

Further reading

For those who want to explore British politics further, there is a huge volume of material available. All I can do here is to make some suggestions, with a bias towards readability (not an attribute of all political science literature) and an eye on the general reader.

A general overview is provided by the many excellent textbooks, aimed at different levels, although they can soon become out of date simply because of the pace of recent political developments. Useful textbooks include *Politics UK*, edited by Bill Jones, Philip Norton, and Oliver Daddow, 9th edn (Routledge, 2018); Simon Griffiths and Robert Leach, *British Politics*, 3rd edn (Macmillan, 2018); Michael Moran, *Politics and Governance in the UK*, 3rd edn (Macmillan, 2017); and Mark Garnett and Philip Lynch, *Exploring British Politics*, 4th edn (Routledge, 2017). These books are typically very chunky, with lots of student-friendly devices, and in some cases with companion websites. They also have extensive bibliographies, including the many journal articles which it is not possible to mention here. Apart from the specialist political science journals, two journals—*Political Quarterly* and *Parliamentary Affairs*—contain articles on British politics aimed at a more general readership.

There are two series of books which keep British politics under continuing review and are therefore particularly useful. *Developments in British Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan) tracks the changing political system. Its 10th edition was published in 2016 (ed. R. Heffernan et al.), so not able to cover recent developments, but previous editions are also worth consulting. The same applies to *The Changing*

Constitution series (OUP), the 9th edition of which (edited by Jowell and O’Cinneide) was published in 2019 and is invaluable for the analysis of constitutional developments.

A rich resource for students of British politics is the set of briefing papers produced by the House of Commons library. These are open access and so available to all (<<http://www.parliament.uk>>). The topic heading of ‘parliament, government and politics’ has authoritative briefings on many aspects of the political system, with reliable data, while other topic headings cover the range of policy areas. This material is highly recommended (and I have drawn on it for this book). There are a number of organizations, with websites and blogs, where British politics is analysed and discussed. These include the Hansard Society, the Constitution Unit at UCL, and the Institute for Government and Democratic Audit. The LSE British Politics and Policy blog is particularly useful in communicating in an accessible way.

I quote Walter Bagehot in this book, as writers on British politics often do. His *The English Constitution* (1867, several modern editions) is a classic of political writing and still deserves a place on any reading list. Anthony King’s *The British Constitution* (OUP, 2007) is a Bagehot for our times. The same author’s *Who Governs Britain?* (Pelican, 2015) is also recommended, not least for the clarity of its writing. Another minor classic is A. H. Birch, *Representative and Responsible Government* (Allen and Unwin, 1964), which provides a reminder of how British politics used to be understood. Anything by Peter Hennessy is worth reading, as an outstanding contemporary historian and explorer of the British state. His prolific output includes a book which influenced my own thinking, *The Hidden Wiring: Unearthing the British Constitution* (Gollancz, 1995), but there are many others. Also prolific is the constitutional historian Vernon Bogdanor (a long-time enthusiast for referendums), whose recent books include *The New British Constitution* (Hart, 2009) and *Beyond Brexit: Towards a British Constitution* (I.B. Tauris, 2019).

A vivid account of the 2016 referendum on EU membership that reshaped British politics is the journalist Tim Shipman’s *All Out War* (Collins, 2017). Kevin O’Rourke’s *A Short History of Brexit* (Pelican, 2019) provides useful background and context. There is a growing literature on the causes and consequences of Brexit in terms of changing political behaviour. Relevant books include Matthew

Goodwin and Robert Ford, *Revolt on the Right: Explaining Support for the Radical Right in Britain* (Routledge, 2014) and Harold Clarke, Matthew Goodwin, and Paul Whiteley, *Brexit: Why Britain Voted to Leave the European Union* (Cambridge, 2017). David Goodhart's *The Road to Somewhere: The Populist Revolt and the Future of Politics* (Hurst, 2017) tries to make sense of Britain's warring political tribes. Geoffrey Evans and Anand Menon, *Brexit and British Politics* (Polity, 2017) looks at what has been happening, and what might happen. The long-running British Election Study tracks changing electoral behaviour and forms the basis of Edward Fieldhouse, Jane Green, et al., *Electoral Shocks: The Volatile Voter in a Turbulent World* (OUP, 2019).

The members of Britain's political parties are analysed in Tim Bale, Paul Webb, and Monica Poletti, *Footsoldiers: Political Party Membership in the 21st Century* (Routledge, 2019). Reliable books on parliament are Philip Norton, *Parliament in British Politics* (2nd edn, Palgrave, 2013) and Nicolas Besly, Tom Goldsmith, Robert Rogers, and Rhodri Walters, *How Parliament Works* (8th edn, Routledge, 2018). The authority on the House of Lords (as well as parliament generally) is Meg Russell, most recently in *The Contemporary House of Lords: Westminster Bicameralism Revived* (OUP, 2013). Veteran Whitehall-watcher Peter Riddell's *15 Minutes of Power: The Uncertain Life of British Ministers* (Profile, 2019) takes the lid off the British way of governing, while Anthony King and Ivor Crewe, *The Blunders of our Governments* (updated edn, 2014, Oneworld) is a stylish and witty catalogue of policy failures (even before Brexit). It could be read alongside Margaret Hodge's *Called to Account* (Little Brown, 2017), based on her period chairing the Public Accounts Committee, which charts the difficulties of getting effective accountability for public money. For an insight into one of the spectacles of British politics, there is Ayesha Hazarika and Tom Hamilton, *Punch and Judy Politics: An Insiders' Guide to Prime Minister's Questions* (Biteback, 2018).

The increasing role of the judges in British politics, and the issues raised, will be informed by a reading of former top judge Tom Bingham's little masterpiece *The Rule of Law* (Penguin, 2013). Recent political history is vividly reviewed by Steve Richards, one of Britain's most acute political commentators, in his *The Prime Ministers: Reflections on Leadership from Wilson to May* (Atlantic, 2019). The 2018 Democratic Audit book *The UK's Changing*

Democracy (ed. Dunleavy, Park, and Taylor, LSE Press, 2018) evaluates political developments through a series of short chapters. Malcolm Dean, *Democracy under Attack: How the Media Distort Policy and Politics* (Policy Press, 2013) raises important issues. Michael Moran's essay *The End of British Politics?* (Palgrave, 2017) is outrageously priced but a stimulating read. The journalist Isabel Hardman's *Why We Get the Wrong Politicians* (Atlantic, 2018) is an interesting exploration of the political class. Also interesting is Philip Cowley and Robert Ford, *Sex, Lies and Politics* (Biteback, 2019), a witty collection of political nuggets. For those political anoraks who want more austere fare then *Butler's British Political Facts* (ed. Mortimore and Blick, Palgrave, 2018) provides it in abundance.

It is surprising (at least to me) that the academic literature on British politics frequently omits what politicians themselves have written about what they have been doing and observing. Of course this is often self-justifying, but it is also indispensable for giving a flavour of what political life in Britain is like. British politics has a rich reservoir of diarists and memoirists. Notable diarists of the post-war period include Richard Crossman, Barbara Castle, Alan Clark, and Tony Benn, while more recently there are the compulsively readable diaries of Chris Mullin and Alastair Campbell. Ruth Winstone's anthology of diarists, *Events, Dear Boy, Events: A Political Diary of Britain 1921 to 2010* (Profile, 2014) brings some of this material together. Recent prime ministerial memoirs are John Major, *The Autobiography* (Harper Collins, 2000), Tony Blair, *A Journey* (Hutchinson, 2010), and Gordon Brown, *My Life, Our Times* (Bodley Head, 2017). Among other recent political memoirs, Nick Clegg's *Between the Extremes* (Vintage, 2017) has interesting reflections on coalition government, while Ken Clarke's *Kind of Blue* (Pan, 2017) spans half a century of political life. Then, finally, there is David Cameron's *For the Record* (Collins, 2019) in which he has to explain why he was the architect of the 2016 referendum and all that has followed from it.