

## Historical interpretations and contested debates

### Extract:

*“The genocide debate had begun with the Human Rights Commission’s Bringing Them Home report in 1997 into the removal of Indigenous children, past and present. When the report pointed out that the taking of children with the intent of destroying a group was, according to the UN Convention on Genocide, a form of genocide, many Australians were horrified and resistant. The debate soon widened to include consideration of whether the huge loss of Indigenous life in the wake of settlement could also be considered a case of genocide.”*

Source: Ann Curthoys, ‘Disputing National Histories: Some Recent Australian Debates’, *Transforming Cultures* eJournal, Vol. 1 No 1, March 2006: available at [www.epress.lib.uts.edu.au/journals/index.php/TfC/article/download/187/134](http://www.epress.lib.uts.edu.au/journals/index.php/TfC/article/download/187/134)

### Note:

The extract above has been provided to offer an example of **one** historical interpretation/ contested debate in Australian History. There are many others – and the worksheet that follow could be used for different content as required.

### TASK:

- Read the chapter ‘The Genocide Debate’ from which the extract (above) is taken (pp. 9-14).
- Identify TWO different interpretations (sides) of this issue as detailed in this source (e.g. you could choose arguments made by Ann Curthoys and compare to those of Keith Windschuttle etc.). You will need to fill out TWO Worksheets on p.2 (one for each interpretation).

Note: you may need some additional research to be able to consider the two interpretations more fully. If you do need additional material pertaining to this topic, visit:

**Debate rages over "peaceful" white settlement** – available at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/stories/s277827.htm>

**'The Denial' - Windschuttle and the Stolen Generations** – available at:

<http://treatypublic.net/content/denial-windschuttle-and-stolen-generations>

**Why There Were No Stolen Generations (Part One)** – available at:

<https://quadrant.org.au/magazine/2010/01-02/why-there-were-no-stolen-generations/>

**Why There Were No Stolen Generations (Part Two)** – available at:

<http://quadrant.org.au/magazine/2010/1-2/why-there-were-no-stolen-generations-part-two/>

## Historical Interpretation Worksheet

### 1. Identify the author's assertion.

What thesis is the author trying to prove?

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### 2. Evaluate the evidence presented by the author.

Is the evidence pertinent? How?

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Are the sources reliable? Why?

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### 3. Analyse the reasoning used in the argument for fallacies.

Cause/effect – Is a clear connection shown? Are possible causes missing?

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Comparison – What similarities/differences are cited? Are they valid?

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Generalisations – Are there oversimplifications? Is there stereotyping?

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Debate – Are opposing views accurately stated? Have all alternatives been refuted?

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**4. Identify unstated assumptions included in the argument.**

What has been left out?

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Are the assumptions valid?

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**5. Identify the author's values/beliefs.**

Do values/beliefs interfere with objectivity?

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