolen Generations", <<http://www.theherald.com.au/newssearch.aspx?q=stolen+generations&date=2&type=1>>, Copyright 2008.
- 'First Australians, The Untold Story of Australia', SBS Television, Director/Writer/Producer: Rachel Perkins, Release date: 12<sup>th</sup> October 2008
- HILL, Marji, Stories of The Stolen Generations, Pearson Education Australia, Port Melbourne, Victoria; Copyright 2008
- KAMERA.co.uk, Film Review, "Rabbit-Proof Fence", <[http://www.kamera.co.uk/reviews\\_extra/rabbit-proof\\_fence.php](http://www.kamera.co.uk/reviews_extra/rabbit-proof_fence.php)>, Copyright 1999/2004.

- NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE, Australian Screen, Clip/Extract: Beyond Sorry (2003) [Documentary; part of the Nganampa Anwernekenhe series produced by Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) Productions], "Beyond Sorry", <<http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/beyond-sorry/clip1/>>, Copyright 2008.
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- PARBURY, Nigel, Survival, A History of Aboriginal Life in New South Wales, Surry Hills NSW, NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs; 2005
- QUARTLY, Professor Marian, <<http://www.epress.monash.edu/ha/about.html>>, September 2008.
- 'Rabbit-Proof Fence' [Film], (2002), (based on the book biography/novel; Follow The Rabbit-Proof Fence, Directed by Phillip Noyce, Written by Doris Pilkington, Release date (Australia): 21<sup>st</sup> February 2002
- STEPHENS, Tony, Fairfax Digital, The Sydney Morning Herald, smh.com.au, "Daughter dies with her story still incomplete", <<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/01/14/1073877902433.html>>, and <[http://www.smh.com.au/ffxImage/urlpicture\\_id\\_1073877900277\\_2004/01/14/nat\\_mollykelly15\\_01.jpg](http://www.smh.com.au/ffxImage/urlpicture_id_1073877900277_2004/01/14/nat_mollykelly15_01.jpg)>, Article: January 15, 2004, Copyright 2008.
- THE AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, The National Organisation for All Historians, <<http://www.theaha.org.au/>>, October 2008.

#### Sources Used for Background Knowledge:

- WIKIPEDIA, The Free Encyclopaedia, "Doris Pilkington Garimara", <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doris\\_Pilkington\\_Garimara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doris_Pilkington_Garimara)>, October 2008.
- WIKIPEDIA, The Free Encyclopaedia, "Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence", <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Follow\\_the\\_Rabbit-Proof\\_Fence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Follow_the_Rabbit-Proof_Fence)>, December 2008
- WIKIPEDIA, The Free Encyclopedia. "History Wars". <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_Wars#Black\\_armband\\_debate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_Wars#Black_armband_debate)>, Last Updated – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

#### Relevant Methodologies and Rationale Behind Their Choice:

- Consider and ensure all source's; reliability, accuracy, validity and accessibility, when conducting historical methodologies and further research.
- Primary Sources: Look at what was written/published before and at the time of the Apology conduction, including: Indigenous and political historians, personal accounts (diaries, letters, novels/autobiographies/biographies, articles, interviews, etc.) this can be used in comparison to the writings of historians of a modern context. By using primary sources, it can be established as to whether or not attitudes to the Stolen Generation sympathisers and detractors have changed over time – through the reliability of first-hand perspectives.
- Secondary Sources: From a range of sources (books; especially those with writings of professional historians, such as: PARBURY, Nigel, 'Survival, A History of Aboriginal Life in New South Wales' and HILL, Marji, 'Stories of The Stolen Generations', films, articles, encyclopaedia, documentaries, biographies, etc.) identification of the facts and general knowledge, contextual and historical background of the Stolen Generation, how society's attitudes have changed over time, and how interpretations are determined by personal experiences and political standpoints of historians.
- Newspaper Articles: Composed for a wide audience, (and therefore subject to criticism and interpretation), reflects what the opinion, attitudes and perspectives were before and at the time of the Apology conduction (primary articles) and how these attitudes have changed over time (primarily secondary articles). Research mainly to be conducted from Newcastle Herald and Awabakal archives.

- **Historical Journals:** Comparing journals, especially those of Time, Australia, with newspaper articles, to show how attitudes and interpretations of Stolen Generation sympathisers and detractors have changed over time, to either support or criticise political and cultural standpoints.
- **Archival Research:** mainly via NEWCAT (University of Newcastle Database), Awabakal Archives and Newcastle Herald Archives (newspaper articles in archives), in order to obtain copies of relevant primary sources written/published within the relevant time period of this historical debate, and hence, reliable for first-hand perspectives.
- **Interviews:** via Awabakal and the University of Newcastle; gaining an Aboriginal first-hand, personal perspective (primary source), in order to obtain an understanding for individual/subjective interpretations and perspectives on the Apology debate, as a result of personal experiences within the historical and cultural context of the Stolen Generations.

### Tasks for the Holidays:

- Use project proposal to be the basis for further research areas and questions, and hence, begin project report
- Conduct further research to collect a wider selection and types of sources (both primary and secondary) and therefore, obtain numerous sources to be compared and contrasted in relation to a change in attitude over time and differing interpretations associated with the Stolen Generation Apology and it's controversy throughout history
- Analyse and evaluate all sources identified to date in great depth and detail as interpreted by various historians, and taking into account, their perspectives and standpoints (identify reasons for being subjective; background, experience, etc.)
- Continue recording progress of project and research in log book over holidays, to enhance and assist organisation and time management during the course of completion of this major project
- Arrange suitable appointment time for archive research at Awabakal and Newcastle Herald, and also inquire for a possible interview

**The subjective nature of political history, recordings within history and historical documents, carries the ultimate responsibility for varying interpretation concerning the need for a national Apology. Contextually subjective history within the 'Apology debate' is primarily the creation of political and cultural perspectives of both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous historians. Explore this concept with regard to the historical question: 'Why has a national Australian apology for the Stolen Generations taken so long?'**

**"History is past politics, and politics present history." – John Robert Seeley<sup>1</sup>**

### Synopsis

*This essay develops the historiographical argument based on the contextual factors which have influenced the writings of historians and historical documents throughout political history, that is, 'To what extent has the historian's political and subjective characteristics influenced the historian's writings, recordings and interpretations of the past?' - explored in relation to 'Why has a national Australian Apology for the Stolen Generations taken so long?'*

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<sup>1</sup> Seeley, J.R. and Prothero, G.W. The Growth of British Policy: An Historical Essay. University Press, 1895.

*Development of the focus question was established from the long-term political controversy over the need for an Apology to the Indigenous Stolen Generations within Australian politics, the recent success and the future impacts of this important historical debate. The main principle concerning the subjective nature of political history, is captured accurately in the above quote from the creditable political academic historian, J.R. Seeley's quote, which forms the thesis to the essay.*

*This essay addresses political agendas of the Australian Government in the delay of the Apology and cultural motives of Indigenous peoples; the portrayal of the Apology by both historian sympathisers and detractors, including the 'History Wars' with participants Henry Reynolds and Keith Windschuttle. It can be identified through various historical evidence and sources, as to how the subjective nature of the historian influences differing readings and interpretations of the 'Apology debate'. Throughout this essay, comparisons to past political historians and the study of political historiography will establish a conclusion based on the subjective nature of the historian, and its ability to influence the nature of politicized history recorded over time.*

*By researching both primary and secondary sources, the latter most prevalent, provides evidence to support the influences on this extremely historically subjective debate, which has acted as an interpretation to divide Australian society both politically and culturally. Primary sources, such as an interview, newspaper articles and the official text of Labour Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Apology, have been portrayed as a source of illustrating the impact of the Apology on the Stolen Generations, whereas secondary sources, such as journal articles, books, media programs and websites, have been incorporated to express the changing interpretations of Stolen Generation historians, whether sympathisers or detractors, who have been responsible for the controversial division in historical perspective and interpretation within Australian political history.*

## **Project Essay**

### **Political Historiography of the Apology to the Stolen Generations**

To what extent has the historian's political and subjective characteristics influenced the historian's writings, recordings and interpretations of the past?

The argument surrounding this historical question has placed the relationship between politics and history at the centre of much historical debate— from the earliest interpretations of Classical historians through to the Postmodernist era. As a modern audience, we need to study past political historiography and thereby, analyse the historian's subjective political agendas and ideologies, acting as the primary historiographical characteristic influencing the nature of political history recorded over time.

Firstly, we must recognize that politicized history has been created as a result of the historian's subjective interpretations throughout the recordings of history. In the words of John Robert Seeley, "[h]istory is past politics, and politics present history."<sup>2</sup> From this, we can conclude that the subjectivity of political history has been created based on the context of the historian. Therefore, the political ideologies of the historian influences the chances of the historian finding what they are looking to find, what they are determined to see, what their view of the world tells them is significant.

The most controversial contention within Australia's political history is reflected within the long awaited Apology, to the Indigenous Stolen Generations, from the Australian Government on behalf of Australian nation as a whole.<sup>3</sup> With a political foundation, the 'Apology debate' has originated from historians' conflicting political agendas and ideologies, producing subjective interpretations of history. This essay aims to investigate the inevitable political prejudices of historians which have,

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<sup>2</sup> Op.cit. Seeley, J.R. and Prothero, G.W. The Growth of British Policy: An Historical Essay.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendices I.



over Australia's Indigenous history, produced varying interpretations of the need, delay and emergence of the Apology - indisputably shaping the attitudes of all Australians through a medium of historiography, historical documents and media.

It is most evident that whether sympathisers or detractors, whether Indigenous or Non-Indigenous, subjective interpretations of historians have undebatably affected the ability to move forward towards a national state of reconciliation.

The *'Bringing Them Home' Report* (1997), found that the nation had a moral obligation to say 'Sorry'<sup>4</sup> and recommended that the first step in healing is in fact, the acknowledgment of truth and the delivery of an Apology. The emergence of this important historical document has acted as our nation's catalyst and as the main source of influence in this intense historical debate between both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous historians. However, the most important reasons extend beyond the Report, to the ideological views and interpretations of Australian political history. Acting as the subject of contemporary and historical media, the writings of historians within this debate have established an immensely subjective portrayal of the Apology.

The interpretational element of political 'subjectivity', and hence, the absence of objectivity within historical sources, can only be defined by the expression and presentation of the historian's ideological views concerning the purposes of political history. Only then, can the recordings of all history be confirmed to be inevitably subjected to the shadows of interpretational subjectivity. Subjective political history can be defined as history subjected to opinion, attitudes and primarily, the historian's underlying political agenda - indisputably establishing the subjective nature of politicized Indigenous history over time. Subjectivity undoubtedly influences the writings and constructions of political history - this concept is best described by British historian John Vincent (1937 - ), in the analysis that:

*"[t]he distortions in evidence that are already there, cannot be brushed away with a broom called objectivity."*<sup>5</sup>,

American historian Carl L. Becker (1873-1945), who perceives that:

*"...the imagined facts and their meaning there enters a personal equation. The history of any event is never precisely the same thing to two different persons..."*<sup>6</sup>, and although influenced by the Annales School, we must consider social historian Richard J. Evans' (1947 - ) argument on Keith Jenkins' proclamation that:

*"...all history is just naked ideology designed to get historians power..."*<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, in relation to Indigenous history and the 'Apology debate', this illustrates that historical subjectivity – the subjective nature of historians and their historical recordings – is in fact the ultimate historiographical element responsible for the establishment of varying perspective and interpretation within contemporary politicized history.

Within the study of political historiography, the existence of the concept of subjectivity on the part of the historian has been found to influence the writings of Indigenous history. This is identified and illustrated perfectly by relativist historian, E.H. Carr's famous assertive quote from his 1961 book, *'What is History?'*:

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<sup>4</sup> The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) *The Apology to the Stolen Generations of Australia*, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

<sup>5</sup> John Vincent. *An Intelligent Person's Guide to History*, London; Duckworth, 1995.

<sup>6</sup> Carl L. Becker, *'What are Historical Facts?'* in *Philosophy of History in Our Times*, (ed Hans Meyerholtt), Garden City, New York; Doubleday Publications, 1959.

<sup>7</sup> Richard J. Evans. *In Defence of History*. Granta, London; 1997.

*“The function of the historian is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from the past, but to master and understand it as the key...”<sup>8</sup>*

Within politicized Aboriginal history, the subjective nature of historians and their writings of the past can be linked and identified within the changing political and cultural contexts up until the twenty-first century. The subjective nature of the historians writing within this field, is inevitably incorporated into the medium of contemporary<sup>9</sup> historical documents and sources, including: film, television, newspaper articles, journals, books, interviews and the internet. In an attempt to illustrate an ideological purpose of political history, historians – whether writing sympathetically, in Doris Pilkington Garimara’s perspective, or in Keith Windschuttle’s case, detracting from an Aboriginal perspective toward the need for a national Apology – have taken advantage of changing media and technology, now adapting their historical arguments and political ideologies by appealing to a contemporary audience through modern day mediums.

Australian Aboriginal historian, author and primary descendent of the Stolen Generation, Doris Pilkington Garimara (1937 - ), is the creditable author of the 1996 book, Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence<sup>10</sup> on which the contemporary film Rabbit-Proof Fence (2002)<sup>11</sup> is based. From an Indigenous perspective, Garimara has confirmed that:

*“[r]ecognition and understanding can help with our healing...we will look to an apology from the Federal Parliament.”<sup>12</sup>*

Recorded within a postmodernist context, the subjectivity within the film Rabbit-Proof Fence<sup>13</sup> can be seen as reflecting certain postmodernist elements, philosophies of historiography and historical analysis. Postmodernism encompasses a critical theory of society and literature, politicizing social problems “...by situating them in historical and cultural contexts...”<sup>14</sup>. This concept is particularly evident within contemporary works of literature, cinematography and the interpretation of history, law, culture and religion in the twentieth century. Along with the story, the promotion of the film Rabbit-Proof Fence, directed by Phillip Noyce (1950 - ), is a link to this postmodernist concept as it successfully encouraged societal denial and indignation, and acted as a valid source of subjective historical and postmodernist media by portraying a sympathetic political interpretation and perspective towards the ‘Apology debate’. The postmodernist critical theory and political ideology was ultimately achieved within this historical source, by provoking contemporary social awareness and division in nationalist attitudes. In 2002, Noyce’s film won the Australian Film Institute Award for ‘Best Film’. As an Aboriginal sympathizer, Noyce used his acceptance speech for the award as a source of historical propoganda and as an opportunity to criticize former Liberal Prime Minister John Howard(1939-), for refusing to apologise to the Stolen Generations and to criticize those Australians who voted for a Liberal government, then saying that Australia had “*lost its humanity*.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Edward Hallett Carr. What is History? London; Penguin Books, 1961, 1987.

<sup>9</sup> David Edwards. Mending Fences. <<http://www.theblurb.com.au/Issue14/RPF.htm>>, [Date Unknown].

<sup>10</sup> Doris Pilkington Garimara. Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence. Australia; University of Queensland Press, 1996.

<sup>11</sup> Phillip Noyce. Rabbit-Proof Fence [Film], (2002), (based on the book biography/novel; Follow The Rabbit-Proof Fence, Written by Doris Pilkington, Release date (Australia): 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2002.

<sup>12</sup> Marji Hill, Stories of The Stolen Generations, Pearson Education Australia, Port Melbourne, Victoria; Copyright 2008.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendices 2.

<sup>14</sup> Lindlof, T.R. & Taylor, B. C. (2002). Qualitative Communication Research Methods. Second Edition. Sage.

<sup>15</sup> Convict Creations, Rabbit Proof Fence (2002).

<<http://www.convictcreations.com/culture/movies/rabbitproofence.html>>, [Date Unknown].



Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Gary Simon<sup>16</sup> also entirely supports Noyce's sympathetic perspective on the 'Apology debate', although challenging this interpretation when concluding that there was in fact "too much pressure on Howard" to refuse an Apology, from his political party and its supporters; "I believe that Mr Rudd is walking in the right direction."

Rabbit-Proof Fence has most certainly become the modern historical face of the contemporary Australian film industry<sup>17</sup> and a reliable historical source in presenting an Indigenous sympathetic perspective to this intense political and historiographical debate. Therefore, in relation to the 'Apology debate' and the recordings of Australian political and Indigenous history, it is most evident that the utilization of contemporary media by postmodernist historians as a means of expressing a particular political agenda, creates 'subjective' historical sources which are undermined and distorted by political and cultural standpoints.

The political context of the historian is crucial to the nature of the writings and varying interpretations of the past produced within political history. This historiographical concept is evident within the postmodernist climate of the 'Apology debate', whereby the interpretation of history is primarily aesthetic literary, political and social philosophy. It was within this context that the replacement of the Howard government significantly altered the dynamic of the debate. In a 2006 article published in *The Sydney Morning Herald*<sup>18</sup>, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (1957 - ) argued that former Liberal Prime Minister John Howard's use of the academic 'History and Culture Wars' was "a fraud" aimed at diverting attention away from more important issues. Rudd's perspective is however, contested by the adherent historian of the 'New Left' in the 1960s and 70s, Keith Windschuttle, who moved to the 'right'; taking a more conservative historical approach towards the interpretation of Australia's Indigenous political history.

In his book, 'The Killing of History' (1996)<sup>19</sup>, Windschuttle argues that historians on the 'left' and 'right' of the political spectrum have misrepresented and distorted history to support various political causes or ideological positions.

Windschuttle claims that the task of the historian is to attempt to provide the reader with an empirical history as near to the objective truth as possible, based on analysis of all the available evidence. Windschuttle also perceives that the political implications of an objective, empirical history are not the empirical historian's responsibility, and a historian may have his or her own political beliefs but this should never lead them to falsify historical evidence. With mutual education and background to that of Howard, Windschuttle presents his historical view as one which is conflicting with that of 'Black Armband' and revisionist historian Henry Reynolds, who firmly stands by his belief that:

*"...behind the [Rudd's Apology] speech was clearly a quite different interpretation of Australia's history than was favoured during the Howard era."*<sup>20</sup> Howard's political agenda was always aimed to emphasise the interpretations and views of Keith Windschuttle, being an active player in the 'History Wars' and openly sympathetic and supportive to their subjective views, in comparison to Labor Prime Minister Kevin Rudd who supports the belief that,

*"[t]his is not, as some would argue, a black-armband view of history; it is just the truth: the cold, confronting, uncomfortable truth..."*<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> See Appendices 4.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Hartcher. "PM'S culture wars a fraud: Rudd". *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.

<sup>19</sup> Keith Windschuttle. *The Killing of History: How a Discipline is being Murdered by Literary Critics and Social Theorists*. New York; Free Press, 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Lateline, Tony Jones talks to historian Professor Henry Reynolds and commentator Gerard Henderson, <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2008/02/13/2162136.htm>>, February 13, 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Prime Minister of Australia, "APOLOGY TO AUSTRALIA'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA".

The 'Apology debate' is comparably less concerned about historical validity as it is centred around the political use of history. Therefore, upon an historiographical analysis, it is evidently recognisable that history is within the control of historians, who are unable to remove themselves from their contextual and personal political position. Historians reflect the political ideologies of their context within their recordings of history, influencing the creation of subjective interpretations, and ultimately, the establishment of highly politicized history.<sup>22</sup>

Within the 'Apology' debate, the concept of politicized history and the influence of politics upon the historian's recordings and interpretations of the past is indisputably illustrated. In order to analyse and understand the influences of politics upon the nature of history, this concept is required to be linked back to the aims and theories of French historian Fernand Braudel (1902-85) - leader of the French social history based Annales School. For a 'total history', which can be defined as the attempt to integrate all aspects of past human life into history – cultural, social, economic and political – Braudel argued that it was this quest for 'total history' which was to be the most significant characteristic of those historians working within or alongside the Annales school.<sup>23</sup> Braudel's book, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Phillip II* (1949)<sup>24</sup>, reflects his relative lack of interest as an historian, in events and past politics within his own recordings of the past. Traditional historians certainly objected to the downgrading of politics within history, but Braudel, like the ideologies of Windschuttle within Indigenous history, forced all historians to justify the writing and interpretation of subjective history dominated by politics. Braudel's historical interpretation concerning the purpose of history can be supported within the ideologies of historians of the Enlightenment period, including German nationalist historians; Johann Gustav Droysen (1808-1884), Heinrich von Sybel (1817-1895, with Romantic influences and critical methods learnt from Leopold von Ranke's Enlightenment historiography), and Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896). These particular historians all viewed the very writing of historical works as a political act. For these historians, the study of the past had its meaningful purpose only in so far as it was made relevant to contemporary problems and their solution<sup>25</sup>. This view regarding the purpose of history and its recordings, can be linked back to the political issues at the centre of the 'Apology debate'.

The historical perspective of the Enlightenment historians was quite unlike the perspective of the Howard government, as these historians wrote for the nation as a whole, rather than for their own profession. However, there is evidence of a challenge to this on examination of their major historical writings spanning from 1830s-1890s, where is a clear correspondence to the political agendas of the Howard government and their influences upon the writings of supported conservative historians such as Windschuttle. Basing his historical work within Indigenous history, Windschuttle criticises the political purpose of history, claiming that:

*"[m]y political agenda is that I think history has been ruined by political agendas."*, and arguing that the Reynolds generation:

*"...has sought to advance a political agenda by reworking the past."*

Therefore, this confirms the ever-continuing historical theory that political ideologies and agendas have distorted historians' recordings of the past, to be historically accurate. Within the 'Apology debate' this is most evident where historians subject their writing with the direct aim of influencing their readers, and seeking to convey national change in response to the political conditions of their context and to their immediate political goals.

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<[http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Speech/2008/speech\\_0073.cfm](http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Speech/2008/speech_0073.cfm)>, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> See Appendices 3.

<sup>23</sup> John Warren. *History and the Historians*. (Access to History) London; Hodder Murray, 1999.

<sup>24</sup> Fernand Braudel. *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949). Berkeley; University of California Press, 1996.

<sup>25</sup> Op.cit. John Warren. *History and the Historians*.

In conclusion, historians of the present need to value the fact that the nature of subjective politicised history is primarily influenced by the historian's contextual conditions and political standpoint, as this is consistently justified through historical sources and the writings of political historians throughout history. As modern witnesses to the recordings of political history, when determining the true extent to which politics have influenced the recordings of the past, we must analyse by establishing a conformative definition of historical subjectivity. That is, through a uniform and thorough historiographical analysis of past historians' views on the political purposes of history. Only then, can we confirm that the subjectivity of political history is in fact the characteristics of the historian, reflected in the writings of the past. Within the postmodernist context of the 'Apology debate', there is a clear sense of emphasis on the importance of politics within historical interpretation and purpose. The relationship between history and politics has been at the centre of much historiographical debate, particularly arising within the political and nationalist arena of the Enlightenment period. By linking these historiographical theories of past historical periods back to the political issues at the centre of the 'Apology debate', we are able to discover that history is ultimately within the control of historians, who are unable to remove themselves from their personal political position. Historians reflect the political ideologies of their context within their recordings of history, influencing the creation of subjective interpretations, and ultimately, the establishment of highly politicized history. When approaching and analyzing political history and the recordings of the past on an historiographical level, perhaps we are required to keep in mind the words of English historian John Robert Seeley, that ultimately; "*History is past politics, and politics present history.*"<sup>26</sup>

## PROJECT ESSAY

### Appendices

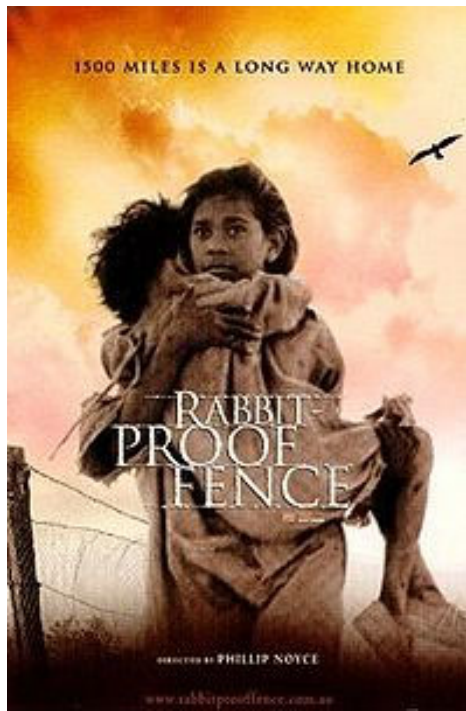


1.

*Prime Minister Kevin Rudd Apologies to the Stolen Generations of Australia.  
"Reaction to the Prime Minister's apology in Canberra and Sydney today."*<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Op.cit. Seeley, J.R. and Prothero, G.W. The Growth of British Policy: An Historical Essay.

<sup>27</sup> Dylan Welch. "Kevin Rudd says sorry" The Sydney Morning Herald. 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2008.



2.

2002 movie Rabbit-Proof Fence, Directed by Phillip Noyce<sup>28</sup>.



3.

'History Wars' — cartoon by Peter Nicholson of The Australian newspaper.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Answers.com. "Rabbit-Proof Fence". Copyright 2009, <<http://www.answers.com/topic/rabbit-proof-fence>>

<sup>29</sup> Peter Nicholson, Floating Life 4/06 ~ 11/07, "Indigenous Australians". 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, <<http://ninglun.wordpress.com/politics/indigenous-australians/>>



4. Uncle Gary and Auntie Brenda Simon – speaking of their experience as part of the Stolen Generations. All seven of their children were taken from the family home while Uncle Gary was at work.<sup>30</sup>

## Project Log Book

### October Holidays

Thought about area of study for the project; area of controversy within history as advised by Mrs Reilly, and suggestions of previous students' undertook preliminary research on the internet on areas of interest: the Apology to the Stolen Generation and the Ned Kelly legend. Collected mainly secondary sources containing general controversial information from various internet sites, considered main areas of interest for choice, as personal interest area lies within mainly Australian history.

19<sup>th</sup> October 2008

First Extension History class of Year 12; was introduced areas of study which were suitable and allowable, according to syllabus requirements and explanation of key questions and components were clarified.

Went to school library after class to gather secondary sources; books on my areas of consideration and found out about 'First Australian' TV show which was relevant to the Stolen Generation and Aboriginal History – possible source for both primary (interviews) and secondary information within the project.

The most relevant book collected: PARBURY, Nigel, Survival, A History of Aboriginal Life in New South Wales, Surry Hills NSW, NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs; 2005

**I learnt that the main focus point concerning the study of historiography is centred upon the historian's background and subjective factors affecting the interpretation of history over time.**

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008

At the end of class, consulted with Mrs Reilly on my area of thought for my project study, the Stolen Generation, approval was made, and further explanation on areas to analyse for the project; **background of historians and historiography. According to the syllabus, I learnt that to analyse history, interpretations of history and recordings over time, is to focus upon the following key historiographical questions within my own project and investigation methodologies: '...opportunity for students to design and conduct an investigation in an area of changing historical interpretation.'** and aim to focus on the **key historiographical questions** of 'Who are the historians?', 'What are the aims and purposes of history?', 'How has history been constructed and recorded over time?', 'Why have approaches to history changed over time?'.

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<sup>30</sup> Fernando, D. and Bishop, M. "Yapang Marruma – Making Our Way, Stories of the Stolen" Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery. 31<sup>st</sup> January – 15 March 2009.



27<sup>th</sup> October 2008

Mrs Golder clarified with the Extension History class as to which historical areas the project is referring to and which areas are of relevance and focus when researching and conducting an historical investigation – according to the syllabus and course requirements; **I learnt that historiography and study of historians writing within the specific historical area, and the reasons for their interpretations of history.**

Within the week – collected a book, **HILL, Marji, Stories of The Stolen Generations**, Pearson Education Australia, Port Melbourne, Victoria; Copyright 2008, from Lake Macquarie City Library, which **contained excellent and reliable sources, mainly primary and some secondary, including the biography of many Stolen Generation victims including Doris Garimara and her mother. From an Indigenous perspective on the Apology debate, this source addresses the historical question concerning: ‘How history has been constructed and recorded over time?’**

30<sup>th</sup> October 2008

Mrs Reilly postponed observing past projects as an example and to gain ideas for our own projects, and for our establishment of deeper historical thought, methods, insight and understanding of what is involved with the major project and unit of the course ‘What is History’. Personally, I obtained a clearer understanding upon the analysis of history and established an excellent foundation for further historical research and methodologies within the development of the investigation. **Sheets on historiography also helped me to understand the concept by linking historiography over time, to my own area of historical investigation -Aboriginal history, including historians, Henry Reynolds and Keith Windschuttle in the ‘history and culture wars’ of black armband and leftist interpretations within this area of historical debate. To analyse this area of political history the historical questions of: ‘Who are the historians? How have approaches to history changed over time?’ needs to be addressed, as this provokes further historical debate into whether the aims and purposes of history have been influenced by politicised history and whether politics have influenced the historians, their interpretations and recordings of the past?**

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2008

Watched the relevant TV show ‘First Australian’ for a reference as a primary source (produced within a secondary medium), to be used within my project, proved a useful source in that it illustrates a first-hand investigation and primary experiences of Indigenous subjects of the Stolen Generations, although was not very useful in providing a source of historiography and historical analysis within the area of study.

25<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Collected Time Australia Magazine article, **CLAUSEN, Lisa, “Resurrection Day”, Time, Australia Magazine, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008**, borrowed it from school library – **article was relevant to reconciliation as a primary source, addresses the historical question concerning media portrayal of social attitudes within this historical debate, the construction and recordings of history over time.**

Began to complete Proposal, main historiographical areas to be focused on are – Topic Area, Focus Question, Preliminary Research Questions and Resultant Enquiry Questions, and began to Record Sources and Resources Identified to Date (mainly secondary sources so far; books, articles, documentary, etc.) and added organisation for an interview as a reliable primary source and first-hand investigation into Tasks For the Holidays.

Conducted research into questions established in the focus area and historians writing within this field identified to date.

4<sup>th</sup> December 2008

Attended University of Newcastle for an Extension History educational excursion; conducted research for the project topic (the Stolen Generation Apology) by utilising the University Database, NEWCAT in order to investigate both primary and secondary historical sources available in the University archives – found a **video, NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE, Australian Screen, Clip/Extract: Beyond Sorry (2003) [Documentary; part of the Nganampa Anwernekenhe series produced by Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) Productions], “Beyond Sorry”, <<http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/beyond-sorry/clip1/>>, Copyright 2008.**

**This source addresses the historical question concerning: ‘How history has been constructed and recorded over time?’**

Recapped on historiographical research methods and methodologies in order to utilise the database most efficiently, to find relevant and accurate information and sources on the area of study and therefore, the historians and their recordings of the past within historical documents.

8<sup>th</sup> December 2008

Worked on Proposal.

Attended an interview with Ms Golder to discuss work on the project to date, check on Log Book processes, methodologies, confirmation and suggestions on the focus question and focus area of my historical investigation.

13<sup>th</sup> December 2008

Completed Proposal for the project, which was due on the week (10) of the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

5<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Completed secondary methodologies in research upon the Apology to the Stolen Generations; the most valuable and reliable of the websites found, addressed the historical questions concerning: ‘Who are the historians?’ and ‘How history has been constructed and recorded over time?’ They consisted of:

- **NOBLES, Melissa. The Politics of Official Apologies. Cambridge University Press, 2008**  
Relevant extracts: Useful analysis of the political influences upon valid historical documents, most notably, the Bringing Them Home Report, “Historians are important and influential background players in apology politics, as they help to rewrite histories.” and “However, the most important reasons extend beyond the report, to ideological views and understandings of Australian history.”
- RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA, “Sorry – FAQ, Apology to stolen generations – questions and answers”. <http://www.reconcile.org.au/getsmart/pages/sorry/sorry--faq.php> , Copyright 2007.
- DAVIES, Anne. “Apology was a mistake, says feisty Howard”. The Age. March 12, 2008. [Author Unknown] “Sorry again the hardest word to stolen generation”. The Sydney Morning Herald. May 24, 2007.
- Analysed **PARBURY, Nigel, Survival, A History of Aboriginal Life in New South Wales, Surry Hills NSW, NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs; 2005**, for relevant information on political agendas, political standpoints and the meaning of an apology to the Stolen Generations, media shaping social attitudes within the recordings of this historical debate.

6<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Continued secondary research on the internet, examining each source in relation to their relevance to the set historical focus questions concerning influences of politicized history in my Proposal. Conducted and analysed research sources for relevant information and how they **addressed the historical questions of: 'Who are the historians?' and 'How history has been constructed and recorded over time?'** As an investigator of history, I analysed each source based upon evidence of political agendas, political standpoints and the meaning and interpretation of an apology to the Stolen Generations, and by doing this, I learnt about the significance and role of the media in shaping historical and social attitudes within the Apology and the relevant historiographical debates.

The following sources proved to be the most reliable and useful within this area of focus:

- **LARTER, Paul. "Kevin Rudd ready to deliver formal apology to 'stolen generations' of Australians". Times Online. January 31, 2008.**
- **CONVICT CREATIONS, "Rabbit Proof Fence (2002)". <http://www.convictcreations.com/culture/movies/rabbitproofence.html>, [Date Unknown]**

"Australia does not have a commercially successful arts sector and the ideologies displayed in the creation and promotion of Phillip Noyce's Rabbit-Proof Fence helps explain why. Rabbit-proof Fence was typical product of the contemporary Australian artist that feels status in making ignorant statements about their culture, and inevitably undermines any sense of affinity the Australian public has to their arts sector as a result."

"In theory, Rabbit-Proof Fence was meant to be a political movie showing support for Aboriginal culture and educating Australians about the untold Aboriginal story. In practice, the movie contained almost no examples of Aboriginal culture.

After Rabbit-proof Fence won best picture in 2002, Noyce used his acceptance speech to criticise the federal government for not apologising for "its" policy of removing mixed race children from their communities from the 1900 to 1970. He then criticised Australians for losing their humanity."

- **EDWARDS, David. "Mending Fences". <http://www.theblurb.com.au/Issue14/RPF.htm>, [Date Unknown].**

"With all the debate (not all of it terribly informed), controversy and media attention given to Australia's Stolen Generation of Aboriginal children, it's surprising that Australian filmmakers have been slow to take up the issue in cinematic form. Equally surprising perhaps is the fact that it's expatriate director Phillip Noyce who has finally brought the issue into mainstream cinema."

- **ROGERS, Gayle. " "SORRY" – Apology to the Stolen Generations of Australia". <http://www.ned.com/group/community-general/news/139/>, February 16, 2008.**

"Therefore, for our nation, the course of action is clear: that is, to deal now with what has become one of the darkest chapters in Australia's history. In doing so, we are doing more than contending with the facts, the evidence and the often rancorous public debate. In doing so, we are also wrestling with our own soul. This is not, as some would argue, a black-armband view of history; it is just the truth: the cold, confronting, uncomfortable truth—facing it, dealing with it, moving on from it."

"Until we fully confront that truth, there will always be a shadow hanging over us and our future as a fully united and fully reconciled people. It is time to reconcile. It is time to recognise the injustices of the past. It is time to say sorry. It is time to move forward together."

- SMITH, Tony. Australian Review of Public Affairs. "The letter, the spirit, and the future: Rudd's apology to Australia's Indigenous people". <http://www.australianreview.net/digest/2008/03/smith.html>, March, 2008.

"Notwithstanding controversial arguments posed by revisionist cultural historians, there are some indisputable facts about Australia's past."

- PEATLING, Stephanie. "Rudd's apology revealed". The Sydney Morning Herald. February 13, 2008.

"We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations - this blemished chapter in our nation's history."

- WIKIPEDIA, The Free Encyclopedia. "History Wars". [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_Wars#Black\\_armband\\_debate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_Wars#Black_armband_debate), Last Updated – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

"The defeat of the Howard government in the Australian Federal election, and its replacement by the Rudd Labor government has altered the dynamic of the debate. In an article published in 2006, Rudd argued John Howard's use of the history and culture wars was "a fraud" aimed at diverting attention away from more important issue, a view contested by Windschuttle."

- "Tony Jones talks to historian Professor Henry Reynolds and commentator Gerard Henderson" Lateline, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2008/02/13/2162136.htm>, February 13, 2008.

- RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA, "Sorry – FAQ, Apology to stolen generations – questions and answers". <http://www.reconcile.org.au/getsmart/pages/sorry/sorry--faq.php>, Copyright 2007.

"Why didn't the former Australian Government say sorry? In 1997, the recommendation of the Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families for an official apology was not taken up by the new Australian Government led by John Howard. Mr Howard argued that it was not appropriate for the current Government to apologise for the actions of past governments. He also said he was concerned that a formal admission of wrongdoing would lead to compensation litigation."

7<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Continued researching in immense detail, analysing and reading through, synthesizing and summarizing the relevant information gathered from primary and secondary (most prevalent) sources, to obtain the main controversial issues, debates and historians involved within the Apology debate and the impact of the media in changing social attitudes toward the Stolen Generations and the Apology. **Most sources aimed to address the historical questions concerning: 'Who are the historians?' and 'How has history been constructed and recorded over time?'**

20<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Attended Awabakal Resource Centre: searched archives for both primary and secondary sources, found books, journals, newsletters and a DVD relevant to focus question, and arranged for a possible interview (primary source) with a first-hand account/experience from a lady of the Stolen Generations; taken from Awabakal local, or through reference of Darryn (Manager), as it is a touchy subject and is upsetting to talk about experiences of what happened -interview was since rejected.

28<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Went to University of Newcastle Auchmuty Library to collect DVD researched on NEWCAT database on the University of Newcastle website. DVD titled: **The Apology to the Stolen Generations of Australia. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008.**

30<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Went to University of Newcastle to inquire about knowledge of a person of Indigenous ethnicity to interview, after rejection of Awabakal lady. University gave me Cary Bennett's email address who would be able to help me get in contact with a lady of part Aboriginality who gave a good lecture last year on the Apology, for a possible interview (primary source)– I was also informed that there would be a Symposium held on the anniversary by Lake Macquarie City Council.

Completed Synopsis of the project in regard to the focus area of the Apology debate and began to write up the project Essay with current sources and information to date.

- AGE-OF-THE-SAGE.ORG. "Quotes About History, Historians on History". [http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/history/quotations/history\\_historians.html](http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/history/quotations/history_historians.html), [Date unknown].

[Other quotes considered for illustration of project thesis]:

"The function of the historian is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from the past, but to master and understand it as the key to the understanding of the present." -E. H. Carr"

"History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future." - Robert Penn Warren"

"If you would understand anything, observe its beginning and its development." –Aristotle"

31<sup>st</sup> January 2009

Continued writing project Essay and incorporating both primary and secondary sources gathered to date.

- KERIN, Lindy. "Long journey to national apology". ABC News. February 13, 2008. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/02/13/2161853.htm>

"The refusal to apologise to the Stolen Generations frustrated Indigenous leaders like Lowitja O'Donoghue, who accused the government of failing Indigenous people.

"He [John Howard] consistently responds to descriptions of Indigenous experience as a black armband view of history," she said.

"These are the responses of denial that I spoke of earlier and they diminish him as a person and Australia as a nation." "

13<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Collected an article, **HASKINS, Dr. Victoria K. "A Significant Step", The Newcastle Herald, February 14, 2009**, from the Newcastle Herald in relation to an exhibition for the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the apology, relevance to the project:

"...the significance of the apology for Australians is not what it says about political parties on either side of parliament but rather how it symbolizes a deeper cultural shift in society."

**This source aimed to address historiography and the influence of politics within history, the aims and purposes of history.**



15<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Read 3<sup>rd</sup> place essay from last year's Extension History Major Projects for a reference to obtain ideas on the types of information, sources and links to historiography to include in my own project and the format and structure of the work, including referencing.

Worked on acceptable referencing; listing the sources to be acknowledged within the project

### **Bibliography.**

Continued writing up project Essay and completed a proof reading of the draft Essay to date.

- READ, Peter. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) . "The myth of the Stolen Generations – a rebuttal". <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/stories/s2163812.htm>, February 15, 2008.

"How insulting to the stolen generations and their descendants to be told that their history has been created by these 'recent academic historians'."

18<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Completed draft Essay after additional research and gathering of further secondary sources and information from the internet.

Word Count of draft Essay to date: 2,971

Worked on **acceptable referencing of both primary and secondary historical sources; listing the sources to be acknowledged within the project.**

28<sup>th</sup> February 2009

**Major Development in Project - Changed the entire focus area of the project and historical investigation, from that of: the effect of the Apology upon Indigenous peoples, to a more suitable focus upon aspects of historiography and the political influences within history, resulting in the delay of the Apology. As an investigator of history, I decided upon his change of focus, purely due to the lack of historiography available within the former area of focus and the minimal ability to make supportive links to subjective works and recordings of past historians; their subjective interpretations and views on the aims and purposes of political history.**

Worked on improving and adjusting my checked and edited Proposal, and proof-read the Synopsis and project Essay; making adjustments and adding appropriate historiographical sources for accreditations and worked on **paraphrasing incorporated quotes and references from historical sources throughout the Essay.**

5<sup>th</sup> March 2009

Project Log Book, Synopsis and Essay was checked by Mrs Reilly and recommendations were made for improvements to my project and historical methods of evaluation. In this meeting, I consulted upon historiographical issues that I was unsure of and aimed to improve within my work and historical investigation as a whole; how to **approach linking areas of past historiography concerning the influences of political history, the political ideologies and recordings of historians of the Enlightenment period: Johann Gustav Droysen, Heinrich von Sybel, Heinrich von Treitschke and Leopold von Ranke, to the political views and interpretations of historians such as Henry Reynolds and Keith Windschuttle, within the area of my own historical investigation. I learnt that this historical methodology must be completed in order to develop a sustained historical argument, and in turn, evaluate and analyse the influences of politicized history upon the interpretations of historians.**

7<sup>th</sup> April 2009

Mrs Reilly gave me a past Extension History major project with close links to my own focus area of Indigenous political history, with useful analysis of historians of my own investigations such as Windschuttle, Reynolds and Blainley. This source was very useful as a reference to obtain ideas on the types of information, sources and links to historiography to include in my own project and the format and structure of the historical work, including suitable referencing of historical sources.

17<sup>th</sup> April 2009

**Conducted an interview (first-hand investigation) concerning the Apology, from an Indigenous perspective, with Aboriginal Elder Uncle Gary Simon, at the Lake Macquarie Art Gallery and viewed the Stolen Generation Exhibition. I was put in touch with Uncle Gary through Brett Adlington (Project Assistant Curator of the Exhibition; FERNANDO D and BISHOP, M. “Yapang Marruma – Making Our Way, Stories of the Stolen” Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery. 31<sup>st</sup> January – 15 March 2009 and Gallery Manager). This historical methodology addresses the historical question concerning: ‘Who are the historians?’. The interview proved to be an extremely valuable source, in that it provided a reliable source for historical usefulness and historical information from a primary Indigenous perspective. Although this primary source may be considered bias (from a purely Indigenous perspective), it successfully provided an excellent, reliable and alternative perspective on this historical debate, and allowed myself as an investigator of history, interpretations and recordings of the past, to provide an objective argument by incorporating a balanced recording of these interpretations and views within my own writings. As an historian, I learnt that in order to strive to analyse the influences of politicised history from an objective and historically balanced standpoint, it is necessary to consider and compare varying interpretations within the central argument of the historical debate reflected in the Apology.**

20-23 April 2009

**Teacher Evaluation** – Rewrote the project Essay and followed recommendations and **adjustments of historical methodologies as suggested by Ms Riley’s evaluation** and reading of draft Essays – concentrating on linking historiography of past historians with factors of the Apology debate; context, agendas, subjectivity, and with a focus upon the key historical questions to address within the syllabus.

Word Count to date: 1, 941

25<sup>th</sup> April 2009

Worked on updating project Bibliography and completed a source analysis of the **three most valuable sources** towards the project’s central argument and historical investigation: interview with **Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Gary Simon, WARREN, John. History and the Historians. (Access to History) London; Hodder Murray, 1999 and NOBLES, Melissa. The Politics of Official Apologies. Cambridge University Press, 2008.**

Word Count of Essay to date: 2, 123

5<sup>th</sup> May 2009

**Teacher Evaluation - Obtained a second teacher evaluation on my historical investigation and relevant methodologies, from Mr Sajko (Modern History and previous teacher of the Extension History course). From Mr Sajko’s feedback on my project Essay and Log Book, I have learnt by and adjusted my historiographical approaches towards politicized history, that is, in a direct statement throughout the Essay on what influence politics have on history, and also incorporating not only my historiographical processes within my Log Book, but a reflection on what I have learnt, personally, about political history.**

15<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**Teacher Evaluation** - Asked Ms. Golder to read through my Synopsis, Essay and Log Book in order to provide constructive feedback. Ms. Golder believed that my project argument was excellent, especially in the sophistication of language and suggested that rather than including images relevant to my historical argument throughout the Essay itself, incorporate them into an Appendices and make relevant references and footnotes where necessary.

Ms. Golder explained how I could improve the layout of my project, structure, paragraphing and quote formatting.

16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

Completed final project.

**Peer Evaluation** - Asked Modern History peer Jennifer Dunstan, and Ex-Extension History peer, Genevieve Nawrot to read through my Synopsis and Essay in order to provide beneficial feedback on what they believe is the strong points of my argument and what they think that I could improve on. Jennifer and Genevieve were very helpful in allowing me to gain insight into the evaluations of two external perspectives, both with a thorough knowledge of historical processes and sophistication of writing.

## **Project Log Book**

### **Project Reviews**

- [See Evaluations throughout Log Book processes]

### **Primary Self-Evaluation**

25<sup>th</sup> April 2009

At the beginning of my major project, I aimed to work on improving my ability to link historiography of the past to my own historical investigation on the Apology debate.

I have since compared my historiographical skills at the commencement of this investigation, to those throughout the development of my historical investigation and completion of my major project to date, and I have discovered that by regularly consulting and receiving feedback from teachers on my approaches to these historiographical methods and focus questions, has helped me to achieve my goal, with suggestions and guidance on points of focus within my Essay. As an analyzer of the past, I have benefited personally with the recognition that I have seen since the start of my historical investigations, that is, a dramatic and constantly increasing improvement in my approaches and answers to historical questions - with an ability to connect my interpretations and writings of the past with a more direct link back to the works of past historians and making comparable links throughout my work to subjective characteristics, agendas and interpretations of historiography throughout history to further support the evidence from sources collected within my historical investigations. During the process of completing my investigation on this historical debate within Australian political and cultural history, my ability and knowledge of selecting the most valuable historical sources and extracting the most relevant information from all classifications of historical documents has become more efficient with constant practise of historical methodologies.

I have learnt, that **by investigating the influences of politicized history on the historian's interpretations and recordings of the past, political history is directly influenced by the subjective factors of the individual historian; their background and ideologies, and as an historian, in order to strive for an objective and historically balanced portrayal of politicised history, an historical argument of the historian must compare, consider and analyse the differing interpretations of historians.**

### **Primary Peer Evaluation**

17<sup>th</sup> June, 2009

#### **Jennifer Dunstan (Modern History Peer) and Genevieve Nawrot (Ancient History and Extension History Peer)**

A very good and insightful essay. Tiahna's essay is exemplary in the standard of writing to be aimed for within the Extension history course. Tiahna's use of the terms 'we' (especially in the concluding paragraph) presents an excellent style of writing within the analysis of historiography, providing the audience with an insightful reflection on what historians should aim for and value within political history of contemporary society.

### **Primary Teacher Evaluations**

5<sup>th</sup> May 2009

#### **Mr. Sajko (Modern History Teacher)**

Obtained a second teacher evaluation on my historical investigation and relevant methodologies, from Mr Sajko (Modern History and previous teacher of the Extension History course). From Mr Sajko's feedback on my project Essay and Log Book, I have learnt by and adjusted my historiographical approaches towards politicized history, that is, in a direct statement throughout the Essay on what influence politics have on history, and also incorporating not only my historiographical processes within my Log Book, but a reflection on what I have learnt, personally, about political history.

14<sup>th</sup> May, 2009

#### **Ms. Reilly (Extension History Teacher)**

'Tiahna – well done for working hard on this and continuing to get feedback. Try to make more clear what point you are making in each paragraph – what are you thinking – what is our hypothesis. This needs to be clear. Develop ideas more and make connections to main syllabus that you are dealing with as well as linking to other sources.'

15<sup>th</sup> June 2009

#### **Ms. Golder (Extension History Teacher)**

Asked Ms. Golder to read through my project Synopsis, Essay and Log Book in order to provide constructive feedback. Ms. Golder believed that my project argument was excellent, especially in the sophistication of language and suggested that rather than including images relevant to my historical argument throughout the Essay itself, incorporate them into an Appendices and make relevant references and footnotes where necessary. Ms. Golder explained how I could improve the layout of my project, structure, paragraphing and quote formatting.

## Bibliography

### Source Analysis (Three Most Valuable Sources to the Central Argument)

#### Source One

- [Interview] Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Gary Simon & Exhibition; FERNANDO D and BISHOP, M. “Yapang Marruma – Making Our Way, Stories of the Stolen” Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery. 31<sup>st</sup> January – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

As a first-hand historical investigation, an interview conducted with Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Gary Simon, allowed for a valid and reliable source to be incorporated into the project and gave clear insight into personal experiences of the Stolen Generations from a reliable primary source. However, as the source is received directly and free from manipulation and interpretations as that of secondary sources, that is, from a father who personally had his children taken away as a result of past government policies, the interview may be seen as unreliable in that the source can be considered inevitably biased as it originates purely from an Indigenous perspective only and may not have considered a Non-Indigenous perspective if the interview focus questions were not directed and answered within an unbiased and neutral manner, or within a possible motive of the interview responder.

Overall the interview proved to be an extremely valuable and reliable source in historical usefulness, providing historical information from a primary Indigenous sympathetic perspective on the ‘Apology debate’. This primary source provided an excellent, reliable and alternative perspective, allowing sympathetic interpretations and views to be considered and compared with those of other historians related to the central historical debate.

Personally, I found that this historical source allowed myself as an investigator of history, to provide an objective argument on the interpretations and recordings of the past by incorporating a balanced recording of these interpretations and views within my own writings. As an historian, I learnt that in order to strive to analyse the influences of politicised history from an objective and historically balanced standpoint, it is necessary to consider and compare varying interpretations within the central argument of the historical debate reflected in the Apology.

#### Source Two

- [Book] WARREN, John. History and the Historians. (Access to History) London; Hodder Murray, 1999.

As a secondary source, this book strives for an informative and educational purpose, providing accurate historiography of past chronological history and analysis and evaluation of historians, their methodologies, and influences upon their recordings and interpretations of the past, such as, context, backgrounds and subjective agendas; assisting my own interpretations of the past - to become increasingly educated and unbiased within my personal presentations and recordings as an historian writing on the ‘Apology debate’ - applying informed historical analysis and reasoning behind varying interpretations. Warren’s book is evidently accurate and reliable in that it originates from a creditable author and educational publication source (Hodder Murray). However, this source can be considered unreliable in that it only analyses and evaluates those historians of major periods in British and European world history, portraying aspects of bias in the views of history throughout time. Unreliability is also evident in the fact that revision and updating of the publication has not occurred since its first publication and copyright date in 1999.



Overall, this secondary source was extremely useful in that it allowed for the link to the central argument of the project to be presented with comparisons to the works, contexts, subjective agendas and views concerning the purpose of history, to that of past historians (especially those concentrating upon political influences within history and the misuse of history for political ends, providing a link to be drawn to politicisation of history within the 'Apology debate' and associated political agendas which have shaped and influenced the writings and interpretations of Australia's Indigenous history, such as historians Keith Windschuttle and Henry Reynolds).

### Source Three

- **[Book] NOBLES, Melissa. The Politics of Official Apologies. Cambridge University Press, 2008.**

As a secondary source, historian Melissa Nobles provides a detailed analysis of the influences of politics within Australia's history and its influences upon the Apology debate, with accurate analysis and references to valid and relevant historical documents, such as the Bringing Them Home Report (1997). Noble's source is evidently reliable in that it has a creditable, reliable and well-known publication source, that is, Cambridge University Press. This source was published very recently, in 2008, and therefore is updated and accurate, increasing its reliability. Author, Melissa Nobles, eliminates the prospect of potential bias, with an educated background and position as an Associate Professor of Political Science, although neutrality of her writings is undermined in a perspective focusing on criticism of political influences.

Overall, this source historically is useful in providing valid information concerning the central argument of the project – the Apology debate, within its role in bringing into view, the certain views about history, moral obligation and political actors, which have influenced the variation of interpretations and perspectives within recordings of history.

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