

History Honours Student Guide 2025



History Programme

School of History, Philosophy, Political Science, and International Relations
Te Kura Aro Whakamuri, Rapunga Whakaaro, Matai Tōrangapū me te Ao

History Hons Staff, 2025



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Key dates in 2025

17 February	HIST 489 orientation and proposal guidance (12.10-1pm, tbc)
24 February	HIST 489 proposals due 2pm
28 February	Response to proposals first 489 workshop
30 May	HIST 489 research essay progress report due
18–19 July (tbc)	HIST 489 Work-in-Progress seminar presentations
5 September (tbc)	HIST 489 research essay draft due
3 October (tbc)	HIST 489 final research essay due

Courses offered in 2025

Each course is worth 30 points

All courses are full year courses (taught over t1 and t2)

All courses are 100% internally assessed (and subject to external assessment)

All classes meet in OK 406

HIST 407

A Topic in European History 1: Histories of the Senses

Coordinator: Catherine Abou-Nemeh

Meeting time: Tues 11:00–12:50pm

This course will introduce students to historical problems and approaches in studying the five senses: vision, touch, taste, smell and hearing. The chief aims of the course are to consider the role of the senses in history and to interrogate historians' emphasis on textual primary sources in the discipline. The seminar discussions will focus primarily on Europe before 1800, and will be based on readings of scholarly works in cultural history and the history of medicine, technology and the environment — with occasional forays into other geographical regions and historical periods.

HIST 423

A Topic in Historiography and Historical Method 2: Holocaust Cinema

Coordinator: Giacomo Lichtner

Meeting time: Wed 2.10–4.00pm

This course investigates how cinema has attempted to represent the Holocaust and shape its memory since 1945. The course considers both how cinema responded to especially challenging aspects of Holocaust history, such as how to represent the gas chambers or the concept of dehumanisation, and how American and European filmmakers and producers engaged with the changing popular understandings of the Holocaust. Through the analysis of a large and diverse number of case studies, from concentration camp footage to *Zone of Interest* and from *Jo-Jo Rabbit* to *Schindler's List*, this course explores the different ways in which history and film interact, how filmmakers use history in their trade and vice-versa, and how the study of history can profit from using the moving image.

HIST 431

Class in History

Coordinator: Jim McAloon

Meeting time: Mon 1:10-3:00pm

This course will examine the importance of social class as an analytical category and a historical reality. Attention will be paid to classical and more recent theoretical debates, and to the concrete meaning of class in a variety of historical situations. The course will deal with aristocrats and peasants, and the middle classes, as much as with the working class, and with historiographical discussion as well as with current research. Most of the historical literature will discuss European, American, and Australasian examples but students are encouraged to work on other places and times, according to their interests.

HIST 489

Research Project / Mahi Rangahau

Coordinator: Adrian Muckle

Meeting time: Fri 2.10–4:00pm (for workshops throughout trimester 1). In addition to this you will have meetings (approx fortnightly) with your supervisor.

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 a History Programme staff member. 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. Proposals are due by 2pm on Monday 24 February 2025.

Developing a HIST 489 essay topic

Students are strongly advised to start thinking about their research essay topics as soon as they enrol for the Honours programme. There are two main pathways to a topic:

- Students may propose their own ideas for topics and locate relevant primary and secondary sources on their own initiative. Some students find it useful to discuss at the end of their third year, or over the summer, potential topics with staff members whose areas of research and courses they have previously encountered. Building on previous coursework has the advantage of giving a sense of context within which to process the primary research material from an early stage in the project.
- Students may also choose to select ideas or topics from the list below. These suggestions are starting points and require students to exercise initiative to locate relevant source material.

In both cases, topics need to be discussed and refined with the advice of academic staff. Students should discuss potential ideas with staff (listed below). Potential supervisors can advise on the scope of the topic, potential sources, and relevant secondary literature. Students not sure which staff member to approach should contact the Honours Coordinator, who will offer advice and help put students in touch with appropriate academic staff.

Note: Normally, staff on Research and Study Leave (RSL) do not supervise HIST 489 essays. It is sometimes possible for a staff member to supervise for one half of the year and another staff member to take over in the other half. Contact the relevant staff member for further information.

HIST 489 proposal

All students must submit a proposal on the first day of trimester 1.

The proposal must show that: 1) you have a viable topic for a 10,000-word research essay (without reference material); 2) you have identified appropriate and accessible sources; and 3) you have thought about the questions to be asked and the research method to be adopted for the project to be completed during the year.

The presentation of a well-focused topic is the goal of the proposal. Subjects that are overly broad or too general do not work well as HIST 489 projects. Looking at the list of recently completed HIST 489 Research Essays can be useful (ask the Hons Coordinator for the list). Avoid broad topics such as 'New Zealand Rugby in the Twentieth Century' or 'German Racism since 1800.' Focus instead on tighter topics, such as 'Discourses of Mateship during the 1960 All Blacks' Tour' or 'Africans and Aborigines in Blumenbach's *Decas craniorum*, 1790–1828.'

Students who want to conduct interviews, surveys or questionnaires must obtain human ethics approval from Victoria University's Human Ethics Committee (HEC). HEC approval may take up to three weeks. For further information and the relevant forms, see: <https://www.victoria.ac.nz/research/support/ethics/human-ethics>.

The History Programme does not specify a precise format or word length for 489 Research Proposals. Most are between 8 and 15 double-spaced pages and range from 2000-4000 words (this often includes a sizeable bibliography). The 'HIST 489 Research Essay Student Guide', available from the Honours Coordinator, includes guidelines for the preparation of the proposal and sample proposals.

An orientation session for all enrolled HIST 489 students will be held on **Monday 17 February 2025**. This session provides an opportunity for last minute guidance on proposals.

Research proposals are due **Monday 24 February 2025 at 2pm**. Students will be advised whether their topic has been approved by Friday 28 February. If the History Research Committee determines that a proposed topic is not viable, students may be asked to submit a revised proposal and further guidance will be provided.

Supervisors, areas of expertise & possible topics

Catherine Abou-Nemeh

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I would be happy to supervise 489 topics that relate to my research expertise, such as history of science, history of medicine, and intellectual and cultural history of early modern Europe (c. 1500-1750). I am open to developing topics with students, and welcome student use of primary sources in foreign languages and creative examination of material objects, such as paintings, maps or scientific instruments.

My own research centres on the histories of science, knowledge and ignorance; connections between learned and craft traditions in early modern European sciences, especially the history of optical instruments; and the reception of Descartes, Newton, and other natural philosophers in the 17th and 18th centuries.

I have supervised 489 theses on a range of topics, including the use of opium medicines in Britain; Dutch and British medical understandings of hysteria; history of anthropogenic climate change debates and climate science; Bess of Hardwick as an enterprising English noblewoman who told her story in letters, embroideries, and other surviving artefacts; Christine de Pizan as a key political thinker and exemplar of early humanism; the interplay between Jansenist faith and mathematical practice in the work of the French mathematician Blaise Pascal; mental health and diseases of the soul in the medical works of the English physician Thomas Willis; gender in the chronicles of Gregory of Tours.

Steve Behrendt (on RSL in trimester 2)

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I would be pleased to discuss and supervise HIST 489 topics on British Atlantic history or the British Empire, 1650–1850, including major British ports (particularly Liverpool), the transatlantic slave trade, anti-slavery and abolition, English social/economic history, commodities, colonial US history, the West Indies, African history, maritime or medical history. Some example topics supported by available primary sources (online and as PDFs):

- 'Reverse Middle Passage' tourism in Africa (researching media sources)
- Liverpool's warehouse history, 1750–1820 (researching newspapers, insurance)
- Liverpool's theatre history, 1800–1830 (researching newspapers, pamphlets)
- British women and charitable giving, 1750–1820 (researching wills)
- Maps and the eighteenth-century colonial Caribbean (researching maps)

- The Royal Navy anti-slavery squadron, 1808–1867 (researching logbooks)
- Liverpool’s pubs and taverns, 1750–1807 (researching directories)
- Liverpool’s Welsh and Irish communities (researching genealogies)
- Literacy and education in 18th Century England (researching marriage licenses)
- Slavery and manumission in the Caribbean (researching registers)
- Caribbean sugar and shipping, 18th Century (researching shipping documents)

Kate Hunter

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I am available to supervise topics in First World War history, Second World War social history, Australian history, as well a topics about gender, dress, material objects, costuming and fancy dress, etc. in Australasia. Below are some more specific topics you might like to consider.

Mass Observation Online is the database of a remarkable social research project founded in 1937 to record everyday life in Britain. It is accessed through the Databases link on the library website. Several topics could be pursued for HIST489 essays, for example:

- Reception of propaganda efforts – reception is difficult to research but within the MOO file reports there is some useful evidence, for example: questionnaires about ARP recruiting, publicity, and propaganda (File Report 4A), cinema audiences were the subject of reports including the reception of propaganda films
- Aspects of shopping and purchasing behaviours including File Report 7, 8, 12, 14 etc. on Christmas Shopping 1939
- File Report 11A on Jazz and Dancing describing attitudes to jazz music, also the effect of the blackout on various leisure activities (dancing was affected little), see also report on Gramophone Records
- Reports on Fashion and Personal Appearance (search by key word)
- Reports on anti-semitism
- The reports on cinema audiences by the volunteers illuminate audiences, their behaviour, and their opinions.
- The Day Surveys were filled out by people from a wide range of classes and occupations
- The Worktown collection focuses on Bolton and Blackpool between 1937-1940 and is a detailed examination of politics (including the attitudes towards the Spanish Civil War), leisure and work.

Potential supervisors for topics generated from Mass Observation Online are Giacomo Lichtner, Jim McAloon, Cybèle Locke, and Kate Hunter.

Coronation Fashions. The Kirkcaldie & Stains business archives are held at Alexander Turnbull Library and have exciting potential for research topics about department stores, especially their advertising copy books. In celebration of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, Kirkcaldie’s ran a significant advertising campaign promoting fashions for the season. In what ways did the coronation affect fashion trends? How did fashion

departments in New Zealand respond to the celebration? Is there a comparison to be drawn with the response to the 1937 coronation of Elizabeth's father? Potential supervisor: Kate Hunter

Photograph Collections. What might we explore in the Bragge (Wellington), Harding (Whanganui), Dawes (Hokianga) or other major collection of photographs now held in public research libraries but once thriving local businesses? What was photography as a profession, and what did image-making as a business do in terms of creating individual, family, or town identities? Where were photographic studios located in the main streets of towns? How were they furnished and what kind of business did they offer to their owners and customers?

Women's Division of Federated Farmers. The Wdff published the NZ Countrywoman from 1933. There are a wide range of topics that can be explored in this magazine including social conservatism in rural NZ, the efforts of the Wdff during the Second World War including their response to the formation of the Women's Land Army, and adaptation to second wave feminism in the 1970s. Potential supervisors: Kate Hunter, Jim McAloon.

Dolores Janiewski

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- The influence and role of U.S. media within the U.S. and internationally
- Social Movements of the 1960s
- U.S. Conservatism
- Social/Cultural History of U.S. and its Regions: 1890 to Present with a focus on Gender, Race, Class in the southern, western, and Pacific regions
- Cold War Events, Culture, Ideology 1945–1991
- History of Surveillance in the United States
- Radicalism and Conservatism in the U.S. and transnationally

Giacomo Lichtner

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I have supervised HIST 489s on a wide range of topics, from Charles De Gaulle to the Holocaust in children's literature, and from British WWII propaganda to representations of whāngai in contemporary New Zealand cinema. My own fields of expertise are in Modern European history, Memory Studies, and in the theory and practice of representing history in media such as cinema, television, and literature, and I am especially interested in:

- Any aspect of the history, representation, or memorialisation of the Holocaust
- The history, memory, and representation of 'the long Second World War' (including the inter-war period), in a national, transnational, or comparative European context
- Case studies in the history of modern propaganda

- The role of historical cinema and television in constructing narratives of history and 'national identity'
- Uses of the past in postcolonial and subaltern cinemas, especially in India, New Zealand, and Australia
- The history, memory, and representation of the post-war period in Europe, especially in regard to the 1960s and 1970s, terrorism and political mobilisation.
- Within this broad interdisciplinary framework, I am happy to talk with students before enrolment to help you develop the HIST489 project of your choice.

Arini Loader (on RSL in trimester 1)

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I am happy to discuss supervision of a range of topics within the broad field of Māori/New Zealand history particularly but not limited to the New Zealand Wars, and those which engage with Māori-language texts including, for example, waiata (song/sung texts/poetry), kōrero tuku iho (traditions/mythology), kōrero tāhuhu (historical texts), whakataukī (proverbial sayings), reta (correspondence) and whakapapa (genealogies). I am also happy to supervise topics in the areas of New Zealand film, media and theatre, Indigenous Studies and Literary Studies including print culture, newspapers and early New Zealand literature in English.

Key resources include:

- Published and unpublished collections at National Library Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa: <http://natlib.govt.nz>
 - Sir Donald McLean papers: <https://natlib.govt.nz/collections/a-z/sir-donald-mclean-papers> at Alexander Turnbull Library
 - Newspapers, magazine and journals, letters and diaries and Parliamentary Papers available online via the Papers Past website: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>
- Manuscripts online at Auckland Libraries: <http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/dbtw-wpd/msonline/index.htm>
- Hocken Library Archives: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/library/hocken/otago038925.html>
 - Marsden online Archive: <http://marsdenarchive.otago.ac.nz>
- Books reproduced on the Early New Zealand Books website: <http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz>

Cybèle Locke

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Kia ora. I am available to supervise a broad range of twentieth-century social history topics. I have a particular interest in 'history from below', people's everyday working lives, their labour, livelihoods, politics, social concerns, and cultural practices; how they formed community in multiple ways and campaigned for social justice. I have expertise in oral history - kōrero tuku iho - as both a methodology and practice.

Key resources: The NZ Legal Information Institute has just recently digitised the NZ Book of Awards. Awards were collective contracts that stipulated the wages and conditions for every occupation and industry in the private-sector workforce until 1991.
<http://www.nzlii.org/nz/other/NZBkAwd/>

This remarkable resource enables all kinds of projects, for example, what can these Awards tell us about the history of the gender wage gap, and why it stubbornly persists?

How much difference did the 1960 and 1972 Equal Pay Acts make?

Oral histories at the Alexander Turnbull Library would also assist with such a project.

Are you interested in investigating workplace cultures or the way particular occupations have been impacted by neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s? Oral histories, a large collection of which are housed at the Alexander Turnbull Library, are very useful sources for this kind of topic.

The rise and demise of the occupation 'Girl Friday'. When does this office job appear as a form of white blouse work, and what spells its demise? What does this tell us about modernity, about gender, workplace culture, about equal rights, and opportunities in the workplace?

Can trade unions be considered social movements during the long 1970s?

How did anti-racism and anti-apartheid movements connect and disconnect in the 1960s and 1970s?

Why did anti-communism become so deeply embedded in New Zealand society? Choose a moment: the 1930s; Cold War 1950s; 1975-84.

Welfare vs workfare: how was welfare reform contested in the 1990s?

Alexander Maxwell

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My wider area of interest encompasses Germany, Russia, the Middle East, and all countries in between. My research interests mostly lie in nineteenth-century central Europe. My previous honours students have worked on topics in German, Hungarian, Kurdish, Lebanese, Palestinian, Polish, Serbian and Soviet history. I have a lot of ideas for helping students interested in one of the cultures of this region find and use primary sources.

Thematically, I am particularly interested in nationalism, ethnicity, and what is often called the politics of "identity." I am also interested in gender history, particularly the history of masculinity, sociolinguistics and the "politics" of language, and the history of everyday practices, such as the history of clothing or the history of sexuality.

I have not proposed a list of topics because I think honours students need to choose their topic on their own. I can help you avoid dead ends, but only you can find the path. Any students interested in working with me should get in touch for a brainstorming session! Feel free to contact me over the summer if interested.

Jim McAloon

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My research interests are generally in the social, economic and political history of Aotearoa-New Zealand, particularly Pākehā migration and settlement in the nineteenth century, economic development, and New Zealand politics since 1890.

Topics in political history — whether of the left or the right — are of interest. These might be studies of a particular issue, or of an organisation or an individual. Topics in 'policy history' are also of interest — from trade boycotts to legislation on drugs. I'm happy to supervise histories of regions and communities (for example, a few years ago I had a student who worked on the cluster of Manx families who settled at Stanway near Feilding). Any topic that aligns with my current research on the middle class in colonial New Zealand — including themes in business history, the history of wealth, and the history of inheritance — would also be very welcome.

Other possibilities: Class in the country: a study of the membership and social boundaries of the Ranfurly Club (Masterton) in the early 20thC. This would be based on the rules and membership list of the Club held at the Wairarapa Archive Ref o8/86/7-4 and viewable in digital form at: <https://teara.govt.nz/en/interactive/31008/womens-clubs-ranfurly-club-rules>.

What does court reporting tell us about newspaper readers as well as about the criminal and justice system? This project would be focused on a specific time period and also, possibly, on a particular group of cases.

Adrian Muckle

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At the intersection of histories of the Pacific, New Zealand and the French empire, my own areas of interest include: colonial violence; missions and evangelisation; the experiences of "mixed-race" families; and colonial "intermediaries" such as islander evangelists, "chiefs" or police.

Get in touch with me if you are interested in developing topics relating to history in the Pacific islands region (including but not limited to Sāmoa, PNG, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji) or its points of connection with aspects of NZ history, the history of French colonial expansion or histories of colonialism and empire more generally.

I have previously supervised 489 research essays on a range of topics, including 'Harry' Holland and Sāmoa; the 1918 influenza epidemic in Sāmoa; the CMS in the Bay of Islands; the British Residency in the New Hebrides; and Wellington in the 1840s.

Pacific History Sources in Wellington. Archives New Zealand holds materials relating to New Zealand's Pacific territories. The Alexander Turnbull Library is a major repository of Pacific archival and published materials, including (but not limited to) the entire Pacific

Manuscripts Bureau (PMB) collection of microfilmed manuscripts, printed documents, audio recordings and photographs. Guides to PMB materials are available at <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/pambu/>.

Geoff Troughton (Study of Religion)

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I welcome supervision on topics related to my research expertise on religion in New Zealand, modern Christianity, and contemporary religious change. Histories that wrestle with religion may deal with traditional institutions, but the scope of possibility is much broader. I am particularly keen to support work that engages with social, ethical, and political debates, the place of religion in cultural life, and experiences of migrant and minority religious traditions. My interest extends to issues connected to secularity, nonreligion, and irreligion. I have current research projects exploring modern atheism, nineteenth century mission history, colonialism and religion, contemporary Pentecostal Christianity, and late twentieth century religious activism.

Honours room, kitchen & Hamer room

Enrolled History Honours students are given space to work in the Honours Room (OK401). The room has several desks, computers, a printer, lockers. Desks are not assigned and are available every day on a first come, first served 'hot desk' basis. See History administrative staff for printer paper and keys and locks for the lockers. If you have any issues with the computers or health and safety concerns, notify Yan Ma (yan.ma@vuw.ac.nz) in the first instance.

In addition to the Honours Room, students are welcome to use the kitchen at the end of the corridor in Old Kirk, which is equipped with a larger fridge and a microwave. Please keep the kitchen clean and tidy. Wash all your dishes in the kitchen sink after use or stack them in the dishwasher in the staff kitchen. Free milk is available in the staff fridge.

The Hamer Room (OK403) is a small, departmental library. You can use the resources in the room (please do not remove books from the room) or book the room for study sessions or video screenings. See History administrative staff for access and to make bookings.

Useful links

Scholarships

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/scholarships>

Alastair Whitelaw Scholarship in History. For students of Māori or Pasifika descent. Closes **31 Oct. 2024**, <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships/current/alastair-whitelaw-undergraduate-scholarship-in-history>. \$6000

Wellington Graduate Award. Closes **1 Nov. 2024**, <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships/current/wellington-graduate-award>. \$5000

Brian Fox Scholarship in History. Closes, **15 Nov. 2024**, <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships/current/brian-fox-scholarship-in-history>. \$7000

Wellington Historical and Early Settlers' Association James E. Worsfold Scholarship. Closes **31 March 2025**, <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships/current/james-e-worsfold-scholarship>. \$5000

Types of postgraduate study

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/programmes-courses/postgraduates/honours>

Bachelor of Arts with Honours - BA(Hons)

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/explore/postgraduate-programmes/bachelor-of-arts-with-honours/overview>

BA (Hons) History

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/explore/postgraduate-programmes/bachelor-of-arts-with-honours/requirements?subject=history-baho>

Postgraduate History

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/explore/postgraduate-subjects/history/overview>