Michael Costen, Philip Slavin, Mark Hailwood, Patrick Walsh, Amanda Wilkinson and Peter Cirenza
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Peter Cirenza

London School of Economics

There was a wonderfully wide range of articles written this past year on British history in the post-1945 period. Political topics were among the most prevalent, with much work focused on the Thatcher and New Labour periods. Works on the Troubles and their aftermath in Northern Ireland, Scottish nationalism and devolution were also numerous. There was much analysis of other domestic political issues including electoral politics, privatisation, tax policy and constitutional matters. Foreign policy, the post-imperial Commonwealth and attitudes towards military conflicts also featured prominently. The roles of class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and religion in British society were explored in much depth, as were those of parenthood and marriage. Issues related to migration, social mobility and the labour market were also prominent. Business case studies were conducted on companies large and small, with much work done on the media industry this year. The housing and mortgage markets were assessed in some detail and there were several works which employed analyses of economic geography. Historical issues involving science and medicine also featured.

There were a series of reflections on the impact of Margaret Thatcher and her policies on British politics and society since the 1980s, no doubt influenced by her death in 2013. Chris Rogers offers a critique of policies towards labour under Thatcher in which he argues that the interests of labour were subordinated to those of capital. Alex Nunn argues that Thatcher ushered in an era of neoliberalism in British politics, which has been accompanied by de-industrialisation and excessive dependence on the financial sector. Christopher Bellringer and Ranald Michie conclude that the transformation in the financial system associated with the "Big Bang" reforms initiated by the Thatcher government were perhaps more the result of longer-term pressure for change in securities markets, the chain reaction caused by abolition of fixed-commission charges and the proactive role of the Bank of England. Stephen Brooke follows a similar line in arguing that the writing of British history of the 1980s should be less focused on the workings of the Thatcher government and should take more account of developments beyond Westminster. Jonathan Greene pursues the idea that the Conservative government employed a combination of supportive and punitive interventions to manage homelessness in London during the Thatcher years. Lawrence Black offers an original narrative on Swinton College, which he describes as the Conservative Party's activist training base in North Yorkshire and a source of neoliberal thought. He finds it interesting that it was actually closed down by Thatcher. Daisy Payling examines how the British left attempted to renew itself during the Thatcher years. She focuses on the relationship between local government and new social movements in Sheffield.

Shifting to the New Labour period, there was strong interest in the Tony Blair and Gordon Brown premierships. Martin Smith uses macro-economic data to argue that New Labour was not as neoliberal as many have suggested and that the forces of globalisation actually enabled New Labour governments to increase spending on key priorities. Ian Nelson examines foreign policy in the first years of the New Labour government with a focus on the evolution of its policy towards the Israeli–Palestinian question and the Middle East Peace Process. He argues that Blair was more focused on Anglo-American priorities, whereas foreign secretary Robin Cook wished to pursue a more European-centred approach. Kevin Theakston et al

assess the role and influence of junior ministers in the Labour government from 1997 to 2010, finding that such positions remain key apprenticeship posts in the British political system. Philip Cowley and Mark Stuart examine the level of rebellion by Labour MPs under the Brown administration and conclude that such level was higher than that seen in any previous post-war Parliament, requiring the government to frequently negotiate with its backbenchers. Rhys Andrews et al find that agreed targets between central and local government under New Labour were more effective when accompanied by tougher targets and explicit goals for enhanced social cohesion. Finally, Steven Fielding offers a provocative analysis of attitudes towards New Labour in terms of how it was dramatised on TV. He finds that such dramatisations were almost wholly negative, focusing on sleaze, spin and betrayal, and argues that they reinforce the public's pre-existing prejudices.

Political, social and military issues related to Northern Ireland in the post-1945 period were also quite prevalent this past year. John Coakley and Jennifer Todd examine the value of elite interviews in assessing the motives of key state actors during the Northern Ireland peace process. They conclude that such interviews can constitute an important and irreplaceable body of evidence, but also highlight the risks of excessive reliance on this type of source. In contrast, Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd argue for a historical-structural approach to explaining the conflict and settlement in Northern Ireland, as opposed to a focus on state actors. They argue that structural change, triggered by a shift in the role of the British state, was critical to the success of the Good Friday accords. Paul Dixon discusses the morality of Tony Blair's "deception" to secure a 'Yes' vote during the referendum campaign on the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Dixon argues that Blair misled Northern Irish public opinion by stating that the IRA would have to decommission before either republican prisoners were released or Sinn Féin entered government. Tony Craig studies the talks that took place between British government officials and loyalist paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland between 1971 and 1976. Michael Potter utilises standpoint theory to argue that the nature of Loyalist paramilitarism is primarily masculinist and that there is a perspective that has gone generally unheard from women in Loyalist communities. Peter Munce explores the relationship between unionists and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in the period between 1999 and 2005. Katy Hayward and Eoin Magennis utilise quantitative data on cross-border trade with qualitative evidence from business leaders in the Irish border region to examine the nature of cross-border cooperation within the private sector and its connections to peacebuilding efforts. Aaron Edwards explores the political constraints imposed on military operations in Northern Ireland. He details how security policy was gradually ceded to the military between 1971 and 1976 and how it was wrested back by civilians in 1979. Gareth Ivory charts the slow process by which changing political, legal and technical circumstances now allow widespread free access to RTÉ television in Northern Ireland. In the immediate post-war period, Connal Parr examines the political lives and work of Sam Thompson and John Hewitt. He highlights the importance of the Labour movement on both these Belfast-born Protestant writers and how this inculcated a socialist conviction quite separate and antagonistic to Ulster unionism.

Issues related to Northern Ireland also had significant ramifications for the Republic of Ireland and its relationship with the UK. Paul Gillespie argues that relations between Britain and Ireland have moved from dependence to interdependence from the 1960s to the 2000s, with the role of Northern Ireland being a central but not primary cause. John Coakley assesses the significance of the new institutions for the British–Irish relationship. Susan McDermott argues that the role of the Irish government changed significantly throughout the course of the Troubles. She finds that the Irish government moved towards increased dialogue and discussion with nationalists and republicans, while maintaining the central

importance of the intergovernmental relationship. P. J. McLoughlin also finds that the Irish government developed deeper ties with nationalists during the peace process. He argues that the intent of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 was actually to have the opposite effect. Gareth Ivory examines the focus of Fianna Fáil policy initiatives relating to the Northern Ireland issue in the period 1969–1973. He argues that Fianna Fáil had a cautious approach, designed to reaffirm Irish sovereignty, uphold political authority and the rule of law within the state and restate the case for Irish reunification at every available opportunity. In a related work, Stephen Kelly demonstrates that Fianna Fáil's recent efforts to reconfigure as an all-Ireland party represents a volte-face in policy. He argues that since Fianna Fáil's establishment in 1926, consecutive leaders from Éamon de Valera to Albert Reynolds in the 1990s consistently refused to remodel the party on an all-Ireland basis. Jennifer Todd article makes use of new evidence in the form of over 70 elite interviews with senior British and Irish politicians and officials to argue that a long process of state-institutional change underlay the eventual swift restructuring of Northern Ireland on a more equal basis in the 2000s.

Another of the UK's nations which received scholarly attention this past year was Scotland. Jim Tomlinson traces the development of the Scottish economy over the last century and a half. He argues that the extraordinarily 'globalised' economy of pre-1913 Scotland slowly evolved into a much more self-reliant entity which is now de-industrialised, substantially de-globalised and has a very large public sector. Ben Jackson examines the key arguments and intellectual influences that have contributed to the case for Scottish independence. He identifies a British state indebted to the New Left, an enthusiasm for the politics of the British labour movement, and a belief that we are witnessing the end of the era of absolute state sovereignty.

British political issues related to devolution, constitutional reform and citizenship were also quite prevalent. David S. Moon and Øivind Bratberg focus on the role played by the Labour Party in two devolution referendums, in Wales in 1997 and in the North-East region in 2004, where it was in both cases the dominant political party but witnessed divergent outcomes. Joanie Willett and Arianna Giovannini assess the devolution process in Cornwall and the North-East, and find that central control of the political agenda is a key issue behind the failure of English regionalism. Elizabeth Meehan addresses how sovereignty has featured in British policy since the 1960s in connection with the EU, Ireland and Northern Ireland, and within Britain. She argues that while changes have taken place in piecemeal fashion, it is unlikely that the 'process' of devolution of power away from the centre can be reversed. Stewart Davidson and Stephen Elstub assess more deliberative and participatory models of democracy for the UK and argue that recent efforts at constitutional reform by the New Labour and the coalition governments have been inadequate. Paul Whiteley examines compulsory lessons on citizenship, which were introduced into secondary schools in 2002, and finds that they had a positive impact on three key components of civic engagement: efficacy, political participation and political knowledge.

Issues related to the British Civil Service and capacity of ministers in government also attracted interest from scholars. Neil Rollings presents a fascinating exploration of Spring Sunningdale, a form of interaction between British business elite and civil servants which began in the 1960s. He argues that the continuity and stability of these meetings stands in contrast to wider changes in the nature of business–government relations in Britain, particularly since the election of the Thatcher government in 1979. Edward Barratt examines the recent history of efforts to modernise the British Civil Service. He focuses on the development of interest in the cooperative organizational form among Conservatives in the

2000s. Matthew Flinders and Marc Geddes examine how the politics of patronage has evolved in recent decades and argue that a silent revolution has gradually but consistently constrained the reach and discretion enjoyed by ministers in deploying their patronage powers, particularly since 2007.

Historical electoral analyses also figured prominently this past year. Heinz Brandenburg and Robert Johns study British elections from 1987 to 2010 and find that a "pronounced convergence" has left the Conservatives and Labour closer together than would be optimal in terms of minimising the policy distance between the average voter and the nearest major party. Richard Webber et al examine the impact of name order in electoral ballots in the UK and find a clear advantage to those placed first. This advantage increases in size as both the number of seats and competing candidates increases. They recommend measures to remove the effects of alphabetic bias. Meryl Kenny and Fiona Mackay study trends in women's political representation in Scotland from 1992 to 2011, examining how intra-party factors and multi-level dynamics impact on party decisions to adopt and implement gender quotas. Justin Fisher et al assess the impact of campaign expenditure and free, voluntary labour on electoral performance. They find that both have some independent impact, but that the impact varies by party. Paul Chaney was a prolific contributor in this area this past year. In two separate articles, he examines issue salience in British elections from 1945 to 2010, one exploring the nexus between the substantive representation of women and issue-salience, and another on issue salience and the discourse on human rights. In another article, he analyses political parties' approach to animal welfare, confirming that the status of animal welfare as a policy issue remains 'fragile'. Lastly, he uses qualitative and quantitative methods to explore party politicisation of the environment in regional elections between 1998 and 2011. In this article, he argues that the issue salience of the environment has been limited.

In other historical political work, Stephen R. Bates et al provide a comparative analysis of the opening sessions of Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) for the last five Prime Ministers in order to test a general perception that PMQs has increasingly become a focal point for shallow political point scoring rather than serious prime ministerial scrutiny. Their numerous observations make for interesting reading. Michael Rush examines the Parliamentary participation of party leaders since 1945, finding that it has declined. Mark Margaretten and Ivor Gaber consider whether Twitter opens up possibilities for gauging 'authentic' dialogue between politicians and citizens, utilising the tweets of Scottish MPs between December 2008 (the earliest recorded tweet made by a Scottish MP) and August 2010. They conclude that it does. Florian Kern et al create a framework that measures and explains policy change. They apply this framework to UK energy policy from 2000 to 2011 and find that a policy paradigm change has occurred. David Rooney explores the role of urban road pricing in the ideological battle between Keynesianism and free-market neoliberalism in post-war British politics. First mooted in the 1950s, road pricing in the form of a congestion charge appears in London in 2003. Henry Irving examines the 1948 and 1949 Bonfires of Controls to reassess Harold Wilson's development as a politician. He concludes that Wilson moves from a self-identified professional economist to an astute political actor. Neil Redfern presents a multi-decade analysis of how the British Communist Party conducted surveillance on its rivals to the left, including the Trotskyists and later the Maoists. Lastly, in an interesting work that combines politics and the world's most successful rock and roll band, Marcus Collins examines the impact of the Beatles on political discourse. He argues that the Beatles did much to legitimise pop music as a means of political expression, to devise organisational structures to support such political activity and to politicise those who produced and consumed pop music.

The relationship between individuals, civil society and the state also attracted attention from scholars. Nadja Durbach assesses how birth certificates became essential to the bureaucratic process of establishing age and identity for social programmes and benefits in the early decades of the twentieth century. When the government finally introduced an abbreviated birth certificate in 1947, which documented name, sex, and birth date without reference to parentage, they were responding to long-standing concerns about the tension inherent in keeping public records about people's private lives. She argues that the emergence of the short form birth certificate is part of a larger story that maps significant shifts in the relationship between the individual citizen and the state in the information age. Lucy E. Hewitt and John Pendlebury review evidence relating to the history of local civic associations to address the temporally and geographically variable relationship between state and civil society.

The foreign affairs of the British government were also a fruitful area for scholars this past year. Manuele Facchini reviews the talks held by Harold Wilson on the HMS Fearless, which represented Wilson's final major attempt to settle the Rhodesian crisis after their unilateral declaration of independence. Sue Thompson assesses the Malaysia–Indonesia Confrontation of 1963–1966, arguing that it was a regional dispute greatly affected by the Cold War environment in Southeast Asia at that time, and that the role of the Foreign Office has been overstated. Mathias Haeussler examines Britain's application to join the EEC in the early 1960s through the views of the Daily Express and the Daily Mirror. He argues that while the Express's opposition to the British application, based on its conservative and imperialist self-identity, has often been highlighted, the Mirror's strong support of European integration, as part of its wider agenda for social and cultural change, has been all but ignored. Simon C. Smith studies the intense debates among British decision-makers regarding the supply of tanks to Israel following the 1967 Six-Day War. In his view, the UK was unwilling to fuel an arms race in the Middle East and was also determined to protect its economic interests in the Arab world, especially oil supplies. Spyros Blavoukos and Dimitris Bourantonis examine the British one-month presidency of the UN Security Council in January 1992 and argue that the presidency successfully secured the transition from the Soviet to the Russian UN Security Council seat while protecting British preferences.

Historical work on British colonies and the Commonwealth in the post-war period were also quite prevalent. Denis Cryle examines the sustained commitment of the Commonwealth Press Union to maintaining cheap press rates during the post-war period as a means of promoting information exchange and co-operation among commonwealth countries. Radhika Natarajan examines the investments of individual nations in participating in The Commonwealth Arts Festival of 1965. In this festival, Britain hosted visual artists, musicians, dancers, poets, and writers representing national cultures, who together presented a diverse Commonwealth assembled in terms of egalitarian multiculturalism. Stephen Jackson explores the establishment of legally mandated Protestant training in the Australian state of Victoria and the Canadian province of Ontario in the late 1940s. This effort exposed a clash of British values, with supporters of the new curriculum believing the religious courses would strengthen the British identity and moral backbone of the Canadian and Australian nations, while opponents argued that imposing religion in the classroom was antithetical to British ideals of freedom and tolerance. Myles Osborne examines British colonial development and welfare funding in Kenya during the 1940s and 1950s, and argues that the minority Kamba ethnic group received vastly disproportionate funding which was largely used to advance their own interests. The treatment of heroes from Britain's imperial past also garnered attention. Peter Yeandle revisits the fiercely contested national curriculum history debates of the 1980s and 1990s in the UK, with a focus on the role of imperial heroes. His article

situates the debate about heroes in the context of both late twentieth-century educational reform and wider historiographical analyses of Britain's perceptions of itself as a post-imperial power. Max Jones analyses a major television series on the race to the South Pole, The Last Place on Earth (1985). In this work, he reveals how the debunking of imperial heroes collided with debates about decline in 1980s Britain: the failings of an individual embodied the failings of the nation, configured through references to gender and sexuality. In a work of British colonial medical history, Henrice Altink uses WHO reports and Colonial Office correspondence to examine a mass TB vaccination campaign carried out in seven Caribbean colonies between 1951 and 1956. British colonialism brought new standards of treatment towards animals to the Far East, according to Shuk-Wah Poon. This article examines how the western concept of dogs and animal welfare introduced by the British colonists was received, and contested, in Hong Kong, and the colonial politics that shaped the way the controversial legislation against eating dog meat was created and passed in 1950.

Several scholars addressed British attitudes towards recent wars and the military. Sylvia A. Ellis explores the nature, tactics and effectiveness of the anti-Vietnam war movement in Britain, focusing on the rhetoric and actions of a range of different groups. She finds that the groups primarily had a domestic focus to their activities. Christopher Moores examines the activities of the Ratepayers Against the Greenham Encampments, a Newbury-based organization which campaigned against the peace camps outside the nearby Greenham Common Royal Air Force base in the 1980s. He argues that this group demonstrated the existence of a non-elite, sub-institutional and 'respectable' form of 'new right' activism in late twentieth-century Britain. With respect to more recent military conflicts, Jason Reifler et al study British attitudes towards the wars in Afghanistan and Libya. They find clear pluralities of survey respondents opposed these military interventions, primarily due to the costs of the missions and concerns about their morality. They also argue that attitudes towards political parties and their leaders are weak predictors of respondents' attitudes towards the military's involvement in these conflicts.

Moving away from political and military matters, there was strong interest in issues of class, race and religion in post-war British history. Selina Todd argues that class provides an important conceptual framework for understanding twentieth-century Britain and that historians of modern Britain remain concerned to document the lives of those outside the political and economic elites. Stephen Brooke examines pictures taken by the British photographer Roger Mayne of Southam Street, London, in the 1950s and 1960s. For Brooke, these photographs afford an examination of the representation of economic and social change in the post-war city and the intersections among class, race, generation, and gender that reshaped London. D. L. LeMahieu reveals the deeply varied experience of academically gifted working- and lower-middle-class males in the twentieth century in a study of six "scholarship boys"—Richard Hoggart, Frank Kermode, Eric Hobsbawm, Harold Perkin, A. H. Halsey, and Brian Magee. He focuses on their commitment to humanism in a post-industrial culture. Jon Lawrence argues that exploring the interpersonal dynamics of social-science interviews can help us recast the conclusions of classic social surveys, such as Goldthorpe and Lockwood's influential anti-revisionist study of affluent workers in 1960s England. For Lawrence, status consciousness, individualism and social aspiration were all much stronger forces than they allowed among England's post-war 'affluent' workers. Kennetta Hammond Perry examines a growing literature on postcolonial Black Britain. This essay argues that new work on Black Britain and the politics of race yields fruitful ground for dismantling artificial historiographical partitions that have oftentimes separated metropolitan race politics in the post-war era from the broader history of empire, decolonisation, and transnational anti-racist movements organized around the pursuit of Black freedom. Gavin

Schaffer examines the Race Relations Act of 1965 and argues that early patterns of prosecution under this legislation reveal a government agenda which was not solely focused on the protection of black and Asian Britons but instead on longer-running issues relating to the tolerance of political violence. He argues that this outcome reflected a nation which was still unsure about the merits of multiculturalism, where it remained largely acceptable to argue that black and Asian Britons did not belong. Linda McDowell et al review the strike at the Grunwick Film Processing Laboratories. Since 1978, this strike has achieved almost mythic status in British labour history, as the moment when the trade unions supported the demands of minority women workers. The authors argue that the dominant narratives and images disguise the complexity of events and the diversity of the strikers, constructing a narrative of success and celebration, even though the strikers were not re-employed. In a work on race and sports, Ray Bachan et al examine the performance of the men's senior national soccer teams of England and France from 1996 to 2011 and find no definitive evidence that the racial composition of the national teams exerts an influence on match outcome for either country. Moving to religion, Clive D. Field uses opinion polls of adults to illuminate public attitudes to the Church and clergy in Britain since the 1960s, and finds that their standing has diminished over the half-century, especially in the 1990s and 2000s.

The topic of immigration continues to attract significant attention from scholars. Sarah E. Hackett provides an assessment of Britain's relatively liberal immigration policy through an investigation of ethnic minority self-employment in Newcastle upon Tyne. In this article, she traces the development of entrepreneurship amongst Newcastle's Muslim immigrant community from its arrival in Britain through to its emergence as a fixed attribute on the city's landscape. Elizabeth Buettner examines how in the 1964 general election, the English town of Smethwick became infamous for the unprecedented manner in which issues of immigration, race and racism entered national politics. The article illuminates how transnational flows of people can impact ideas about race and cultural diversity, and how Britain was being reshaped by its 'multi-racial', postcolonial Commonwealth. David Feldman argues that immigration policy since the 1960s has repeatedly failed to fulfil the ambitions of its advocates and that disappointing results have contributed to disillusionment with the political system and help to create the ground on which UKIP has prospered. Sean de Hoon and Frank van Tubergen conduct a survey in 2010 which shows that ethnic minority adolescents, and in particular those with Muslim parents, are more religious than native-majority adolescents and that transmission of more private aspects of religiosity is more successful among ethnic minority families than native-majority families. In an analysis of more temporary movements of people, William Gatt and Joseph Falzon estimate tourism demand elasticities for a number of Mediterranean countries in relation to British tourists from 1963 to 2009. They find that while Spain and Portugal managed to keep a stable market share over time, Malta and especially Italy lost market share to Cyprus, Greece and Turkey.

Historical issues viewed from the perspective of gender were also important this past year. Al James assesses work–life balance across IT employers in two regional economies: Dublin, Ireland, and Cambridge, UK. He stresses how gendered responsibilities of care and personal-life interests beyond the workplace shape workers' (non)participation in the networks and communities of practice widely theorized as enabling learning and innovation. Lynn Abrams draws upon a series of life history interviews with a cohort of the post-war generation of British women for whom she argues the educational and professional outlook was bright, enabling them to construct a lifestyle and outlook very different from that of their mothers. She concludes that this generation of women came to embrace a new model of autonomous womanhood predicated upon 'self-worth, entitlement, self-propulsion and independence.' Barry Hazley provides an analysis of the personal migration narratives of three women who

migrated from southern Ireland to England between 1945 and 1969. His article assesses how these migrants' early experiences of settlement in post-war England were conditioned by the consumption and internalisation of a number of competing constructions of femininity circulating within British and Irish culture during the post-1945 period.

Historical analyses relating to parenthood and marriage were also quite prevalent. Lynn Prince Cooke compares the effects of parenthood on the earnings distribution in Australia, the UK and the United States. Among other findings, she argues that women in the UK fare better than those in the US, but not as well as those in Australia, especially across the bottom half of the distribution. Hannah Zagel investigates women's employment trajectories during and after single motherhood in the welfare state contexts of Britain and West Germany. She finds a higher prevalence of volatile employment trajectories in Britain. Richard Lampard uses data from the second National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles to examine the stated reasons for the dissolution of co-residential relationships in Britain. He finds that differences between marital and cohabiting relationships persist within multivariate analyses, suggesting that neither attitudes to relationships nor socio-economic or demographic factors provide satisfactory explanations for the persistence of these differences. Philipp M. Lersch and Sergi Vidal analyse the interdependence between marital separation and home ownership using two longitudinal surveys (British Household Panel Survey and Socio-Economic Panel Study, 1991–2008) and find that separation is negatively associated with home ownership. Lastly, Heather Brown et al use data from the British Household Panel Survey from 2008 to show positive and significant correlations in spousal body mass index, even after controlling for own health, spouse health, marriage length and regional effects. They argue this result suggests evidence of a social influence.

There were also interesting analyses of historical events and issues viewed through the lens of sexual orientation. In addressing the large network of support groups that were established throughout the UK and internationally during the British miners' strike of 1984–5, Diarmaid Kelliher focuses on the London Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners group. This group collected funds primarily for the Dulais mining community in South Wales, with a larger goal of bringing 'socialism onto the agenda of sexual politics in the London lesbian and gay community [… and] sexual politics onto the agenda of trade union politics'. Alan Sinfield offers a very personal series of separate but linked excursions into issues of homosexuality and its politics in Britain since the 1950s.

Issues related to social mobility and the labour market more generally in the post-war period were also prominent topics. Richard Breen and Kristian Bernt Karlson develop tools for measuring the role of education in intergenerational social class mobility in 20th century Britain. Their results suggest that roughly half of the association between class origins and destinations is mediated via educational attainment. Tania McIntosh uses oral and documentary evidence to explore district midwifery between 1954 and the 1974 re-organisation of the National Health Service. She argues that during this period, district midwives saw themselves as having autonomy and prestige in their work but that this situation was fragile, conditional and ultimately short-lived. Neil Lee investigates the impact of the 2008–2009 recession on unemployment in the sixty largest cities in Britain. The key determinant of changes in unemployment was the skills of the population, with highly skilled cities experiencing smaller increases. Melanie K. Jones and Louise Skilton use data from the Labour Force Survey (1995–2005) to examine the short-run impact of the EU Objective One funding programme on local labour markets in Britain. The evidence from a difference-in-difference analysis reveals that employment and job-related training gaps between the Objective One and non-Objective One areas narrowed during the funding period. Chris

Dawson et al investigate the reported motives for choosing self-employment between 1999 and 2001. After controlling for individual characteristics and industrial structure, they find that some regional differences persist. Lastly, Alita Nandi and Cheti Nicoletti use 2005 data to estimate the effect of personality traits on pay gaps in the UK. Among their conclusions, they find that the personality trait associated with the largest pay gap is openness to experience, followed by neuroticism, agreeableness, extroversion and conscientiousness.

Business history, frequently involving the use of case studies, was also quite prevalent. Lee Moerman et al explore the narrative reporting of two former asbestos manufacturers, Turner & Newall in the UK and James Hardie in Australia. They find evidence of several distinct phases of reporting of asbestos, from a source of unmitigated value, to one of risk and finally as a threat to corporate viability. Each stage erased or re-situated the prior story of asbestos so that users of individual annual reports may be unaware of the larger narrative of asbestos in its transformation from 'magic mineral to killer dust'. Shifting from asbestos to chickens, Alessandra Tessari and Andrew Godley compare the development of the poultry industry in Italy with the UK. They focus on the relationship between the industry and supermarket retailers, where the UK had an early advantage but Italian firms were able to overcome a more restricted domestic supermarket sector by adopting American techniques. Staying within the meat industry, Sam McKinstry et al trace the development of Jackson's, a firm which became Scotland's leading producer of sheep meat by the late 1920s and maintained that position until 1981. They focus on the impact of family influence on strategic direction and implementation. Chris Carr and Andrew Lorenz trace the 254 year development of GKN, a leading global player in automotive and aero components. They argue that GKN's strategy reflects financial conservatism, constant adaptation to its historical and competitive context, a highly proactive internationalisation and, from 1902 onwards, a determination to develop at least 'three major business legs' to survive evolutionary processes as sectors mature and consolidate globally. Qing Lua presents a case study of the post-acquisition integration process of HSBC and Mercantile Bank between 1959 and 1984. The article explores the impact of the institutional environment and organisational transformation on the speed of integration and explains why the integration took so long. Stuart Dawley et al focus on the labour market dynamics of Northern Rock's rapid growth and decline on the North East of England. They argue that older industrial regions suffer from a process of occupational disadvantage that restricts their ability to adapt to economic change. Georgios Fotopoulos explores new firm formation between 1994 and 2007 and finds that interregional differences and their determinants are time persistent. Lastly, Paul A. Grout et al analyse regulatory attitudes to movements in capital goods prices for public utilities in the twentieth century and find that the evidence is consistent with robust regulation against monopoly incumbents.

One British company which received significant focus this past year was Film Finances, Ltd. Incorporated in 1950, the company offers completion guarantees to lenders to facilitate the financing of the film industry in the UK and internationally. Charles Drazin gives an account of its formative years and how its guarantee became the lynchpin of a new system of state-supported financing of the film industry. Sarah Street explores the role of Film Finances in supporting the films of the British new wave and how it played a key role in encouraging new directors and artists during a period of flux and transformation for the British film industry. James Chapman explores Harry Saltzman's working practices as a producer and sheds light on the political economy of the British film industry in the late 1950s and 1960s. Sue Harper analyses the Film Finances file on Tom Jones (1963). Justin Smith examines three British films made at Shepperton Studios in the first half of the 1970s, exploring the relations between capital and creativity in the British film industry in this period.

Other work on the film and media industries included Vincent L. Barnett's case study of the commercial and contractual aspects of The Curse of Frankenstein (1957) and Dracula (1958), both of which were international box-office sensations for Hammer Film Productions. Brett Bebber examines the BBC television sitcom Till Death Us Do Part, a generational comedy programme that evolved into a key site for the presentation of Britain's prominent social fractures and divisive political culture in the 1960s and 1970s. Joe Moran traces the development of voice-recording technologies in the twentieth century from gramophone records to miniaturized mobile devices. He argues that the recording of the voice led to a renewed awareness of the voice as a trained instrument, as a marker of individual identity, and as a way of immortalizing speech and preserving an auditory remnant of people after their deaths.

Topics involving the history of science in the UK, often related to the media, were also quite prevalent this past year. From the 1950s to the 1970s, a group of physician–researchers forming the 'Liverpool school' made ground-breaking contributions in such diverse areas as the genetics of Lepidoptera and human medical genetics. Doris T. Zallen explores the role of partnerships in making possible the Liverpool school's scientific and medical achievements. Allan Jones presents a narrative of the largely unsuccessful effort by the elite world of institutional British science to take control of the BBC's management of science broadcasting in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Anne Karpf assesses Donald Winnicott's radio talks about motherhood, which were broadcast on the BBC between 1943 and 1962, and places Winnicott among other popularisers of psychoanalytic ideas at the time. Kristian H. Nielsen examines the evolution of exhibits in the Children's Museum at the Science Museum in London, noting a shift from historical emphasis to one of combining instruction with pleasure.

Studies about attitudes towards women's health issues included Elizabeth Toon's examination of the professional and public response to the television play Through the Night, which aired on BBC1 in 1975. One of the first British mass media portrayals of a woman's experience being treated for breast cancer, Toon assesses critics' and viewers' responses to what the play said about breast cancer treatment in particular, and about Britons' experiences of medical institutions more broadly. Emma L. Jones and Neil Pemberton address the social, cultural and political history of backstreet abortion, focusing on the murders of Beryl Evans and her daughter Geraldine in 1949. The article reveals changes in the gendering of abortionists, the increasing power and presence of abortion activists and other social reformers, the changing representation of working-class women and men, and the increasing critique of the practice of backstreet abortion.

Privatisation remains a controversial and much debated topic in British history, with important implications for contemporary government policy. David Parker examines why the Royal Mail was not sold during the heyday of privatisations in the 1980s and 1990s. He argues that lukewarm support at the prime ministerial level, concerns about political consequences, and trade union opposition proved decisive in preventing earlier privatisation of the company. D. R. Myddelton argues that the introduction of competition (as well as regulation) reduced overstaffing, strike threats and losses in state-run industries. Richard Wellings is quite critical of the privatisation of the railways in the 1990s, arguing that the industry remained heavily regulated and was not permitted to evolve according to market processes. Hence economies of scale and scope were lost and transaction costs increased. Philip Booth proposes a new method of allowing people to contract out of the state pension system and discusses potential risks of adopting the proposals. Lastly, Julia Mitchell studies how the decline of the coal industry in Britain was expressed compellingly through the

English folk revival (c.1945–70), which provided an important but conflicted voice for those being left behind by the decline of this nationalised industry.

Historical analysis of issues related to tax policy also featured this past year. Paul Johnson considers the development of tax policy over the last decade and argues that reform is needed. Anne Brockmeyer examines UK firms from 2001 to 2007 and shows that investment by small firms responds significantly to kinks in the tax code where such investment lowers income below the kink threshold. Rachel Griffith and Helen Miller find that revenues from corporate income taxes have remained relatively stable as a share of national income over the last three decades despite reductions in corporate tax rates and increased opportunities for multinational tax avoidance. Alan Peacock and George Peden provide an historical analysis of the National Insurance system and show that officials identified the problem of maintaining increasing numbers of elderly people as long ago as 1950. They make a series of recommendations for contemporary policy changes.

House prices and mortgage finance also attracted attention this past year. Clive B. Walker examines the relationship between news media and UK house prices between 1993 and 2008, arguing that the media did not contribute to the UK's housing boom and likely helped to constrain it. Daniel Chandler and Richard Disney explain why house prices in the UK are likely to be more volatile than prices in other markets and that such volatility can impact consumption spending, indebtedness, labour supply, and entry to and exit from the homeownership market. Alla Koblyakova et al examine regional variations in mortgage choice in the 2000s, and find that a household's decision to choose a variable rate mortgage (despite their higher interest rate risk) is more likely to occur in areas with lower incomes and affordability rates, such as Northern England, Scotland and Wales.

Residential issues in Britain were also analysed in historical context. Camden's Alexandra Road scheme in London is one of the most architecturally celebrated social housing schemes in Britain. Mark Swenarton studies the public enquiry set up to examine why the project overran on both time and budget, placing it in the political context of the late 1970s. Katherine Farley and Tim Blackman present evidence that ethnic residential segregation in England was not increasing between 1991 and 2001 and argue that at neighbourhood level there is little evidence to regard ethnic residential segregation as a problem despite the policy priority it came to have. Paula Devine and Dirk Schubotz analyse factors that contribute to segregation preferences among young people in Northern Ireland in the 2000s and find that religious and national identities are the strongest predictors of segregation preferences. Laura Balderstone challenges existing stereotypes of middle-class suburbia as being detached and disengaged by revaluating the social networks constructed in post-war Leicester. Laura Balderstone et al also explore the changing urban form and society of waterfront Liverpool in the last generation of the city's role as a traditional general cargo seaport.

And to conclude, Jodi Burkett assesses how the National Union of Students set up two international student organisations and developed bilateral connections with students around the world in the post-war period and argues that such international focus was not a new phenomenon in the 1960s.

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