HIST 489
Research Project
Student Guide 2018

SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE
AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/TE KURA ARO
WHAKAMURI, RAPUNGA WHAKAARO, MATAI
TŌRINGAPŪ ME TE AO
Contents

Overview.............................................................................................................4
Key Dates.............................................................................................................5
Honours Coordinator 2018.................................................................................6
Workshops.........................................................................................................7
HIST 489 Research Essay Proposal.................................................................8
Proposal Guidelines...........................................................................................9
Supervision..........................................................................................................10
Progress Report................................................................................................11
HIST 489 Seminar..............................................................................................12
The First Draft..................................................................................................13
The Final Essay..................................................................................................14
Assessment.........................................................................................................15
Appendix: Sample Research Proposal............................................................16
Overview

The HIST 489 Research Project gives students the chance to pursue their own research topic with guidance and support from a faculty member as supervisor. Students gain experience with high-level historical research, managing an independent project, and producing an extended piece of written work. Supervisors help students with historiography, research methods, essay structure, and managing the project as a whole. Whether students pursue historical research at the advanced postgraduate level or embark on professional careers outside academia, the History Programme believes that the skills they acquire writing their 489 essays will remain relevant throughout their professional careers.

*HIST 489 is a compulsory research essay undertaken in the completion of a BA (Hons) degree. The topic is devised principally by the student under the guidance of the History programme staff member*
Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26 February</td>
<td>HIST 489 orientation and proposal guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 March</td>
<td>HIST 489 proposals due to History Reception (OK 405) by 2pm and by email to the Honours Coordinator. Please use the History cover sheet for email and hard-copy submissions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 March</td>
<td>Response to proposals by history research committee Students receive feedback on proposals and are officially designated a supervisor at the first 489 workshop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 June</td>
<td>HIST 489 research essay progress report due to the Honours Coordinator and your supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27-28 July</td>
<td>HIST 489 seminar presentations Timetable announced closer to the time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 September</td>
<td>HIST 489 research essay draft due 2pm to your supervisor; email and hard-copy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 October</td>
<td>HIST 489 research essay final version due 2pm Submit two hard copies to History Reception and two e-copies, to your supervisor and the Honours Coordinator.</td>
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Students undertaking a HIST 489 Research Essay should be able to — Undertake a self-directed piece of research of 10,000 words and, ideally, to the standard of a quality, peer-reviewed article; Base their research on a wide reading of primary and/or secondary sources; and develop a solid and historically informed topic based on their research and advance a historically defensible argument about that research as it relates to existing historiography.
Honours Coordinator 2018

VALERIE WALLACE IS THE HONOURS COORDINATOR FOR 2018

Feel free to email, phone, drop by or make a time to come and see me if you have any questions or queries

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Workshops

Workshops for 489 students will take place weekly in the first semester 2018 on Fridays 2:10-4pm in OK406.

Further information about the HIST 489 Workshop schedule will be posted and circulated in February 2018.

A first meeting for History Honours students in 2018 will be held on **Monday 26 February, from 10-12pm** in Wood Seminar Room, OK 406. This meeting will provide a last round of advice on preparing your HIST 489 proposal and general organisational information regarding Honours (access to Honours rooms, facilities etc).
HIST 489 Research Essay Proposal

A HIST 489 proposal should demonstrate to the History Programme that the student has a viable topic for 10,000-word research essay, has identified appropriate and accessible sources and has thought about the questions to be asked and the research method to be adopted for a project to be completed between March and October.

Students are strongly advised to consider their research topics as soon as they enrol for BA (Honours). Students should select a subject of research interest, locating relevant primary and secondary sources on their own initiative, or working from the list of suggested topics in the History Honours 2018 booklet (available at the History office).

After students have developed an idea, they should consult with a History Programme staff member, who may make further suggestions as to scope, sources, time limits and relevant secondary literature. Some students find it useful to discuss potential topics at the end of their third year, or over the summer break with staff members whose areas of research and courses they have previously encountered. The goal is to give your topic a good focus. Subjects that are too ambitious, or too general, do not work well as HIST 489 projects, so avoid broad topics such as ‘New Zealand Rugby in the Twentieth Century’ or ‘German Racism since 1800’. A list of recently completed HIST 489 Research Essays is available in the History Office.

Students who want to conduct interviews, surveys or questionnaires must obtain human ethics approval by Victoria University’s Human Ethics Committee (HEC). HEC approval may take up to three weeks. For further information and the relevant forms, see: http://www.vuw.ac.nz/postgradlife/pages/pages_current_pg/ethics.html

Research proposals are due Monday 5 March at 2pm (hand in print copy at History office OK 405 and email a copy to the Honours Coordinator). Students will learn whether their topic has been approved by Friday 9 March. If the History Research Committee believes that a proposed topic is not viable, students will be asked to submit a second proposal. Typically, proposals are either accepted or rejected: resubmissions are allowed only in exceptional circumstances.
Proposal Guidelines

**PROPOSALS SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING:**

1. A working title for the essay. For now, pick something short and informative, rather than catchy: you will be able to change it later on.

2. A statement about the issue or question which the essay intends to explore. Students should relate their topic to work that has already been published, explaining why the question is of historical interest.

3. A bibliography listing the main primary sources and the relevant secondary sources, both works the student has already read and material the student considers important for conducting future research.

History does not specify a precise format or word length for 489 Research Proposals. Most vary between 5 and 15 double-spaced pages. Some students write an outline with bullet points; others write formal mini-essays complete with footnotes or endnotes. You may find it helpful to follow the structure below:

1) Title
2) Background
   - Describe the background to your project. What have historians said about your topic? What is the intellectual justification for doing this particular project?
3) Aim and Scope
   - What exactly does your essay aim to do? What are the essay’s parameters and why have you set those parameters? What are your research questions?
4) Methodology
   - How will you answer your research questions? What sources will you use? How will you analyse them?
5) Structure
   - How will your essay be organised? What will each section consider?
6) Plan/Timetable
   - What are your milestones? By when do you hope to have completed your primary research?
7) Bibliography

For a sample proposal please consult the appendix to this guide.

**HIST 489 Research Essays are mostly based upon primary source material as opposed to the secondary source material used in most undergraduate essays. Some HIST 489 Essays, though, may be advanced historiographical essays**
Supervision

Each HIST 489 essay will be supervised by at least one History staff member. Students meet regularly with their supervisor over the course of the year. Students should approach members of staff with relevant expertise, but the History Programme decides the final allocation of 489 supervisors.

Students should maintain regular contact with their supervisor throughout the year. Initially, the Programme recommends fortnightly meetings. Meetings enable the supervisor to monitor the student’s progress and resolve any difficulties in a timely manner. Students may discuss problems with sources, essay structure, and argument with their supervisor. Students who have problems with their essay, or with the supervision process, may also contact the Honours coordinators.

Students usually find it more difficult to confine their topic to manageable proportions than to select a topic the first place. Students may get carried away while conducting primary source research and gather far more material than they can use in the HIST 489. Supervisors can provide perspective on research material, helping students focus on the main themes of their argument.

Finally, students may find that their focus shifts or evolves as their research progresses. Thesis topics routinely shift, and students should not feel obligated to stick rigidly with their first suggestion. Students should, however, discuss all new developments with their supervisor to ensure that their thesis does not lose focus.
Progress Report

On 8 June students must submit a progress report to their supervisor demonstrating that they have made progress researching and/or writing their 489 thesis. Students may submit a draft of their thesis introduction, if available.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING A PROGRESS REPORT

The Progress Report should be about 10 pages (double-spaced typed, pages numbered), and contain the following:

1. A statement of progress about the student’s research to date, particularly discussing any changes to the student’s research focus.

2. A timeline for the student’s research and writing for the period until the seminar presentations in July.

3. An updated bibliography.

History does not specify a precise format for progress reports. Students should consult with their supervisor about the content and format of their reports.
HIST 489 Seminar

On **27-28 July** honours students present their research in seminar format (dates and times will be confirmed closer to the time). Students give a twenty-minute talk about their work in progress to staff and other history honours students. The format of the seminar resembles that of a formal academic conference.

Students often find that the giving a summary of their research helps them write their 489 research essay by providing an opportunity for them to concentrate on their main argument. The seminar also provides students with feedback from their peers. Finally, it gives students experience in public speaking.

The presentation should communicate the purpose of the student’s research. Students should highlight main research themes and describe their most important sources. Students should not attempt to present all of their primary source data in detail, they should instead summarize provisional findings. Students may also discuss any difficulties or surprises that arose in the course of their research. Students may speak extemporaneously, but many prepare hand-outs and most use PowerPoint. The 489 workshop will give further guidance about academic presentation styles.
The First Draft

Students are required to present a first draft of their 489 thesis to their supervisor. Supervisors and students negotiate the date between themselves. The draft must be completed **no later than 10 September** and may be submitted earlier: students and supervisors should discuss a mutually-agreeable time. Students should provide both an electronic and paper copy. The supervisor will make comments on the draft and meet with the student as appropriate. The first draft is not marked, but students should present as full a draft as possible. The process of drafting and revision is central to a major research project. Organising material, sharpening the argument, checking and making consistent citations in footnotes and bibliography and polishing expression is all part of the stages of producing a completed piece of research.

**HIST 489 Research Essays should be around 10,000 words, approximately 40 pages of double-spaced typing, excluding footnotes and bibliography**
The Final Essay

On 12 October students must present both two paper copies and an electronic file of their final 489 research papers to their supervisor and the Honours coordinator by 2pm. One paper copy will be retained for History’s library, the other will be returned to the student in November. Students will be notified by email when the examined copies are ready for collection.

Research essays count for 25% of the honours degree, i.e. the equivalent of one full paper. All 489 essays will be examined by the student’s supervisor and a second history staff member. Some Research Essays will also be sent to faculty at another university for external assessment.
Assessment

THE CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING THE HIST 489 RESEARCH ESSAY ARE:

1. The ability to develop and sustain an original piece of research over two trimesters;

2. The ability to undertake relevant bibliographical research and demonstrate an understanding of relevant secondary works, including books, articles, internet sources, etc;

3. The ability to formulate and address an historical question, to identify and interpret sufficient relevant evidence, and to generate clear conclusions;

4. The capacity to place any primary sources in a historiographical context;

5. The ability to present the results of historical research essay in clear prose, and

6. The ability to apply the conventions of historical scholarship accurately and consistently. Specifically, students must properly attribute quotations; citations, data, figures, or images; and construct a bibliography.

Please note that there is no strict mathematical correlation between these criteria and 489 final marks: essays will be assessed as a coherent whole, not by assigning weighted marks to individual criteria.
Working Title

“British Maritime law as argued at the High Court of Admiralty.”

Background

I am entering my sixth year at Victoria University, having studied both an LLB and BA. I have previously completed work as a research assistant for Dr Steve Behrendt on his Marsden Grant project, 'Liverpool as a Trading Port, 1700-1850'. Among other aspects, my work involved reading and transcribing 18th century shipping cases involving various questions of law, including the law relating to prize.

Following a discussion of my 489 topic with Dr Behrendt on 14 February 2012, I have decided that my legal background combined with the knowledge of 18th century shipping law I gained working on the Marsden project, lend themselves well to the topic of joint capture. I have adapted the topic included in the History programme's 'suggested 489 research topics' hand out, entitled 'Maritime Law in the Atlantic World, 1756-1815', narrowing its scope to the more specific area of legal history concerning 'joint capture'.

Topic

The law of prize was a major aspect of the maritime world in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Significant wars were fought during this time including the Seven Years' War and the Napoleonic Wars. Naval warfare played a large role in the outcome of these wars. The practice of taking enemy ships as 'prizes' became an effective way for warring nations to eliminate their enemy as efficiently as possible, at the same time expanding their naval or privateer forces with captured vessels and selling the enemy vessels' cargo for profit.

Taking prizes was not a free-for-all. Because most nations (excluding neutral nations) engaged in prize warfare, they were forced to have regard to the existing laws of nations. It was the prize divisions of Vice-Admiralty and Admiralty Courts that enforced these laws. There survives a wealth of written submissions, affidavits and judgments from these courts that shed light on the state of the law at the time.

Many of these cases dealt largely with claims of 'joint capture'. It was clear that vessels could lay claim to a share in a prize captured by connected vessels. Yet sources show that it was often unclear to what extent the vessels must be connected. Some secondary sources indicate that any vessel in the vicinity of the primary captor and in sight of the prize might be entitled to a share in the prize. Others indicate that shares were only granted where both vessels were endorsed by the Crown to share in prizes, or where the secondary vessel was actively involved in the capture of the prize. In completing this 489 essay, I intend to use primary source materials, and in particular, case law, to shed light
on the law of joint capture and its application to a variety of prize war situations.

Proposal

I intend to use the wealth of primary source material available to me to develop this topic into a thoroughly researched and well-informed thesis. The most important and relevant sources I have available are the High Court of Admiralty (HCA) cases preserved in handwritten and often typed form at the National Archives in Kew, London. Dr Behrendt has taken photographs of several hundred cases in the HCA45 series concerning Liverpool vessels, slaving ships, and privateers. Few scholars have examined cases in the important HCA45 series.

I also have discovered a large volume of case summaries entitled Reports of Prize Cases Determined in the High Court of Admiralty ... From 1745-1859, published in 1905. Many of the summaries in this volume relate to the doctrine of joint capture. I will focus on Admiralty court cases, as they played a large role in developing the law of nations and naval warfare.

I intend to utilise primary and secondary sources to develop a framework of the law surrounding joint capture between 1756 and 1815 and to test whether the law of ‘joint capture’ evolved over the period from the onset of the Seven Years' War (1756) to the ending of the Napoleonic Wars (1815). Some mention of the specific topic of joint capture can be found in secondary source books discussing prize law. Other secondary sources on the topic, some of which have cited the HCA45 series, can be found through various databases, namely JSTOR and ProQuest. I have included examples of these articles in the bibliography that follows. My essay will question the validity of current thought on joint capture, shedding light on an aspect of prize law that has, as yet, been little explored by historians.

Main issues for inclusion

- The context in which the law of prize arose as a major part to naval warfare
- The importance of the prize court in the 18th century and its impact on the law of nations
- Explanation of the doctrine of joint capture – what could one gain from bringing a joint capture claim in the Admiralty courts?
- Assessment of the law as interpreted in secondary sources
- Critical analysis of the primary source case law and assessment of judges' application of the law in differing joint capture situations (for example, did different rules apply where the secondary captor was a privateer assisting a navy vessel? What rules were applicable where troops on land claimed the right to share in a prize, the capture of which they sighted?)
- Overall conclusion of what the cases show about the law in relation to joint capture. Why were there different rules for different situations? Did the law change over time? In what ways did Admiralty judges efficiently enforce the law of
nations?

Structure

I intend to divide the thesis into several parts, largely for ease of reading and, for myself, clarity of thought. The first part will provide an overview of the historical context in which the practice of joint capture arose. The second part will discuss the law as provided for in secondary source materials I have accessed, developing an overall picture of the major aspects of the law of joint capture and how courts decided whether to divide prizes between joint captors. The third (and largest) part will apply the law, as evidenced in case law, to the secondary source assertions. Excerpts from cases will prove whether these assertions are correct or incorrect and will add substantially to contemporary knowledge of the law of joint capture and its application in differing circumstances.

Timetable

I will adhere to the recommended timetable for handing in my progress report, draft and completed thesis. I will continue to research the topic for possibly the first month of the academic year to ensure I have all the relevant material available to me. This may require liaising with the library to interloan books or articles. However, because the majority of my thesis will be based on material I already have, this should not take a lot of time. I envisage that at least monthly meetings with my supervisor will be sufficient to ensure I am on the right track. However, I'm sure that Dr. Behrendt will not be opposed to answering any questions I have by email between those meetings.

Preliminary Bibliography

Primary Sources

Cases

- Approximately 11 cases on the topic of joint capture, contained in High Court of Admiralty documents supplied by Dr. Behrendt, in HCA 45/1-17 and HCA 45/18-54 (series and fat ledger with cases).

  The majority of these cases include arguments submitted by the parties, affidavits and evidence as to the law of joint capture. Some have hand-written judgments included.

- Approximately 20 case summaries on the topic of joint capture, contained in Roscoe, E.S., Reports of Prize Cases Determined in the High Court of Admiralty (London: Stevens and Sons Limited, 1905), Vols. 1 and 2.

  All judgments contained in these volumes have been paraphrased by the editor, with headnotes added stating the main principle of law.
Books


Paget, J.W., An Analytical Digest of the Cases Published in the Law Journal: and in all the reports of decisions in the courts of common law and equity, ... from Michaelmas term, 1822, to Trinity term, 1828, inclusive, (London: James Holmes, 1831).


Articles


Secondary Sources

Books


**Articles**


Chambers, William and Chambers, Robert (eds.), 'Prize or no Prize', in *Chambers's Journal*, no. 231, June 1858, p. 360.


**Further databases – accessible through Victoria University Library**

British Library: 17th-18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers

British Periodicals

JSTOR

Slavery, Abolition and Social Justice, 1490-2007

State Papers Online Database

**History Honours coordinator 2018**

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w: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/about/overview-of-the-school/hist-overview

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