



HISTORY & POLICY

Connecting historians, policymakers and the media

Political Historians pool their expertise ahead of General Election

- History & Policy launches Political History Forum

Wednesday 31 March 2010

In a new initiative launched by History & Policy (H&P), a group of expert political historians is now available to provide comment on a range of key issues ahead of, during and immediately after the General Election.

The H&P Political History Forum aims to provide historically-informed input on major issues of public policy and debate, including:

- Electoral reform: proposals for the 'alternative vote' system, learning from the variety of systems in place in local and devolved governments, now and in the past;
- Electoral outcomes and consequences: hung parliaments, coalition governments, representation of women and minorities;
- Electoral campaigning: TV debates between party leaders, political advertising, party funding;
- Public attitudes and engagement with politics and the 'loss' of public trust in politicians;
- Candidate selection processes and their variety, both over time and between political parties;
- Appointment of the Cabinet and ministers, including timing, strategy and governments representing more than one political party.

H&P will also publish policy papers and briefing notes on its website, www.historyandpolicy.org. There are already 16 policy papers available addressing political institutions and ideas.

The historians in the forum are all members of H&P's network of over 250 historians and are based at universities in the UK. Their expertise ranges from the 18th century to the present day and includes:

- The Relationship between political parties and the people;
- The crisis of representative democracy;

- The Monarchy, House of Lords and the Constitution throughout the 20th century to the present day;
- The history of British political thought in the 20th century;
- The history & politics of the Labour party from its foundation to the present day;
- Youth politics in Britain since the Second World War;
- Women and politics in 18th century Britain;
- Scottish politics and devolution in the 20th century.

They are willing to speak to journalists, think tanks, civil servants, research groups and other relevant organisations and can be contacted via the H&P office at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. They will also provide rapid responses and opinion articles commenting on current issues. New members are being recruited to the forum regularly.

Notes to editors

1. History & Policy is an independent initiative working for better public policy through an understanding of history, see www.historyandpolicy.org for further details. The initiative was founded by historians at the Universities of Cambridge and London and is based in the Centre for Contemporary British History, at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. History & Policy's current work is funded with charitable grants from Arcadia and The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.
2. Current H&P papers on political institutions and ideas can be found at: <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/themes.html#political>
3. Rapid responses and opinion articles by historians can be found at <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/opinion/index.html>
4. To receive news updates from the H&P Political Forum, email us at historyandpolicy@sas.ac.uk to be added to the mail list or follow 'HistoryPolicy' on Twitter.
5. For further information or to request an interview with a historian, please contact: Mel Porter, External Relations Manager, Tel: 020 7862 8768, Mob: 07979 867765, email: mel.porter@sas.ac.uk, or Ruth Evans, External Relations Officer. Tel: 020 7862 8783, Mob: 07920 092389, email: ruth.evans@sas.ac.uk.