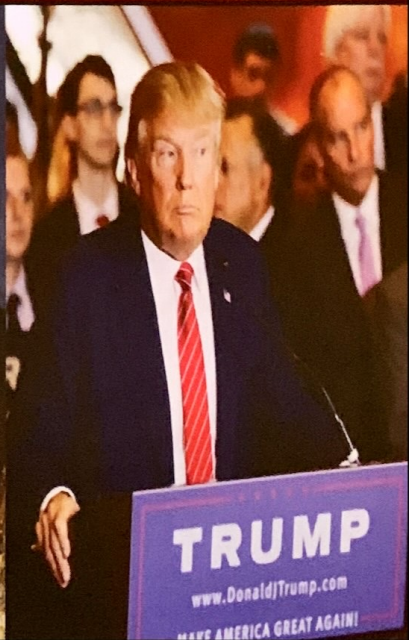


HISTORY STUDENT TIMES

Making Old News Big News

Issue 3 2015/16

'Reform and Democracy'



EDITOR'S LETTER

Hello and welcome to the History Student Times!

The third edition for 2015/16 is based on the theme of 'Reform and Democracy' and contains articles on topics ranging from the reform of the Tudor state to Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump in the current U.S. presidential election. This edition also includes the special feature of a politics spread on British electoral reform and pictures from the much loved David Tebb's leaving party!

Thank you to all the writers who have contributed articles. A special mention goes to Brogan, Claire, Lindsay, Liz, Natascha and Sam for contributing to all three issues over the course of this year —I greatly appreciate your enthusiasm and dedication.

I would also like to say that I have thoroughly enjoyed being the editor of HST for this year. It has been an exciting opportunity to get to know more people in the History department, to help others gain experience in writing and to learn about such a wide variety of topics from others.

I hope you enjoy this final edition!

Katie Milne

If you would like to contribute in the next academic year please contact the next editor by emailing:

historystudenttimes@leeds.ac.uk

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The Reform of the Tudor State

Alexa Clark

Straight History



A gout-ridden tyrant and a woman with the 'heart and stomach of a king' overseeing the 'Golden Age' of English monarchical rule; is the image that is immediately conjured when one thinks of the Tudor dynasty. Everyone knows the story of the Battle of Bosworth Field, of Henry and his Six Wives, and of Elizabeth and the Defeat of the Spanish Armada. While it is true that the Tudor period was one of warfare, bloodshed and religious persecution, it was also an age of innovation; of progress; of reform in government, society and (perhaps most famously) the Church. Under the rule of the Tudors, the English State evolved significantly to form the beginnings of the basic political and social structure that we have in Britain today. The Tudors were about more than power, glory and bloodshed: they looked forward to the future, laying the stepping stones to the modern state that we have in Britain today.

Fresh from his victory on the battlefield at Bosworth, Henry VII became the King of a bankrupt state. His predecessor's reign had been short but turbulent: and Richard's constant wars had left the treasury in dire need of repair. Medieval Kings needed a strong image to be considered successful rulers, and part of this image was wealth: as a usurper with a relatively weak claim to the throne, Henry VII was well aware of the need to reform economic policy in order to maintain a strong grasp on the English throne. Although he may not have been remembered as a particularly glamorous or great King, there is no denying that Henry's shrewdness and prudent economic policy reforms made him a successful one, leaving a secure and wealthy throne for his son to inherit. A key example is his renewal of the Chamber system used by his Yorkist predecessors: rather than the inefficient and slow Exchequer system, the first Tudor monarch modernised the way in which royal revenue was col-

lected, by restoring the Chamber system to deal with nearly all aspects of income - and hence collecting over one hundred thousand pounds per annum from royal estates alone.

Henry VII was not just the founder of one of the most famous royal dynasties of all-time: he was a pragmatist who knew that his kingdom needed to be reformed if it were not to fall once again into chaotic civil war, and also if it were to compete with its wealthier and more powerful neighbours. Economic reforms certainly aided the latter, but for the former a different approach was needed: judicial and law enforcement reforms were passed in order to restore royal authority in a kingdom still healing from the scars of the Wars of the Roses. For instance, Justices of the Peace were used on a national scale in order to keep order in the regions and ensure that the law was obeyed across the country, thus forming the foundations of the modern policing system we have today.

Arguably the most famous Tudor monarch, Henry VIII is perhaps best known today for executing two of his six wives and for being the founder of the Church of England; all in his desperation for a male heir to succeed him. However, to take this overly simplistic view of his thirty-eight year reign would be to undermine some key changes and reforms of the English state which occurred under the rule of this most infamous of Kings. Unlike his father, Henry VIII was little interested in affairs of state, and left much of the work to his most able, expert ministers: the most famous of which being Thomas Cromwell, so perhaps it is to him more than his King that the credit for reforming the state is due.

Cromwell did indeed pass many sweeping reforms that had a massive impact upon the workings of the Tudor State. For instance, one of his most significant bureaucratic reforms was his creation of the courts to execute decisions which had previously been made on a personal basis by the monarch: this reform was highly significant as it laid the basis for the institutional structure we have in Britain today, as it formed the equivalent of modern-day Ministries. For example, in 1540 the Court of First Fruits and Tenths was established in order to manage revenues coming in from church property; and Statute Law became hugely important as a tool of control over the realm and political life, with Canon Law now completely inferior to statutes. Statute Law remains the most supreme even to this day - demonstrating the lasting impact of Tudor reforms to the state.



Henry VIII of England

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c7/Hans_Holbein_the_Younger_Around_1497-1543_-_Portrait_of_Henry_VIII_of_England_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

The Tudor State also experienced significant reform under Henry VIII in terms of religion. Following the Break With Rome, Henry set in motion the English Reformation; a process which truly rocked English society and had a huge impact upon the state for centuries afterwards. England shifted from being a Catholic state to a Protestant country with a nationalist Church: there was much impact upon the workings of the state, with the Dissolution of the Monasteries acquiring huge wealth for the Crown, and Henry making himself Supreme Head of the Church of England - a massive, fundamental change to the nature of the relationship between Church and State. Furthermore, Henry VIII also reformed the workings of the English State by investing heavily in the Navy: its size was increased from five to fifty-three ships. This proved to be a hugely important reform to the English State as it is from this point that we really see England emerge as a significant maritime power to

contend with: a characteristic which would shape the reputation of the English state for centuries to come.

Finally, there were also significant reforms to the Tudor state during the rule of Henry's daughter, Elizabeth I. Elizabeth's reign was not just about exploration of the New World or the war with Spain: particularly towards the end of her rule, there were significant domestic reforms which shaped the role of the state within society. For instance, the Act for the Relief of the Poor at the very end of Elizabeth's reign in 1601 brought in measures to differentiate between different kinds of poor people, and to move away from obvious punishments to methods of 'correction', such as workhouses for the impotent poor. This was a significant reform to the role of the state in society, giving it a more interventionist purpose and less of a laissez-faire attitude: this is well demonstrated in its longevity - the Act remained in use and intact until changes were implemented centuries later in the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.

Therefore, while it is easy to see the Tudor dynasty as a power-hungry, bloodthirsty war machine, one must remember that it was also an age of progression into the modern era during which the path was laid clear for the formation of the modern British State that we know today. Thus we can see that the Tudor dynasty were the heralds of a new age, taking a step forward into the modern era through the reform of key state areas and functions back to which modern Britain can trace its roots.



Elizabeth I of England

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bf/Queen_Elizabeth_I_by_George_Gower.jpg

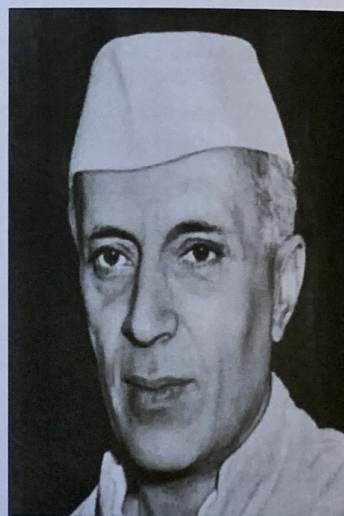
Holograms, Hindu Nationalists and a Surplus of Gandhis: The Path of Democracy in India

Natascha Allen-Smith

In 2014, India held the world's largest election, with 8,251 parliamentary candidates grappling for the support of 814.5 million eligible voters. The election process itself put long-established democracies like the U.K. to shame, with a 66.4% turnout, 100% electronic voting, and a polling station every two kilometres – including one specially built for a single voter living in a forest in Gujarat. Narendra Modi, who led the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party to victory, even used hologram technology to address rallies all across the nation. Every facet spoke of a vast, modern, thriving democracy which took great pains to ensure that every citizen could participate. But is this the reality of the political situation in India? And what challenges has it faced along the way?

Myriad books and articles have been written about India's route to independence, but much less interest has been taken in how the nation governed itself after the British left. Focus is frequently drawn to the violence and divisiveness of partition in 1947, which left roughly half a million people dead and ten million displaced. Remarkably, in contrast with many former colonies like Burma and Zimbabwe, India has never become a dictatorship (despite a period of distinctly autocratic rule under Indira Gandhi in the 1970s). Although the government was initially fairly elitist, it has become more representative, with lower-caste parties ruling in several of India's twenty-eight states.

However, corruption has been a recurring theme within Indian politics. A shocking 30% of today's members of Parliament are facing criminal charges, despite a recent upsurge in anti-corruption organisations. Nepotism is also prominent: Rahul Gandhi, a candidate in 2014 and the current Vice President of the Congress party, is the grandson of Indira Gandhi and the great-grandson of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Both his parents have also led Congress. Still, this is not particularly different from the world's most famous democracy, the United States, in which generations of Kennedys, Bushes and Clintons have served as senators, state governors and presidents.



Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5f/Jnehu.jpg>

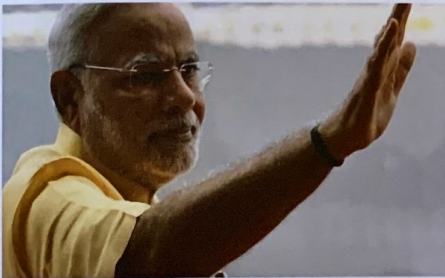
Perhaps the greatest challenge to democratic rule in India has been the nation's remarkable regional and religious diversity. The bloody baptism of partition revealed how divisive this can be, and there is still an overwhelming variety of languages, cultures and political parties within the subcontinent, making national policy difficult to determine. Since 1989, the influence of Hindu nationalist parties has grown, and Modi's victory in 2014 led to some concern for the future of religious minorities, particularly Muslims. It is vital that the Indian government remains secular – if certain religious groups are condemned to second-class status, there is a real danger of internal fragmentation and perhaps even secession.



Rahul Gandhi, Vice President of the Congress Party

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8e/Rahul_Gandhi_in_Ernakulam_Kerala.jpg

So are corruption and disparity the defining characteristics of Indian democracy? Not at all. Since Independence, the government has taken several initiatives in order to keep the nation whole and relatively stable – in 1956, for instance, the states were redrawn along linguistic lines, something the British Raj never thought to do. It is also worth remembering that India gained its first female head of government in 1966, less than two decades after Independence – a phenomenon not matched in the U.K. until 1979, and which has yet to be seen in the U.S. Overall, in its rapid establishment and maintenance of a durable democratic system, India stands out amongst other former colonies as an inspirational success story. Its political system remains flawed, but as it continues to develop, perhaps the British media will begin to pay the world's largest democracy the attention it deserves.



Narendra Modi, current Prime Minister of India and leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party

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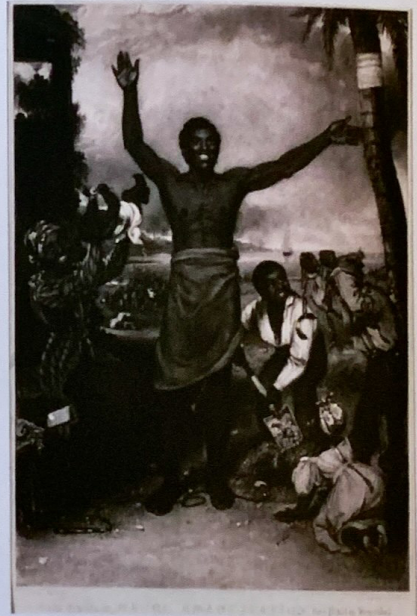
The Long Road to Abolition

Liz Egan

The Abolition of the Slave Trade Act was passed by British Parliament in 1807 and was followed in 1833 by the Slavery Abolition Act. The transatlantic slave trade saw millions of men, women and children taken out of Africa and across the Atlantic Ocean to work for the profit of their owners. It was hugely profitable for those who owned and traded in human beings and yet at the turn of the nineteenth century, the British government was coming under increasing pressure from opponents of slavery. Investigating why the abolition movement gathered so much momentum when it did thus highlights important developments within wider British history and sheds light on the legacy of slavery beyond emancipation.

In 1944 Eric Williams argued in *Capitalism and Slavery* that the end of the slave trade in Britain should be attributed to the growth of industrial capitalism. His thesis has since been widely criticized most prominently by Seymour Drescher who has highlighted that at the moments when abolition was at its most popular, the British slave trade was actually most profitable. Instead, Drescher proposes, it is important to understand abolition as symbolic of ideological and social change within Britain. For example, the drive for abolition of the slave trade and slavery found support from large and varied swathes of the population. Petitions sent before the House of Commons contained thousands of signatures from across the country, with a special ladies' petition in 1833 exhibiting 187,000 names. Ex-

panding upon Drescher, Linda Colley has examined this popular support for abolition in light of the development of British national identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and her analysis reveals interesting interpretations which help to explain the timing of the economically detrimental decision to end slavery.



'To the Friends of Negro Emancipation', an engraving in the West Indies, celebrating the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833.

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/24/FriendsOfNegroEmancipation.jpg>

Colley assesses the abolition movement in the wake of the American Revolution, the French Revolution and Catholic emancipation and through this convincingly argues that the abolition movement is entangled in the development of British national identity. Increasingly the population felt that slavery was inconsistent with Britain's libertarian heritage, with Colley highlighting that the launch of the first mass petitioning campaign against the slave trade coincided with the centennial celebrations of the Glorious Revolution. Abolition came to be understood as a 'patriotic act' entwined with Britain's place in the enlightened world as a God-fearing and freedom-loving nation. Indeed, in 1807 when the transatlantic slave trade was abolished, the Lord Chancellor announced it:

'was our duty to God, and to our country which was the morning star that enlightened Europe, and whose boast and glory was to grant liberty and life, and administer humanity and justice to all nations.'



Official medallion of the British Anti-Slavery Society

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/20/Am_I_not_a_man.jpg



'Proclamation of the Abolition of Slavery in the French Colonies', 1849, by Francois Auguste Biard

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Biard_Abolition_de_l%27esclavage_1849.jpg

Thus, the abolition of the slave trade and later the abolition of slavery were important moments in British history. However, rather than as a self-congratulatory narrative of a humanitarian epiphany, abolition was only achieved after a long and arduous campaign supported for a variety of reasons from religion to ideology tied up with national pride. By recognizing this we can begin to understand the legacy slavery continued to have on colonial relationships. For many of the formerly enslaved, discrimination, poverty and exploitation continued to be facts of everyday life. Abolition was a legislative decision made in the metropole, largely removed from the thousands for whom slavery was a reality. Understanding the specifically national motivations for abolition therefore allows us to recognize that the formal legislative end of slavery was only one small step in the battle against imperial oppression.

British Electoral Reform

Sam Lloyd

Politics Special Feature



Discussion of electoral reform occurs in a uniquely cyclical nature within British political debate. At each General Election, the insurgency of minority political parties is inevitably stemmed by the workings of the First Past the Post voting system, which invariably prompts calls for the adoption of alternative ways to elect our representatives. In 2005 and 2010, the Liberal Democrats suffered most in this regard, while 2015 saw a 4 per cent vote share for the Green Party translate to just a single seat in the House of Commons: 0.15 per cent of the 650 seats available.

Defenders of First Past the Post often invoke the Alternative Vote referendum of 2011, in which Britons voted overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the majoritarian system, as part of the case against reform. However many aspects of this campaign were unsatisfactory to supporters of electoral reform, who argue that it was disingenuous to reduce a complex issue to a simple 'Yes' or 'No' binary vote on one specific voting system. Several alternatives exist, and during the campaign the Green Party argued that a 'No' vote, against Alternative Vote, could equally be interpreted as preference for a different type of

reform, rather than defence of the present system. For example, a more preferable system might be Single Transferable Vote, as advocated by the Electoral Reform Society and the National Union of Students. Further criticisms of the 2011 referendum included accusations of misinformation by the 'No' campaign, and the idea that the debate was framed along partisan lines, with voters influenced by the unpopularity of Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats and a prominent advocate of electoral reform.

Campaigns for voting system reform extend beyond the recent past. The Electoral Reform Society formed to support this cause in 1884 at the instigation of Liberal politician John Lubbock. The cause also attracted notable support from liberal thinker John Stuart Mill, whose friend Thomas Hare is often credited with the inception of Single Transferable Vote. This form of proportional representation grants a single vote to each citizen, who ranks candidates in order of preference at the ballot box. If a person's first choice has no chance of election, their vote transfers to their second-preference candidate.

Single Transferable Vote can be traced through British imperial history. For example, attempts to establish home rule in Ireland in 1921 made use of this system in order to account for Catholic and Protestant minorities in the North and South of the country respectively. Single Transferable Vote remains the electoral system of the Republic of Ireland to this day and is known in many parts of the world as 'British proportional representation' due to its imperial past.

The case for a more proportional voting system, such as Single Transferable Vote, is clear. The most common argument in favour of First Past the Post is its tendency to return strong governments, yet it is a myth that majority governments are necessarily stronger than coalitions, which are commonplace across European politics. First Past the Post's bias towards Conservative or Labour majority governments comes at the expense of support for smaller parties, due to the encouragement of tactical voting. Moreover majority governments under First Past the Post do not necessarily represent the views of the majority of the public. In the 2015 election, the Conservative Party achieved a 37 per cent share of the vote, which afforded them enough MPs to push through their entire legislative agenda over the subsequent five-year period, despite more people voting against than for them.



Vote for one option.

- Joe Smith
- John Citizen
- Jane Doe
- Fred Rubble
- Mary Hill

Rank any number of options in your order of preference.

- Joe Smith
- 1 John Citizen
- 3 Jane Doe
- Fred Rubble
- 2 Mary Hill

A pre-election poll by the *Independent* in 2015 found that 61 per cent of Britons favoured reform, while alternative systems are already in place for Parliament and Assembly elections in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. In a post-industrial society, politics is increasingly divorced from social class, while the Internet has granted citizens greater access to information to form their own nuanced political opinions. As such, voters possess increasingly unique worldviews, no longer simply toeing one of two party lines, or adopting the positions of their favoured newspaper. It is only a matter of time before the archaic First Past the Post system is banished from the British political sphere and replaced by a system that is capable of reflecting these new complexities.

For more detailed information on the different variations of voting systems visit: <http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/voting-systems>

https://pixabay.com/static/uploads/photo/2016/04/28/19/49/ballot-box-1359527_960_720.png

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/18/Preferential_ballot.svg

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/2/2f/Plurality_ballot.svg

David Tebb's Surprise Leaving Party!

Katie Milne

On Thursday 28 April students surprised David Tebb with a leaving party. David has been the School of History's Student Support Officer for many years and he has had a profound impact within the faculty. On Monday 25th, he was awarded the Positive Impact Award for his exceptional contribution to helping and caring for students. It goes without saying that David will be very much missed by everyone in the School of History!

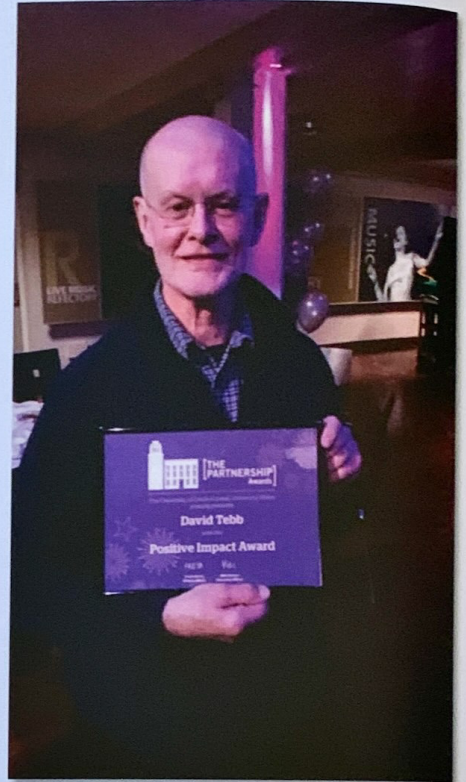


Photo courtesy of Jack Palmer

I am very lucky to have had David around to help me with my role as the editor of the History Student Times. I have always been able to rely on him to solve any worries and he never fails to make me smile, and I know that many others feel the same way! A few of the other History interns have shared their kind words about David too...



Photo courtesy of Becky Williams

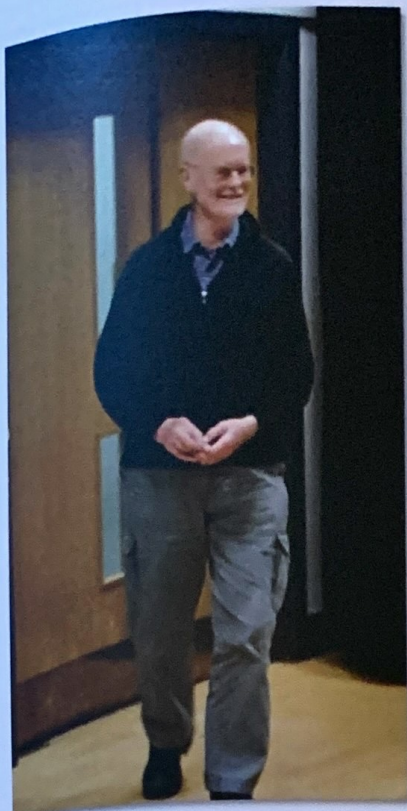


Photo courtesy of Becky Williams

'David has always been there to support us and brighten meetings with his jokes, he'll be missed!'

Georgia Tresadern

'He is incredibly supportive and helps all students whatever their problem may be. He has always gone above and beyond to care for students and he really will be missed.'

Mollie Osborn

'He's a lovely person to chat to and he always makes an effort to say hello when he sees you! An integral part of the history department who will be missed!'

Natalie Cherry

'He has made the internship meetings fun to attend and he is extremely supportive. He will be greatly missed.'

Fiaza Boota



Photo courtesy of Becky Williams

Should Hilary Clinton be the next President of the United States?

Jack Walker

Debate

As the race for the presidential nominations intensifies in both the Republican and the Democratic parties, we are steadily getting closer to finding out who both parties will vote as their general election nominees. As of the 26th April, on the Republican side, Donald Trump was convincingly in the lead with 1,002 delegates.

Texas Senator Ted Cruz is in second place with 572, and Ohio Governor John Kasich is in third with 157. A Republican candidate needs 1,237 delegates to secure the nomination. For the Democrats, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is in the lead with 2,176 delegates (1,666 of these were secured through votes, and 510 of these are super-delegates, who can choose either candidate at the party convention in July. However, this means that they can change their vote from, or to, either candidate). Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders is in second with 1,400 delegates, split 1,359 through votes and 41 super-delegates. A Democrat needs 2,383 delegates to secure their nomination. Here I want to focus on just the former Secretary of State, and see whether she really is the best candidate for the job of President.



Hilary Clinton, American politician campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/28/Hillary_Clinton_by_Gage_Skidmore_2.jpg

For:

Without a doubt, the strongest argument that Hillary Clinton has in favour of her being President is the wealth of experience she has in the political arena. Since 1993, she has served as Bill Clinton's First Lady between 1993 and 2001, Senator for New York between 2001 and 2009, and President Obama's Secretary of State during his first term (2009-2013). This experience could prove invaluable in brokering deals that require support from both parties, and also means that Clinton is without a doubt the most qualified candidate to be President.

Clinton's political manifesto is also the most realistic on the Democratic side. Whilst Bernie Sanders' claims of free healthcare for all and free education might sound wonderful, he has often struggled to explain where the money for these policies would come from. The usual answer is a higher tax on the rich, but Sanders has also conceded that the middle class would see their taxes raised for the price of healthcare to be reduced, despite saying that the middle class needs a tax break.

Clinton on the other hand, wants to expand Obamacare, a health system that has seen over 16 million Americans gain affordable healthcare, instead of replacing it completely with an untested free healthcare system. Clinton also believes in raising the amount of grant that students can claim, to make the American education system similar to the British. Again, this is a far better way to help students into education than implementing an untested free education system.

Both candidates also want to raise the minimum wage. Whilst Sanders wants to make the minimum wage \$15 an hour nationwide, Clinton understands that the poorer states within America may not be able to afford a mandatory \$15 an hour minimum wage. Her idea is to raise the minimum wage to \$12.50 an hour, and those states that can afford to go to \$15 an hour are free to do so. For comparison, none of the Republican candi-

dates want to raise the minimum wage, and all of them want to scrap Obamacare.

Finally, the two Democratic candidates have very different foreign policy experience. In a time of heightened global tensions, there is no better candidate than Hillary Clinton. Her four years as Secretary of State have given her invaluable experience in foreign affairs that no other candidates even comes close to, least of all Bernie Sanders or Donald Trump.

Of course, there is the argument that she would be the first female President. However, both the former Secretary and I want to be careful in not making this point too often. This point is only important in terms of advancing women's rights and healthcare, contrary to the aims of Republicans, who want to cut funding for the nation's biggest contraception and abortion provider, Planned Parenthood.



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Against:

But it isn't all sunshine and roses! There are several compelling arguments to why Clinton should not be President as well. Perhaps the argument that has so persistently dogged her the most is that she has murky ties to Wall Street. Whilst perfectly legal, Bernie Sanders does not have a Super-PAC – a Political Action Committee, which raises funds for the nominee they support. Sanders' entire campaign has run off individual donations (and for those who follow the debates between the Democrats closely, you will know that the average donation to the Sanders campaign is \$27). Donald Trump hasn't taken any donations and has funded his entire campaign from his own pocket, although he is probably the only candidate in either party who is wealthy enough to do so! These unclear ties to Wall Street are arguably the main reasons why her campaign and her own personal approval ratings have never been as popular as she would like.



Hilary Clinton and Bernie Sanders, also campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election

<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/qJyunHKNWXA/maxresdefault.jpg>



https://i.ytimg.com/vi/MAPY9k_TCvc/maxresdefault.jpg

These Wall Street ties have come to a head in this nomination process as Clinton refuses to publicise the transcripts for speeches she gave to Goldman Sachs (and was paid roughly \$200,000 per speech). Sanders and other Clinton detractors claim that these speeches must contain something that suggests Clinton's policy aims of regulating the banks more tightly, is false. She says she will release her transcripts when every other candidate does, but she will not take the initiative and release hers first.

An argument that is much easier to explain and understand is that Hillary Clinton constantly appears to change her mind on the most important topics. For example, she voted for the Iraq War as a Senator in 2000, she was not in favour of gun control reforms until 2008, and did not support same-sex marriage until 2013. Whether this is seen as her changing her mind based on incontrovertible evidence, or simply saying what she thinks the electorate wants to hear in order to get elected (known as 'flip-flopping' in America) is very much up for debate.

Donald Trump: A 21st Century Hitler?

Lindsay Hill

A popular internet trend this year has been comparing Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump to Adolf Hitler. Whilst sometimes this has been a joke, for example photoshopping Hitler's moustache onto Trump to emphasise his right-wing policies, there have been some real debates over whether or not Trump is as much of a threat to the world as the German Führer.

One of the most contentious issues of the 2016 US election race is immigration, particularly Trump's stance that calls for a wall built across the southern US border to keep out 'illegal' Mexican immigrants. Whilst not building a wall, this bears similarities to the way Hitler used the Jewish community as scapegoats, believing that they were a drain on resources and taking valuable jobs from the Germans.

Some argue that it has to be borne in mind that whilst both have exclusionary policies towards minorities, Hitler killed millions of these people whereas Trump is just using his freedom of speech in a democratic election. However, this scaremongering rhetoric does mirror Hitler's rise to power and it may be that by not taking this seriously and making a mockery of Trump in the candidate race, he becomes more of a threat.

For example, Adam Brown argues that similar to this election, many people laughed off the idea of Hitler ever taking any real power, mocking him with political cartoons. By making the possibility of their leadership seem so unachievable, it detracts attention from the authority they are actually gaining and allows them to garner more support and progress further. Trump's comedic factor has possibly allowed Americans to laugh off his policies as ridiculous, meaning that he is managing to avoid explaining how they would actually work and giving those who are considering voting for him less time to seriously think about the implications—especially as voters pick their candidate earlier than usual in this year's Republican election.



Donald Trump, American businessman and politician campaigning for the Republican presidential nomination in the 2016 election

https://farm1.staticflickr.com/691/20957155630_sdb420b093_o_d.jpg

The Trump-Hitler comparisons have been around for months now with varying degrees of seriousness. Some people have argued that they are too stretched and not legitimate concerns. After all, whilst it definitely has its problems, the U.S. in 2016 is very different to conditions in Germany in the 1930s. For example, Germany suffered widespread economic depression, a weak government and humiliation in the First World War. These were extreme conditions that allowed Hitler to become powerful, meaning that the comparisons between him and Trump may stop at rhetoric. However, one holocaust survivor – and history teacher – believes that there is room for concern having seen first-hand how both Hitler and Trump have used the fear of minorities and a pledge to make their countries great again to tap into support.

So, whilst the two politicians do differ and their campaigns have taken place under different conditions, it appears that for many there are enough similarities to be concerned, even if Trump's leadership is just an "if" at the minute.

The Easter 1916 Irish Uprising

Brogan Coulson-Haggins

2016 marks the centenary year of the Easter uprising in Ireland. Remembered in W. B. Yeats 'Easter, 1916' poem, the rebellion was essential for gathering support for the Republican cause that led Ireland to independence in 1921.

In Dublin on 24th April 1916, Easter Monday, the Irish Republican Brotherhood began the six-day armed rebellion, joined by the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, against British Rule. They called themselves the Provisional Government and declared "the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland" in the Proclamation of the Irish Republic. The aim of the 1250 rebels was to capture important buildings within Dublin in order to gain control of the capital. Whilst they took the Post Office, Jacob's Mill and the Four Courts, they failed to take Dublin Castle (the base for British Rule) and did not attempt to conquer Trinity College which was being guarded by unionist students.

After an initially uncoordinated British response, the British army under the command of Lord French, an Irish unionist, sent in four divisions which began to surround the captured buildings. Martial Law was declared on 25th April and under the command of General Maxwell, the British launched an attack strategy aimed at quashing the rebellion as quickly as possible. With their base at the General Post Office, the rebels had assumed that the British would not want to destroy their own buildings and therefore did not anticipate being forced to relocate to 16 Moore Street after heavy shelling. By 29th April, after heavy losses to both civilian and rebel life and an outnumbering of at least twenty to one, Patrick Pearse, who had become the rebel commander during the rebellion, announced unconditional surrender. In his document he explained it was "in order to prevent the further slaughter of Dublin citizens". All fighting stopped on Sunday 30th April.

66 rebels and 143 British soldiers were killed in the six days of fighting, however over 50% of those who died, around 280, were civilians. As the rebels wore mainly civilian clothing it became hard to distinguish rebel from bystander. The last day of fighting, 29th April, saw the most civilian deaths, forty-five, according to the Glasnevin Trust. There were claims of the deliberate killing of Irish civilians by British soldiers, for example in the 'North King Street Massacre' on

28th to 29th April. Fifteen civilian men accused of being rebel sympathisers were shot at close range or bayoneted by troops from the South Staffordshire Regiment. There were also accounts of soldiers stealing from people they had just shot and then burying the bodies in an attempt to cover it up.

As C. N. Trueman explains, there is an irony to the uprising. A key reason for the lack of rebel success in capturing important buildings was their lack of support from the Irish public. As the rebel leaders were marched to prison, the crowd jeered. However, as the information of the brutality of the British and of General Maxwell and the number of civilian deaths emerged, the sixteen executed rebels became martyrs. Despite dismissing Maxwell and releasing three thousand rebels held in Britain, the damage was done. Sinn Fein, a Republican political party, led by some of those involved in the rebellion, became more popular. The party won the 1918 general election and delivered, after the Anglo-Irish War, on its promise of a free state. This begins Ireland's political journey to leaving the British Commonwealth and becoming the Republic of Ireland in 1949.

The 1916 Easter Uprising, therefore, was a pivotal moment in Ireland's history of independence. The actions of the few against the many drastically altered public opinion in favour of banishing British rule. This in turn encouraged the Irish population to democratically vote for a party that continued the ethos of the 1916 rebels and consequently set the state onto the path of reform.



Henry Street, Dublin, after the Easter Uprising

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1f/Sackville_Street_\(Dublin\)_after_the_1916_Easter_Rising.JPG](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1f/Sackville_Street_(Dublin)_after_the_1916_Easter_Rising.JPG)

Cuban Socialism

Claire McArdle

Cuba is a small island located in the Caribbean, previously a colony of Spain, until it declared its independence after the Spanish-American War of 1898 and formal independence from the U.S. in 1902. Today, it is a popular tourist and holiday destination but it is also politically interesting in being one of the four socialist countries to presently exist. However, Cuba has not been a socialist state since its independence.

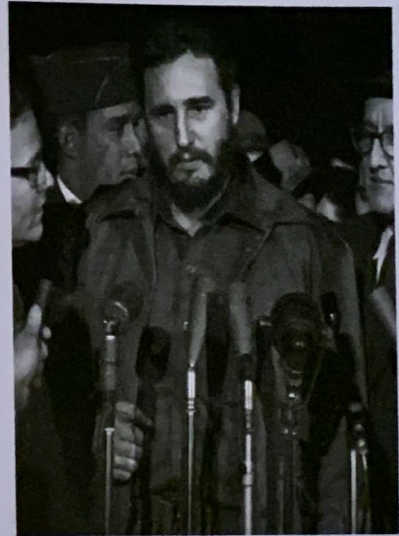
Fulgencio Batista ran the dictatorship in Cuba after seizing power through a military coup in 1933. He was heavily supported by the U.S. and established his dictatorship in 1952, which saw him live an extremely lavish lifestyle whilst the standard of living for poorer Cubans began to decrease. The man who transformed Cuba into a socialist state was Fidel Castro, a Marxist-Leninist lawyer who had previously attempted a rebellion against the Cuban government in July 1953, but this failed and Castro had been imprisoned.

However, in January 1959, with the support of the men involved in his guerrilla campaign, including Che Guevara, Castro was able to overthrow Batista in Havana, the capital of Cuba. Many ordinary Cuban citizens joined the guerrilla campaign because of how unpopular Batista was, as his regime became increasingly more corrupt, brutal and inefficient. During his regime, Castro was successful in reducing illiteracy and improving public health care but he became widely criticised for repressing economic and political freedoms. A communist state can only allow for the existence of one political party, unlike in a democratic country, and there is public ownership of the means of production and resources, meaning that there can be no entrepreneurs or privately owned businesses.

However, Castro did not publicly state that he had socialist beliefs until 1961. This statement strengthened Cuba's diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union but it led to an increasingly strained relationship with the U.S. because of the Cold War tensions, and the American desire for Cuba to not become a communist state. As a result, Cuba relied heavily upon the Soviet Union for economic and military support. The U.S. ended diplomatic relations with Cuba and imposed a trade embargo that still stands to this present day, albeit now more relaxed. Failed American attempts to overthrow Castro include the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961. After the collapse of the Soviet

Union in 1991, U.S. restrictions on Cuba became even stricter and Cuban citizens suffered.

Castro continued to govern Cuba until his resignation in 2008, in which he was replaced by his brother Raul Castro, who started to lift the strict restrictions on Cuban citizens and the political economy began to slowly transform from communist to socialist. In January 2011, the economy became partly privatised, allowing for some people to own their own businesses. Concerns over the future of Cuba as a socialist state are being expressed, as Cubans have taken to the media to argue that the state can no longer provide for them and that outward appearances are not what they seem. Only time will tell if in our modern day capitalist and consumerist society, socialism can truly survive.



Fidel Castro, former Cuban Prime Minister and revolutionary

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c5/Fidel_Castro_-_MATS_Terminal_Washington_1959.jpg



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