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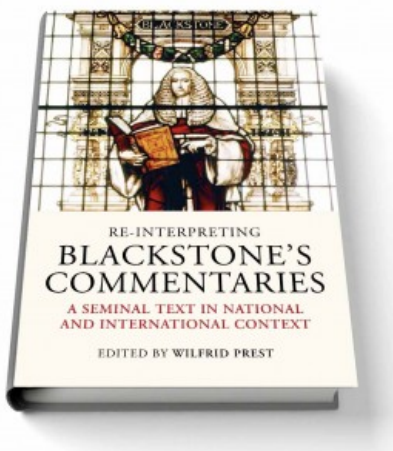
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Re-Interpreting Blackstone's Commentaries: A Seminal Text in National and International Contexts. Edited by Wilfrid Prest

Posted on 10/09/2014 by [John Cairns](#)

Since research for his PhD, this blogger has had a long-term interest in Blackstone. Most readers of the blog will be aware of the wonderful new work on Blackstone being carried out in Adelaide under the leadership of Wilfrid Prest. This has produced a new biography, an edited collection of letters, and two volumes of essays, as well as encouraging all kinds of other work see <http://law.adelaide.edu.au/research/blackstone/>

This blogger had the privilege of participating in a conference on Blackstone there, where he managed to link his interests in Blackstone, slavery, and Louisiana. The conference proceedings have now been published as a volume, and it is possible for readers of this Blog to get a copy of the volume at a reduced price through the publisher's website!



Under the title Re-Interpreting Blackstone's Commentaries, the collection explores the remarkable impact and continuing influence of William Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England, from the work's original publication in the 1760s down to the present. Contributions by intellectual and legal historians, together with cultural and literary scholars, trace the manner in which this truly seminal text has established its authority well beyond the author's native shores or his own limited lifespan. A particular value is the perspective from the humanities generally in the volume. Thus, in the first section, 'Words and Visions', Kathryn Temple, Simon Stern, Cristina S Martinez and Michael Meehan discuss the Commentaries' aesthetic and literary qualities as factors contributing to the work's unique status in Anglo-American legal culture.

The second group of essays is more traditional in approach, if opening up new research. They trace the nature and dimensions of Blackstone's impact in various jurisdictions outside England, namely Quebec (Michel Morin), Louisiana and the United States more generally (John W Cairns and Stephen M Sheppard), North Carolina (John V Orth) and Australasia (Wilfrid Prest). Finally Horst Dippel, Paul Halliday and Ruth Paley examine aspects of Blackstone's influential constitutional and political ideas, while Jessie Allen concludes the volume with a personal account of 'Reading Blackstone in the Twenty-First Century and the Twenty-First Century through Blackstone'.

This volume is a sequel to the well-received collection Blackstone and his Commentaries: Biography, Law, History (Hart

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Publishing, 2009).

Table of Contents: <http://www.hartpub.co.uk/pdf/9781849465380.pdf>

Wilfrid Prest is Professor Emeritus in Law and History at the University of Adelaide.

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- [Louisiana](#) (11)
- [New Books](#) (15)
- [News and Events](#) (46)
- [Old Books](#) (4)
- [Opportunities](#) (29)
- [Practicks](#) (4)
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- [Roman Law](#) (25)
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