



B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

2011

**HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATION**

History Extension

General Instructions

- Reading time – 5 minutes
- Working time – 2 hours
- Write using black or blue pen
Black pen is preferred

Total marks – 50

Section I Pages 2–3

25 marks

- Attempt Question 1
- Allow about 1 hour for this section

Section II Page 4

25 marks

- Attempt Question 2
- Allow about 1 hour for this section

Section I

25 marks

Attempt Question 1

Allow about 1 hour for this section

Answer the question in a writing booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant issues of historiography
 - use relevant sources to support your argument
 - present a detailed, logical and cohesive response
-

Using the Source, answer the question that follows.

Source

Who Owns History?

In recent years, countries around the globe have been roiled* by debates over history similar in many ways to our own. Critics condemned a proposed new history curriculum for British schools for not being ‘British enough’— meaning that it neglected a number of monarchs while requiring students to study non-European societies such as Aztec Mexico or Benin... In Japan, demonstrators protested the introduction of new texts said to sanitize the country’s aggression in World War II and its maltreatment of occupied peoples such as the Koreans and Chinese. ...

Although they generated far more heat than light, the(se) history wars did underscore the basic differences between historians’ understanding of their task and what much of the broader public thinks the writing of history entails. Historians view the constant search for new perspectives as the lifeblood of historical understanding. ...

History always has been and always will be regularly rewritten, in response to new questions, new information, new methodologies, and new political, social, and cultural imperatives. But that each generation can and must rewrite history does not mean that history is simply a series of myths and inventions. There are commonly accepted professional standards that enable us to distinguish good history from falsehoods... Historical truth does exist, not in the scientific sense but as a reasonable approximation of the past. But the most difficult truth for those outside the ranks of professional historians to accept is that there often exists more than one legitimate way of recounting past events.

* roiled: *disturbed, unsettled*

Source continues on page 3

Source (continued)

Thankfully, the history wars appear to have subsided. But these controversies raised a set of questions relating to the politics and purposes of historical understanding...

Given the partisan** exaggerations and intellectual distortions so evident in... historical controversies... it would be perfectly understandable if historians retreated altogether from engagement with the larger public. This, I believe, would be a serious mistake. A century ago, in his presidential address to the American Historical Association, Charles Francis Adams called on historians to step outside the ivory tower and engage forthrightly in public discourse. The study of history, he insisted, had a “public function”, and historians had an obligation to contribute to debates in which history was frequently invoked with little genuine understanding or knowledge. ... Adams pointedly remarked... history should not be left to “the journalist and the politician”. These observations are as relevant today as in 1900, when Adams spoke.

Who owns history? Everyone and no one—which is why the study of the past is a constantly evolving, never-ending journey of discovery.

ERIC FONER

Who Owns History? Rethinking the Past in a Changing World, 2002

Acknowledgement: Who Owns History? Rethinking the Past in A Changing World, reproduced with permission of Eric Foner

** partisan: prejudiced, one-sided

Question 1 (25 marks)

To what extent do historians ‘own’ history?

Support your argument with sustained integration of the Source and at least TWO other sources.

Please turn over

Section II

25 marks

Attempt Question 2

Allow about 1 hour for this section

Answer the question in a SEPARATE writing booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of an appropriate case study
 - engage with the historiography of the areas of debate selected for discussion
 - present a sustained, logical and cohesive response
-

Question 2 (25 marks)

Awaiting copyright

Assess the relevance of this statement as it applies to at least ONE area of debate from your chosen case study. Identify your case study at the beginning of your answer.

End of paper