

HIST 20252

Winds of Change: Politics, Society and Culture in Britain, 1899-1990



Margaret Thatcher Front Covers Paul Stephenson, Bristol March, 1963

In 1899 Queen Victoria ruled a vast overseas empire, well over half the population could not vote, the Independent Labour party had no MPs, sex between men was a crime and convicted murderers were hung. By 1990, the empire had fallen, all adult men and women had been enfranchised, the Labour party had over 225 MPs, including open homosexuals, and Peter Sutcliffe, the “Yorkshire Ripper”, was serving a life-sentence in Broadmoor. This course will examine these profound transformations, paying particular attention to political allegiance, government policy and social attitudes. Scholars have challenged the assumption that social class was the primary determinant of political allegiance, emphasizing how parties actively constructed political constituencies. Major reforms did not simply reflect changing social attitudes, but were shaped by party politics, ideologies, and individuals such as Paul Stephenson, who led a successful boycott of the Bristol Omnibus Company in 1963 for their refusal to employ Black and Asian workers.

The weekly programme of lectures and seminars will weave a chronological analysis of the development of party politics and political allegiance, with analysis of the formation of policy in such areas as: the enfranchisement of women; moral regulation (sexuality, violence, birth control et. al.); and immigration. The final week will assess debates about the (alleged) decline of class as the primary determinant of political allegiance, and the rise of consumer politics across the twentieth century.

Indicative List of Weekly Topics [NB Some topics may alter slightly as we have a new appointment]:

- Welfare and the New Liberalism, 1899-1914;
- World War One, 1914-18;
- British Politics Between The Wars, 1918-1939;
- 'The Hungry Thirties';
- World War Two, 1939-45;
- The Post-War Consensus: Reconstruction & Affluence;
- Sexuality and the Permissive Society, c.1945-70;
- Labour and Protest, c.1950-1990;
- Race and Immigration after 1945;
- The Thatcher Revolution, c.1974-1990;
- From Classes to Consumers.

Teaching Methods:

Two x 1-hour Lecture + One x 1-hour seminar per week + Film Screenings/Course Unit Office Hours equivalent to one-hour per week.

The course will make extensive use of Blackboard. All course materials will be delivered via Blackboard. Essays will be submitted, marked, and returned with feedback via Blackboard. After each lecture, students will engage with a set of primary and secondary sources delivered via Blackboard, and complete a "Seminar Worksheet" available on Blackboard.

Indicative Reading:

Francesca Carnevali & Julie-Marie Strange (eds.), *Twentieth-Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change* (2007)

Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain, 1900-2000* (2004)

Lesley Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change in Britain since 1880* (2000)

Pat Thane, *A History of Britain, 1900 to the Present* (2018)

James Vernon, *Modern Britain, 1750 to the Present* (2017)

Ina Zweiniger-Bargiulowska (ed.), *Women in Twentieth Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change* (2001)

Assessment:

1 essay (2,000-words max.) 50%

1 open book exam 50%

Students will complete weekly seminar worksheets which will provide the opportunity for regular feedback throughout the course.