

International Research Programme

Projects for 2024

1. Advertising death: Ammunition cartridges as commodities, 1850-1950

Area: History

Project Supervisor: Prof. Maartje Abbenhuis

Project description:

The history of gun violence is most often written as a story about guns. But it is not the gun that kills but its ammunition. Since the development of industrial manufacturing and the introduction of rifling in gun design (from about 1850 on), personal guns became more deadly and destructive, largely because the ammunitions used to make these new guns work caused greater damage to their targets than those shot from pre-industrial weapons.

This research project asks the following questions: How did ammunition manufacturers market their bullets to customers across the period 1850-1950? What qualities of their ammunition did they promote? How might these findings help us to understand how contemporaries (between 1850 and 1950) understood and thought about gun violence?

Researcher's work:

There are three components to this research project:

1. Primary source research: using available library and archival resources, the researcher will find examples of advertisements and other promotional materials relating to gun ammunitions in the period 1850-1950 across the English-speaking world. They will construct a database of these sources and provide a contextual and analytical commentary on each source (2 weeks)
2. Secondary source research: supported by suggestions from the supervisor, the researcher will read key texts on the history of gun violence and norms of war and state violence to help contextualise their primary source findings (1 week)
3. Essay construction: using these combined sources, and in consultation with the supervisor, the researcher will write a 2,000-word essay explaining how a small set of these advertisements/promotional materials (eg from a particular manufacturer, or those published at a particular time or in a particular place) helps us to answer the core questions of this research project (1 week)

Research outputs:

There will be three research outputs from this project: a database of primary sources, a bibliography of secondary sources and a 2,000-word essay reflecting on research findings and their historical importance.

Required skills/prerequisites:

The ideal applicant for this project is a student with a background in History (ie having taken at least two History papers at University level) and who is interested in the history of inter-personal violence, warfare, hunting or the laws of war.

2. Colonial Photography and Global Advertisement: Germany in Samoa 1900-1914

Area: German/Pacific Studies

Project Supervisors: Dr. Nicole Perry (German and Comparative Literature); Lemoa Henry Fesulua'i (Pacific Studies)

Project Description:

Called the "Pearl of the German Colonial Crown" German Samoa (1900-1914) and the relationship between Germany and Samoa was markedly different to those in German South West Africa. Romanticized and erotically charged images, whimsical stories, and noble savages layer the landscape of German Samoa, a former colony in Polynesia, whose distinctive colonial past can be attributed to such things as its distance from Germany, the trading routes and relations upon which it was created and the governing practices at the time. The legacy of German Samoa is one of a certain fondness and nostalgia; not only for the German residents who were forced from their island paradise after New Zealand took control in 1919, but also many Samoans tend to see the German occupation nostalgically especially when compared to New Zealand's colonial governance until Samoan independence in 1962.

Researcher's Work:

Working with online databases and archives the Scholar, will create a database of important events in the German colonial holdings of not only Samoa, but more broadly the South Pacific to contextualise the years before, during and after Germany's presence in Samoa, many sources which also exist in English. By providing the historical background of the era, the Scholar will be able to contribute to the analysis of photographs, postcards, and newspapers, to analyse the interest and knowledge of German Samoa in Germany and other German speaking countries.

1. The Scholar will compile an annotated research database, tracking newspaper entries from 1889-1920 that report on or advertise German Samoa, or Germany's interest in Samoa, depending on the time period.

2. The Scholar will create a bibliography of key secondary texts (In German, English, or both), identifying those which have particular significance to German colonial holdings in both the South Pacific and Africa.

Required Skills/Pre-requisites:

While the knowledge of German is not necessary, it is beneficial. The Scholar should have the ability to conduct independent research using academic databases and other internet resources. Students who have studied German, History, or Pacific Studies courses at the University level will have priority.

3. State Responsibility for the Welfare of Heritage Diasporas

Area: Migration/Diaspora Studies

Project Supervisor: Professor Malcolm Campbell

Project description

In its policy document *Global Irish: Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025* the Irish Government sets out an ambitious plan for engagement with people of Irish citizenship and descent around the globe. Importantly, the policy extends a commitment to the welfare of the Irish abroad, including those people for whom "Irish heritage is more distant, including African-American and Hispanic communities in the US, and people of Irish ancestry in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and other parts of the world." This project investigates the concept of a heritage diaspora, asks whether Ireland is unusual in adopting a policy that engages with so broad a diasporic group, and considers the implications of national commitment to a heritage diaspora at a time of existential threat posed by the challenges of global warming and climate change.

Researcher's work

Utilising the library resources at the University of Auckland, the researcher will identify and analyse scholarship to ascertain whether other states have adopted Ireland's approach to the recognition of a heritage diaspora or have different strategies; prepare an annotated bibliography on scholarship relevant to the topic; and work with the project supervisor to consider the implications of the "heritage diaspora" approach for communities affected by issues of global warming and climate change, particularly in the Pacific.

Research outputs

- The researcher will create an annotated bibliography of the key secondary texts, identifying those that have particular significance.
- The researcher will also write a 3,000-word paper based on aspects of their research. A specific topic will be developed in consultation between the researcher and supervisor.

Required skills/prerequisites

The candidate will likely have a background in History, Law, International Relations, or a cognate field, and interest in studying migration and/or environmental issues.

4. Framing War in a Time of Climate Crisis

Area: Politics and International Relations

Project Supervisor: Thomas Gregory and Nicole Wegner

Project description

War is environmentally destructive, both in terms of the immediate damage it causes to the ecosystems within which they are fought and in terms of the long-term damage from the greenhouse gases emitted during its conduct. At the same time, climate change is increasingly posed as a

potential threat, with states concerned that future conflicts will be waged in response to problems arising from global warming. This project examines the climate change mitigation measures that leading militaries have introduced in response to these developments, including the specific plans that have been developed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the proposals that have been devised to address emerging environmental threats. This project examines how these measures might work to rehabilitate armed conflict despite its detrimental effects to both people and place.

Researcher's work

Significant work has been done outlining the damage war does to the environment, but less work has been done examining how militaries intend to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and deal with emergent threats. The researcher will examine the climate change mitigation measures that militaries and defence departments have introduced in Australia, Israel, Britain and the United States, as well as the discourses surrounding these measures. Specific tasks include assembling the relevant documents, analysing their content, contextualising their emergence, and examining the discourses surrounding their introduction.

Research outputs

1. Researcher will produce a working paper on these measures, which will inform future work.
2. Supervisors will produce a conference paper on their broader project, which will be presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention in 2025.
3. Supervisors will apply for Marsden Fund in 2025.

Required skills/prerequisites

The researcher will need to have taken some modules in Political Science, International Relations or similar fields. They will need experience conducting advanced qualitative research and writing up their findings, and they will need good communication and organisational skills.

5. A Comparative Examination of Asylum Seekers Settlement Policies across the OECD

Area: Social Science/Refugees

Project Supervisor: Dr Tim Fadgen, Public Policy Institute; Prof. Jay Marlowe, Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies

Project description

The world continues to face a human migration policy crisis. By early 2023, more than 35 million people were refugees and a further 5.4 million people sought asylum in a country other than their own—more than the population of Canada. In addition, tens of millions of others reside on temporary visas in a country other than that of their birth. Countries of resettlement face policy and political challenges in designing programmes meant to lead to successful resettlement outcomes that typically focus on language and job skills whilst also conveying information about accessing important state services and other transitional matters. This requires setting success indicators that

are not only in the asylum-seekers short and medium-term interests but also meet the long-term demands of the domestic political environment. In order to better understand these interconnected issues, this project has two main components: This project aims to survey a range of asylum-seeker policies and programmes in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. This sample is selected to provide a range of programme sizes and contexts to examine not only the policy contexts of each intervention but also the political contexts within which these policies and programmes have been developed. The lessons learnt from this research will generate insights into best practices that can be used to guide policymakers to optimise the political and policy balance for successful asylum-seeker outcomes.

Researcher's work

The research student will compile and review scholarly and grey literatures across OECD countries on policies and practices with respect to asylum seekers. In particular, the student will focus on those policies that address public services, benefits and accommodations available to asylum seekers during the pendency of their applications for asylum status. The research student will develop and maintain a database of relevant research and grey literature on this topic and assist the researcher with other tasks as required.

Research outputs

- A database of current policies and laws impacting asylum seekers across OECD countries
- A literature review of scholarly and grey literature concerning asylum seeker policies and laws across the OECD

Required skills/prerequisites

The ideal candidate will have a strong interest in the subject area and a passion for research and detail. In addition, the candidate must have an ability to communicate clearly, both orally and in writing.

6. Gender Based Violence: A comparative study of its cinema and media representation in Italy, Aotearoa/New Zealand and the United States

Area: Film and Media Studies and Gender Studies

Project Supervisor: Bernadette Luciano

Project description (one paragraph)

As numerous films and docudramas dealing with gender based violence have proliferated on international screens over recent decades, scholarly works have considered how images and narratives of violence reflect social dynamics of power and subordination. This project looks at how film and media representations of address issues of gender based violence and attempt to create a space for reflection and change. Contemporary Italian films and documentaries have moved away from "normalized" and comedic representations of domestic violence in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s to more politically engaged films that foreground instead the tragedy and horror of abuse that remains deeply rooted in long term acceptance of such behaviour. and expose the pervasive and transversal nature of such violence, violence that cuts across age, ethnicity and class. Recent documentaries

extend beyond the experience of the victims and investigate its origins in deeply rooted patriarchal thought and iconography and in media reports that perpetuate stereotypes. These documentaries focus on a path forward for 'prevention'-through progressive legal initiatives and re-education. This project extends beyond the Italian case and proposes a comparative study of Gender Based Violence in film and media that includes Aotearoa/New Zealand and US perspectives.

Researcher's work (one paragraph)

There are two components to this research project:

1. Using library and on-line resources, the researcher will develop a database of US and New Zealand films and documentaries in the past decade that address issues of gender-based violence. They will provide a summary and comment on each item.
2. Using library and on-line resources the researcher will identify examples of media articles which comment on instances of gender-based violence. the subjects of these films and analyze the language used.

Research outputs (bullet points)

- An annotated database of Aotearoa/New Zealand and US primary sources.
- A 2000-word essay which reflects on the problematic language used in reported incidents of gender based violence.

Required skills/prerequisites

The researcher for this project would ideally have a background in gender studies and/or media studies with an interest in New Zealand contemporary culture.