 Glossary of terms – Gough Whitlam

| Term | Definition |
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| Academic history | Histories that are produced by trained historians who use scholarly methods, including peer review, to produce detailed, evidence-driven interpretations of the past. |
| Australian Constitution | A document that establishes the form the Federal government takes and the relationship between the Commonwealth government and the States. It is not a Bill of Rights. It took effect on 1 January 1901.  |
| Casual vacancy | This occurs when a member of the Senate or the House of Representatives either dies, resigns mid-term, is expelled, or disqualified mid-term. In the case of the House of Representatives, the vacancy is filled by way of a by-election. In the case of the Senate, the vacancy is filled by a member of the same Party following nomination by the appropriate State government. Prior to the Whitlam dismissal, this was a convention but is now enshrined in the Constitution. |
| Deferral of supply | The Opposition (with a majority in the Senate) refuses to vote on the supply Bills in order to force the government to an election. It was easier for the Opposition to defer bills to force and election rather than to reject them.  |
| Democratic Labour Party | It existed between 1955 and 1978. It broke away from the Labour Party in 1955, driven by anti-Communist Catholics. It was credited with keeping Labour out of power until 1972 and was influential in the events leading up to the Constitutional Crisis of 1975. |
| Double dissolution | The Governor-General, on the advice of the Prime Minister, issues a proclamation dissolving both Houses of Parliament (Senate and the House of Representatives) at the same time and elections are held for both Houses simultaneously. |
| Film history | Accounts and interpretations of the past communicated using the medium of film. This can incorporate documentaries, docu-dramas, historical re-enactments and history-based narrative films. |
| Governor-General | The Governor-General is the representative in Australia of the Australian monarch - currently Queen Elizabeth II. He or she is appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister. |
| Joint sitting | This follows elections being held for both the House of Representatives and the full Senate (a double dissolution). Members of both Houses sit together to deliberate on and pass proposed laws. |
| Medibank | It is now known as Medicare. It was introduced by the Whitlam government in 1975 and is a system which provides free access to hospitals and other medical services. |
| Official history | Histories that are produced or endorsed by a group or individual who features in that history. |
| Popular history | Histories that are produced by writers and journalists who do not necessarily have History training. Popular histories seek first to entertain by telling compelling, personality-driven narratives about the past for a wide audience. These histories are driven by audience interest. It is considered non-academic history as it was written by someone with a lack of History training.  |
| Prorogue | It is a proclamation made by the Governor-General that terminates the current session of Parliament, one or both Houses of Parliament without dissolving it to enable fresh elections. |
| Reserve powers | These are ‘discretionary’ powers as opposed to ‘explicit’ powers which the Governor-General has. These powers can be exercised without Ministerial advice or contrary to Ministerial advice. They include the power to appoint and dismiss a Prime Minister. |
| Revisionist | The second wave (re-interpretation) of histories of the Kennedy Presidency, produced from the 1990s. These histories often sought to break down the classic Camelot story of his Presidency and legacy. |
| Supply | These are Bills (Appropriation Bills) which are required to provide the government with the money to carry out its day to day business. |