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(TORY) ANARCHY IN THE UK: THE VERY PECULIAR PRACTICE OF TORY ANARCHISM

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Abstract:

The idea of 'Tory Anarchism' is reasonably well known but largely unanalysed in either popular or academic literature. Tory Anarchism refers to a group of apparently disparate figures in English popular and political culture whose work has, in part, satirised key British institutions and social relations. At the same time they also provide interesting insights into questions of British, though predominantly English, identity, by focusing upon issues of class, empire and nation. This article examines tory anarchism by focusing upon four representative figures: Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, Peter Cook and Chris Morris.

(TORY) ANARCHY IN THE UK: THE VERY PECULIAR PRACTICE OF TORY ANARCHISM

INTRODUCTION: THE SOCIAL ORIGINS OF TORY ANARCHISM

Tory anarchism is a term that describes a group of (largely) English writers and artists who span the C20. As a concept it is infrequently referred to and lacks any systematic analysis in either academic or popular literature. This has mainly been an English phenomenon, the product of men, not women, who are members of the English middle and upper-middle classes and that are often in revolt against what they see as the denigration of the core values of England or the idiocies of a ruling establishment. Although often linked with social satire, tory anarchism is much more than this and embraces ideas about the nation, morality, class, culture and patriotism.ⁱ The argument that I develop in this paper is that tory anarchism emerges against the background of Britain's changing circumstances in the World System. In particular it should be seen in the following context:

- The end of Empire and relative decline of the UK, and more specifically, England. In this respect it is both an evocation of and a commentary upon the changing nature of English identity over the course of the C20.
- An ambivalent reaction to modernity and capitalism that invokes a cultural critique sharing many concerns with those of the Frankfurt School:
 1. The death of the individual;
 2. The rise of authoritarianism and totalitarianism;
 3. The subordination of moral values to monetary value;
 4. An ambiguous attitude towards both elite and mass popular culture.

However, tory anarchism offers a profoundly different analysis of these problems and ultimately hankers after a different kind of utopia to those of the critical theorists, one rooted in a romanticised past rather than a romanticised future.

What does it mean to describe someone as being both a tory and an anarchist? On one level the term is clearly paradoxical; conservatism and anarchism are often seen as political opposites and yet in truth there are often striking overlaps in these political philosophies: a concern with the local and the empirical,ⁱⁱ the concrete reality of everyday lived experience, as opposed to more abstract, universalist theorisingⁱⁱⁱ; and the importance of class in understanding social order. However, the analyses offered by orthodox anarchists and conservatives to these issues are radically different. What can be said to characterise the idea of a tory anarchist then? First, it is an individualist creed. There can be no party of tory anarchists as it is an anti-political stance or posture that would make such an idea impossible in practice. There is no institution in which the tory anarchist is housed and nor is it a political badge that simply anyone can wear. The history of tory anarchism suggests that it is restricted in its meaning to members of a particular social class, working in areas of popular culture. To be a tory anarchist in practice means having an audience for your work, to be someone

that has made an impact on popular and political culture. Given the rebellious nature of tory anarchism it is difficult to make a case for lay people adopting the mantle with any degree of conviction. Tory anarchists are essentially public figures who use their public image to unsettle, to question and to challenge the failings and contradictions of English society.^{iv} In the context of tory anarchy in the UK there is a rich lineage of figures that can be referred to from the aforementioned Swift, Milton and Cobbett through to C20 journalists such as Richard Ingrams, Auberon Waugh and Michael Wharton.^v The social conditions and individual qualities that I have described as being necessary aspects of the character of the tory anarchist can no doubt be found elsewhere in the world system. For example, both Louis-Ferdinand Céline in France and Dwight MacDonal in the USA might reasonably be described in this way. However, this article is concerned with tory anarchism as a predominantly *English* phenomenon and with its distinctive national qualities.

The backdrop to the idea of tory anarchism in the C20 is the end of empire and the gradual and relative decline of the United Kingdom's global hegemony. In turn this raises the question of the relationship of tory anarchism to conservatism as a political ideology. Wallerstein has noted that the embedding of capitalism into everyday social relations has presented major problems for all political ideologies but particularly for conservatism.^{vi} In effect the deepening of capitalism as a global system has been at the expense of many of the ideas, beliefs, values and institutions that conservatives have held dear, none more so, of course, than in the United Kingdom. In terms of party political ideology the traditional notion of a conservative that Ian Gilmour sees as being characterised by the following: a commitment to one nation, a mixed economy and a pragmatic philosophy, has for the moment largely disappeared from the political landscape.^{vii} Equally socialism in any meaningful sense of the term has disappeared from mainstream party political ideology, with most political parties adhering to some variant of neo-liberal or social democracy.^{viii}

For the tory anarchist these developments are hugely significant. The death of conservatism as a political force is merely another target for the iconoclasm of tory anarchism, another example of the failure of traditional ruling classes to defend and sustain the values and institutions that helped shape modern England, sold out to a crude and vulgar materialist (neo) liberal ideology. Given its peculiar origins the death of conservatism merely highlights the persistence of tory anarchism as a part of British (but predominantly English) popular culture. So the relationship to traditional conservative thought is somewhat ambivalent. Tory anarchists are bohemians and ironists, not themes necessarily associated with orthodox conservatism. As a consequence they are at the same time able to defend values and institutions that they know to be outmoded, reactionary and frequently unacceptable (empire, colonialism, racism, a ruling class and fox hunting) and acceptable (English culture and customs from the pub to drinking tea, English cooking, cricket).

In this paper I intend to focus upon four well-known tory anarchists: Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, Peter Cook and Chris Morris. Each of them has something important to tell us about tory anarchism, satire and Englishness,

particularly the peculiarity of the English. Although my main concern is with satire I want also to bring out other aspects of their work to give full meaning to the idea of the tory anarchist. Thus the paper will examine their ideas regarding the following key themes: empire, class, nation and popular culture.

TORY ANARCHY AS SOCIAL SATIRE: WAUGH, ORWELL, COOK AND MORRIS

As with all social practices, satire is rooted in a particular time and place. Unlike most other forms of English satire, however, tory anarchism knows no bounds in terms of its targets and the extremes of humour to which it will go in order to make its point. As a consequence it provides the most challenging of tests to free speech and the exposure of social folly and vices, whatever the consequences, in the public sphere. There is an irony here in that whilst the idea of the public sphere is most commonly associated with liberal and leftist social thought, in the English cultural mainstream it is the tory anarchist who has arguably pushed the boundaries of free speech and the public sphere the furthest. The work of Liberal and Leftist satirists is usually situated within part of a broader progressive social movement and has tended to subject itself to self-imposed limits on both its subject matter and the language used. By contrast, the tory anarchist is the ultimate contrarian, raising issues that others don't and often rubbing the noses of their fellow citizens in the most hypocritical and repulsive aspects of popular and political culture. Think here of the following: Waugh on English racism in his early novels; the horrified reaction of the orthodox English left at the time of publication to Orwell's satire and attacks upon totalitarianism; the extreme scatology of Peter Cook's fictitious persona in the 'Derek and Clive' works and the establishment horror at his impersonation of then Prime Minister Harold MacMillan; Chris Morris's *Brass Eye* paedophile special and the hysterical reaction it provoked amongst the popular press and politicians.

Each of these men has used the dominant cultural formats of their time to explore their ideas about Englishness and identity. The first three figures (Orwell, Waugh and Cook) are all working against a background of direct connection with the British empire and its disintegration while the last figure, Morris, deals in his work with the consequences of a post-empire and post-modern Britain. By post-modern I am referring to the apparent loss of faith felt by many in the core capitalist states towards the grand narratives of identity rooted in the nation, class, politics, religion and science. This has led commentators such as David Harvey to view post-modern experience as an outcome of the development of capitalism and as such something to be explained by social theory (Harvey, 1991). On this understanding post-modern societies are marked by the fragmentation of social and political groups, values and beliefs and a lack of trust in if not outright cynicism towards social and political institutions. The development of the idea of post-modern England is rooted in the decline of the material power and grand narratives of class, nation and empire that once provided the ideologically unifying themes to everyday life and experience. As these narratives have loosened they have been replaced by increasingly commodified forms of social relations that have in turn deepened many of the features of modern life that have been the target of tory anarchist ire: the rise of conformism; the vapidness of popular culture;

the erosion of values other than those based upon money; the complicity of the ruling class in the moral decay of England; the loss of a coherent sense of English identity; the threat to individual liberty posed by large-scale bureaucracies. These are all themes that connect Waugh, Orwell, Cook and Morris, to a greater or lesser degree. But it is wrong to expect outright consistency here. Being contrarian is by its very nature likely to lead to contradictory and inconsistent social and political positions as it is more of a reaction against than an argument for something.^{ix} In its worst form it becomes simply misanthropic, an asinine opposition to all things and outright cynicism. Of the four figures cited here only Orwell was openly politically committed, though he was most reluctant to subordinate himself to any party political program.^x

What is it, then, that unites the avowedly socialist Orwell with the radically right-wing and racist Evelyn Waugh?^{xi} What can be said to connect the gregarious public figure of Peter Cook with the intensely private Chris Morris? In short, what is it that gives coherent meaning to the idea of a tory anarchist? There are a number of threads that connects all of these figures and I will set them out here. As tory anarchists they share a similar social class background, being upper-middle class, public school and university educated. It is, then, a cultural conservatism that unites them rather than a political one. It is their shared social class that connects these four men as each of them could easily have ended up occupying a conventional establishment career. Instead they became establishment critics. Hence the tory anarchist is a critic of political and popular culture rather than someone who espouses a political ideology. In this sense Orwell and Waugh can both be tory anarchists. Orwell said of himself that when he was 18 he was 'both a snob and a revolutionary. I was against all authority.'^{xii} It is important to stress that there is a contradictory aspect to Orwell's politics.^{xiii} He is without doubt the most problematic figure to be viewed as a tory anarchist although there is no doubt that this is how he often described himself. As many writers have noted, Orwell was a lifelong democratic socialist and John Newsinger describes him as a 'tory socialist'.^{xiv} However, he was also, and at the same time (until at least 1934) able to refer to himself as a 'tory anarchist'. As has often been observed Orwell was a conservative in everything *except* his politics. The contradiction in his character between his democratic socialist politics and his conservative cultural leanings is manifest in a number of factors: his critical commentaries of English culture and custom, his ideas on patriotism and his (often self-) critical reflections on class, racism and empire. Orwell held his own prejudices, too, a list of which reads much more clearly like those of the tory anarchist than the democratic socialist: an at times authoritarian personality, little sympathy for homosexuals, pacifists, naturists, vegetarians, an uneasiness with women and a hostility to the middle-class 'cranks' that were undermining socialism.^{xv} When added up this list would not be out of place in a study of the political ideology of the right-wing *Daily Mail* newspaper. Orwell revealed these prejudices in many places (*The Road to Wigan Pier*, for example) and portrays them in a satirical manner in his novel *Coming Up for Air*, where the anti-hero George Bowling says, 'I knew the type. Vegetarianism, simple life, poetry, nature-worship, roll in the dew before breakfast . . . you could see in your mind's eye the awful gang of food-cranks and spook-hunters and simple-lifers with £1000 a year that lived there. Even

the pavements were crazy.^{xvi} The irony here being that these counter-cultural middle-class figures that Orwell sought to satirise so acidly were also the kind of people that he himself mixed with. The contradictions in Orwell's views can also be noted by his long-standing hostility to the class-based nature of the English educational system whilst at the same time putting his adopted son down for public school.^{xvii}

Waugh (born 1903) came from a middle class family and was one of the 'bright young things' of 1920s England that he went on to satirise in *Vile Bodies*. He was educated at Lancing College and Oxford where by all accounts he lived a relatively debauched and indulgent life, that of a loafer.^{xviii} However, his relative lack of academic success led him to pursue a variety of jobs that left him deeply unhappy, with a possible attempted suicide by drowning aborted only when he was stung by a jellyfish.^{xix} Orwell was born in India in 1903 where his father worked for the opium department of the civil service. His mother brought him to England when he was one year of age and he was subsequently educated at Wellington and Eton.^{xx} Upon leaving Eton Orwell, as is well known, did indeed choose a career reflecting his social class, joining the Indian Imperial Police, an experience that was to shape his future anti-imperialist politics.^{xxi} Like Orwell, Peter Cook (born 1937) was born into a family where the Father was a colonial civil servant. Cook was educated at Radley and Pembroke college Cambridge where he was perhaps the most famous ever member of the Footlights. Cook noted in various places that he too had been expected to work in the Foreign Office but his career as a satirist (something he went on to mock with some vehemence) had stopped this possibility.^{xxii} Finally, Chris Morris (born 1965) was educated at Stonyhurst, the Jesuit boy's boarding school in Lancashire, and the University of Bristol.^{xxiii} Morris is by far the most private of these figures and his relative anonymity is an understandable strategy in that unlike the other three figures he works in a media driven age where his primary satirical focus is the media itself. His comparatively low public profile has been an important factor in his ability to satirise the media and popular and political culture. The less the media is able to tell us about Morris, the more he is able to retain his cutting edge and autonomy of purpose.^{xxiv}

A note of caution should be added here in that I am not trying to argue that sharing a similar social class background will determine in a simple way the path to becoming a tory anarchist. Clearly it is more complex than this. Nonetheless, I think it a necessary, though not sufficient, factor in understanding what makes a tory anarchist. Additional qualities are needed including: a rebellious streak, an aesthetic interest in popular and elite culture, the ability and motivation to take huge risks with your career and future, the desire to reflect upon, criticise and perhaps profane the very things that are most important to you. Each of these men has had these qualities and it is these additional factors that mark them out as tory anarchists. They are tories in the area of culture, defending a range of values from aspects of both modernity and capitalism. They are anarchists in the sense that they are anti-authoritarian, against the state and bureaucratic power, and in defence of individual liberty. Their anarchic quality leads them to an iconoclasm where any institution, no matter how sacred, can be attacked, sometimes in the most scatological and extreme way.^{xxv} For example, Waugh was both a critic and a

member of the bright young things movement; Cook was both a satirist and admirer of Macmillan^{xxvi}; Orwell was a democratic socialist who defended the customs and conventions of provincial English village and town life, customs which often entailed uncharitable views about homosexuality, foreigners and women; Morris is a master of the modern media age but also a supreme critic of its impact on popular and political culture. Irony is the cutting edge of the tory anarchist and it is an irony that they are as adept at applying to themselves as to their chosen targets. How, then, do the major themes within tory anarchism connect these four men?

AGAINST MODERNITY? TORY ANARCHISM AS CULTURAL CRITICISM

The relationship between tory anarchism and modernity is a complex one. Often it takes the form of scathing hostility and Waugh's complaint articulated in the guise of Gilbert Penfold that the evils of modern life could be summed up as 'plastics, Picasso, sunbathing and Jazz' is a neat summation of this mood.^{xxvii} More tellingly his novel *The Loved One* is upon first reading both a shock and thrill in its characterisation of the vapid and amoral social relations of 1940s Los Angeles. With its exiled English poet Denis Barlow as anti-hero taking advantage of the naiveté and vulgarity of his American hosts whilst working at the garish pet cemetery (the perfectly named 'Whispering Glades'), *The Loved One* is a thoroughly modern novel in style, target, tone and humour. It is written with a dead-pan and vicious wit that enables Waugh to skewer the narcissism and emptiness of modern consumer society. It's relevance for an understanding of the dangers of commodification on social and moral norms has only grown over time. The theme that emerges here and throughout tory anarchist writings is that of human imperfection, the willingness of people to carry out the most awful and often inhumane actions and even to find humour and pleasure in them. Orwell noted this tendency in his writings on the appeal of fascism, for example.^{xxviii} More benignly tory anarchists find humour in the imperfection and imperfectability of human nature, leading them to dwell upon the often absurd nature of life.^{xxix}

By contrast, Peter Cook both loved and ridiculed aspects of the modern world. He claimed to spend most of his time reading newspapers, watching television, consuming pornography, listening to rock music and engaging in gossip.^{xxx} At the same time his flawed film, 'The Rise of Michael Rimmer' was a failed attempt to examine and ridicule the rise of public relations in political life as a mechanism for controlling public opinion.^{xxxi} As is now well recognised, this theme of the rise of a politics of P.R. has become central to political culture in most countries. George Orwell most famously saw the dark aspects of modernity in *1984* where the mass media had become mechanisms of social control and totalitarianism, although in fact he drew upon his experiences at the BBC for inspiration for the details of the novel.^{xxxii} Similarly Chris Morris's work appears to be a telling critique of many aspects of modern popular and political culture but on another reading he is accused by his critics of being a symptom of the very decline he satirises, someone who panders to their audiences worst taste. What can be concluded then is that tory anarchists have contrary views on the nature of modernity and in this section I will examine the major themes in their work in order to draw out this contradictory nature.

Empire, Class and Nation: The end of England?

A major theme of tory anarchist writing has been the apparent erosion or transformation of English Identity over the course of the C20. Rooted in the relative global decline of the UK, this erosion of identity is reflected in three areas: the end of empire, the failure of the ruling class and the transformation of the nation and its values.^{xxxiii}

1. The end of Empire

Although it is addressed explicitly only by Waugh, Orwell and Cook, it also serves as a cultural backdrop to the work of Chris Morris. The post-modern, multicultural Britain that Morris inhabits is a direct legacy of the empire and is for many traditional conservatives the nightmare consequence of empire. Rather than colonising other countries, 'others' are now colonising Britain. Orwell had mixed feelings about empire but ultimately reached a consistent anti-imperialist politics. Empire was a source of some of the works of literature that he most admired such as those of Kipling. Equally it was the source of a general racism in the English ruling classes that he came to despise. The brutality of empire and its deadening effect on the moral consciousness of rulers and ruled alike is explored in the essay 'Shooting an Elephant' and in his accounts of life in the Imperial Police where Orwell acknowledges with customary honesty that the institution was changing him and moulding him to its own racist norms and values.

For Waugh empire is less problematic but equally indicative of the corrupting effect of power and the decline of England. In both *Scoop* and *Black Mischief* Waugh is able to expose the follies of arrogant ruling class megalomaniacs such as Lord Copper of 'The Daily Beast' and Lord Zinc of 'The Daily Brute', in a way that is devastatingly funny, affectionate and brutal in its clarity about the unaccountable power of media moguls and the ruling classes. Both novels are laced with acerbic observations about the intricate relationship between British racism and the empire, reflected in the complacent and arrogant practices of a ruling class that is increasingly unable to rule with any authority. It is important to remember though that however much Waugh exposes the vices of the English ruling class he does so as someone sympathetic to these prejudices. They are both a problem for him and a seam that runs through the cultural life that Waugh inhabits. His later conversion to Catholicism can be read as a reaction to what he saw as the moral collapse of this world around him. Infusing his Catholicism with conservatism gave Waugh the weapons that he needed to express his hatred and intolerance of an atheistic and nihilistic age. In fact it had been Enlightenment philosophers of modernity that had led to Waugh's youthful rejection of religion and he was fully versed in that tradition. He later came to reject it on the grounds that reason cannot sustain a social order and conception of a good society and it cannot provide the truth needed to lead a good life. For that, faith is required.^{xxxiv}

By the 1950s the British empire was in full retreat but in ideological terms it continued (and still does) to hold a massive significance in popular and political culture. British politicians continued to act as though they possessed imperial power, as Eden illustrated with the attack on Suez in 1956 supported by the French and the Israeli's. This arrogance and continued belief in

imperial power left Britain's ruling classes of the period open to the attacks of a younger generation who came of age after WW2 and at the forefront of this was Peter Cook. Cook's 'The Establishment' club became the first and most important comedy club in Britain where a new generation of satirists could vent their spleen against an establishment from which many of these satirists' were actually drawn.^{xxxv} For Cook the 1950s were a period of cultural stagnation and decline in which the UK was bound by a series of social conventions that had their roots in Victorian Britain and its empire but which seemed increasingly irrelevant to the needs and desires of many of his generation.^{xxxvi} Cook's aims were to ridicule the manners and morals of an elite that appeared ridiculous in their pretence of imperial power. Cook's work here was filled with characters he would later come to develop in his career: jaded, violent and corrupt judges, pompous and deluded politicians, sexually repressed middle-classes, stiff-upper lipped and desperate military officers and perverse public school teachers. In short he was mocking the weakness and failures of a generation shaped by empire and its decline.^{xxxvii}

2. Class Rule

Class is a central concept in the tory anarchist's lexicon and reflects their general ambivalence towards modernity. As social categories classes are sources of rich cultural heritage, humour and values, setting out clear social roles and forms of authority, obligation and morality. Rather than class relations in English history being inherently a form of social conflict, for the tory anarchist classes have enjoyed a more complicated relationship. No class is necessarily good or bad in its cultural influence, except perhaps for the commercial philistines that emerged with modern capitalism.^{xxxviii} There is a sense of a natural order to the tory anarchist view of class that has its roots in English (perhaps British) culture, but an order that has been fundamentally subverted by modernity and the rise of capitalist society.^{xxxix} Under capitalism the working classes have been transformed into wage slaves and the traditional aristocracy are frequently reduced into a faded and ridiculous grandeur. It is the newly emerging Victorian middle class entrepreneur's with their depressing utilitarian and philistine ethos that has served to destroy the real meaning of English culture: life and liberty. In the *Brass Eye* episode 'Decline' Chris Morris focuses upon the moral decay of Britain, a theme that is central to an understanding of Waugh's work. Morris paints an exaggerated and satirical portrait of a morally decayed and corrupted society that has succumbed to the quintessence of capitalist culture: consumer commodification. At one point he uncovers a map of the UK to reveal that it has lost all 'decency', a theme that resonates in the work of Orwell and Waugh and which is at the heart of the tory anarchist critique of modernity. Decent values and manners are lost in a world corrupted by money and profit.

But the point for Waugh is that the aristocracy and the upper classes remain an important source of values and inspiration in English culture despite their debauchery, stupidity and abnegation of responsibility.^{xl} Happiness and a good society are to be found in the complex interplay of social classes and the diversity of character and outlook to be found within the nation. The enemy for the tory anarchist is the grey uniformity of class and character that is the product of a society engineered by the state through its social policy. Orwell clearly shares this concern over the power of the state to transform social

order and in his accounts of the lives of the working classes in England and elsewhere he paints vivid pictures of the sights, sounds, smells and feel of class as a lived cultural experience. Class is a permanent factor in Orwell's work but it is ultimately overshadowed by his concern with the modern bureaucratic and ultimately totalitarian state, a phenomena that he feared to be just as prevalent in the Western democracies as in the totalitarian states of Eastern Europe.

Peter Cook inherits the mantle of something like an aristocratic dandy (shades of Wilde and Coward perhaps) a brilliant and savage wit who is a member of an upper class that he both mocks and celebrates for the rich array of crazed and crackpot characters that it throws up.^{xli} When Cook decided to attack the ultimate symbol of utilitarian and philistine values, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, he did so by readopting the guise of Harold Macmillan (now Lord Stockton) in an appearance on *Saturday Night Live*. Whatever Cook's critique of the generation that Macmillan represented, the former Prime Minister was as aghast as Cook at Margaret Thatcher's philistinism.^{xlii} For Cook it seems that whilst MacMillan may have represented a ruling class at the (fag) end of empire, Thatcher was the culmination of everything horrible in the new commercial conservatism.^{xliii}

3. One Nation in Decline

The nation is fundamental to conservative politics in general and for tory anarchists serves as a source of inspiration for culture, meaning and ultimately satire.^{xliv} In terms of the tory anarchists vision of a good society (and I make that claim tentatively) the nation is the repository of practices and traditions from which a modern society can and should draw.^{xlv} The history of the nation, particularly its rural past and present, is a site of inspiration for tory anarchism rather than simply being the home of 'rural idiocy', as Marx once described it. It should be stressed, however, that for tory anarchists, the countryside is *also* the home of 'rural idiocy' and therefore a site rich in potential for caricature and humour. For example, Waugh famously adopted the guise of the traditional English country gentleman as part of his transformation into a curmudgeon but admitted he had not the slightest interest in rural life.^{xlvi}

Unlike socialist utopias based on a vision of a future good society, tory anarchists draw from the qualities of the nation's past for their inspiration. It is modern industrial capitalism that has undermined these traditions and in so doing transformed people's lives from ones of self-management and skilled or semi-skilled communal existence into the atomised, routinised and de-skilled drones of progress.^{xlvii} English national identity is rooted in a defence of 'life and liberty', a love of play, community and self-help that has been replaced over time by the rise of the state and capitalism. With this has come a sacrifice of both life and liberty in return for which people are promised 'security' in all its forms. So liberty has its roots in culture for the tory anarchist rather than a commitment to abstract principles. It is an expression of the lived experience and history of a group of people. In short, all manner of life can be found in the work of tory anarchists with no pretence at moralism or the perfectibility of the human condition.

A love of the nation despite its flaws and often ugly or horrendous past is a connecting feature of these writers and in Orwell finds perhaps the clearest defence of patriotism in English literature.^{xlviii} For Orwell love of country is a fundamental social and political virtue and something he finds generally lacking amongst his left-wing comrades. Indeed, Orwell is equally scathing about what he saw as the mindless 'John Bull' patriotism of the right as he was of the snobbery and intellectual detachment of many leading British socialists, finding that they have nothing in common with the working classes they aspire to represent.^{xlix} Orwell was self-critical about his own relationship to British working class life, but unlike many of his contemporaries could openly admit this.¹ Orwell takes his concern with the nation and its culture more deeply when he focuses upon the peculiarities of the English, their love of pubs, vulgar seaside postcards and music hall humour, even the correct method for making a cup of tea. It is worth noting that there is nothing sentimental about any of these tory anarchist's views of English culture. On the contrary, their assessments are of both its resilience and its contradictory nature. Thus it is the diversity and peculiarity that national identity generates that is so attractive to tory anarchists in their critique and celebration of English culture. For Chris Morris writing in what I described earlier as a post-modern, multicultural England (what John Gray has described as post-traditional England^{li}) there is a stark contrast here. What happens when a people that was once held together through grand narratives of class, nation and empire begins to reject or move away from those meanings? What does it mean to live in an increasingly multicultural England for the tory anarchist? Morris is ambiguous about this in his work and I suspect this is because he is unsure about the answers. Rather he is raising awkward questions, pricking the pompous (like Waugh before him) and exposing contradictions, as tory anarchists are wont to do. What is transparent is his mockery of a dumbed-down England of mass culture, moral decline, popular idiocy and shallow intellectual depths as personified in the rise of a facile celebrity culture.^{lii} What are the consequences of this for the tory anarchist?

Popular Culture in theory and practice – Profaning the Public Sphere

1. In Theory – How very un-British

It would be an exaggeration to say that tory anarchism represents a coherent social theory and no doubt its practitioners would regard this suggestion with some scepticism. At best it is a stance or a position that is taken against the grain of contemporary culture and politics. Nonetheless it is not unreasonable to say that there are certain themes that underlay the position of the tory anarchist and that at its heart is a moral response, though not a didactic or moralising one, to what is seen as decline in British life, art and culture. But this always comes tinged with irony as the tory anarchist both laments and celebrates the changes that are taking place. Waugh undoubtedly feared the general decay of English culture but it was only in his later life that he began to manufacture the image of the curmudgeon and reactionary, perhaps as a skin to hide behind from interviewers and his own fears.^{liii} For Waugh the concern is with the defence of the values of true or great art against mere populism. There are echoes of this in the work of Orwell, Cook and Morris but in general they take a more complicated view of popular culture. Their work exposes the ways in which mass culture in the hands of an oligarchy of media

professionals can be used as a mechanism to exploit and corrupt taste and culture, playing on popular fear, ignorance and gullibility.^{liv}

So what can tory anarchists tell us about the nature of British popular culture over the course of the C20? First it is clear that for all of these figures except perhaps Morris there was a resistance to theory and theorising, often coupled with a deep hostility to what was seen as unnecessary pretentiousness. Waugh is an ambiguous figure here in that he experimented with and was influenced by modernist literary style and devices such as: collage, the interior monologue, classical parody, the intrusive narrator, the camera eye, montage. Allen suggests, however, that Waugh's heart was never really in it and that he used these techniques at least as much as a way of shocking his elders and the public as through any intellectual commitment to the tradition.^{lv} In particular Waugh rejected the way in which modernism connected aesthetics and politics in support of wider political projects, something he saw as demeaning and potentially corrupting of art. Waugh's prickly attitude to the modernist movement in popular culture is reflected in his general loathing of modernist art and comments on modernist contemporaries such as Joyce. In the course of his work Waugh pillared major modernist figures and movements from Le Corbusier to the surrealists for their pretensions and pomposity.^{lvi} In style and method Waugh was like Orwell, an empiricist, committed to the clear and precise use of language.^{lvii}

In a similar vein Orwell was hostile to unnecessary theoretical pretensions and one of his most famous essays, 'The Politics of the English Language', is an attempt to defend the virtues of clarity and simplicity in style, something he shared with Waugh. For Orwell language became intrinsically connected with morality as he sought to defend principles of truth, objectivity and verification of historical narratives, all things that he saw being systematically decimated during the 1930s. Both Orwell and Waugh saw the dangers of theoretical pretension as leading to a mixture of obscurantism and intellectual elitism.^{lviii} Orwell acknowledged in his essay, 'Why I Write', that his motivations were a mixture of the desire to establish the truth, to promote political goals of democratic socialism and to defend aesthetic values.^{lix} Waugh would part company with Orwell on the second of these points as he saw the influence of politics upon art as corrupting of aesthetic. Critics have noted that Orwell's empiricism remained theoretically unsophisticated, a factor he would perhaps have been perfectly happy with.^{lx}

Both Waugh and Orwell's reaction to theoretical innovation were reflective of the tradition of British empiricism that has its roots in Hobbes, Locke and Hume. For many of its modern critics British empiricism is seen as an inherently conservative and outdated philosophy. This is hardly fair in that empiricism was a sceptical philosophy that could generate radical and unsettling conclusions.^{lxi} The work of Hume and Hobbes, as is well known, can be seen to call into question everything from a belief in god to the authority of religious and political institutions, hardly the position of the traditional conservative. Indeed, it is the coruscating relativism at the centre of this tradition that Waugh found most difficult to live with, finding only in Catholicism the absolutism and foundations that he felt necessary to secure social life in the modern world.^{lxii} This kind of empiricism is a sceptical

tradition that doubts the power of reason to resolve fundamental problems of social life.

By contrast both Cook and Morris owe debts to the surrealist tradition in their works. Cook's caricature of English eccentricity frequently evokes a rich surrealist tradition from Lear and Carroll to the Goons. Cook was a masterful deflator of pomposity and pretension in his work and a number of pieces show his ability to ridicule theoretical pretensions. His well-known 'pete'n'dud' sketch with Dudley Moore set in an unnamed Art Gallery illustrates this nicely.^{lxiii} In the sketch 'pete and dud' are working their way through various classical works of art in a gentle, mocking and deeply affectionate parody of the impact of the opening up of classical art to the working classes. In the age of mass culture anyone and everyone can have an opinion on matters of high and low art, irrespective of education, upbringing and the quality of their judgments. In this respect Cook's ambivalent attitude to art and theory is almost a precursor to postmodern rejections of the division between high and low art and it is with Morris that the tory anarchist fully enters the postmodern age. In works such as *Jam* and *Brass Eye* Morris is able to mix surrealist ideas with the mundane aspects of everyday life to force the viewer to radically revise the way in which they approach and interpret TV shows. Morris appears to share something of Baudrillard's view of the media as creating a 'hyper real' world where the difference between appearance and reality is abandoned as popular culture becomes a realm of continuous invention of the idea of what is real. As Patrick West noted, it is impossible to watch a TV current affairs show in the same way after viewing Morris's work.^{lxiv}

2. In practice – Iconoclasm and Profanity

The impact of tory anarchists on the public sphere in the UK has been immense and challenging. As noted earlier, one of the distinguishing aspects of tory anarchism is its unrelenting iconoclasm and rebellious nature. This manifests itself in a variety of ways from affectionate caricatures of all social classes through to hostile and extreme attacks on religion and politics. There is something of the permanent adolescent about tory anarchists, the need to continually annoy and aggravate in order to gain attention and this is reflected in much of their work.

Waugh was very much a rebel in his youth and early years as a writer. His relationship to 'anarchy' was complicated, though, in that he had both the impulse of the natural rebel whilst at the same time he was driven by a fear of nihilism and chaos, which in part inspired his conversion to Catholicism. In his novels Waugh creates an amoral and chaotic world where justice and morality have little place.^{lxv} In these works comedy and satire become Waugh's defence against the nihilism that he feared was an inevitable outcome of modernity where atheism replaced faith.^{lxvi} The early satires were controversial for a number of reasons: their clear analysis and tacit defence of English racism, the venal nature of a corrupt and idiotic ruling class, the opportunistic nature of public figures, businessmen and politicians, and the stupidity of religious figures, perverse sexual practices including paedophilia, all were ripe targets for Waugh's lacerating wit. But they were also things not much commented upon by members of his class at the time in such an open

manner. Orwell noted of Waugh that he was 'about as good a novelist as one can be while holding untenable opinions.'^{lxvii} As an ironist Waugh's relationship to the things he satirised was ambiguous, as Orwell noted. In exposing the corruption of culture Waugh was also defending things that were abhorrent to the socialist Orwell. For Waugh there is a sense in which these things simply *are* and as such they can only be mocked, satirised or celebrated as part of the true picture of England.

Orwell's impact is perhaps the greatest of any of the figures here, in ways that he could not have anticipated. In some respects this is a little surprising in that his work is generally the least satirical of any of the tory anarchists mentioned here. Orwell's tory anarchist instincts were rendered more explicit in his short essays celebrating England and its cultural traditions, from how to make a proper cup of tea to the virtues of English cooking and the Pub. Nonetheless *Animal Farm* is now celebrated as one of the greatest of political satires and at the time of its publication was widely seen as an attack on Stalinism and political conformism. More interesting perhaps is the fact that Orwell saw these works as being not simply about the Soviet Union but equally about life in England. In a suppressed preface to *Animal Farm* he noted that censorship and the control of information in the Press was as much a factor of life in democracies as it was in the totalitarian states, it just took a different form and was the exercise of different mechanisms of power and control.^{lxviii} This message was not heard and, ironically, was deliberately suppressed by the publishers as Orwell was fully incorporated into the role of Cold War warrior, one that he would no doubt have accepted anyway. Along with the bleak *1984*, *Animal Farm* has had the greatest impact upon popular and political culture of any of Orwell's writings.^{lxix} Initially Orwell had great trouble publishing *Animal Farm* as the standard left-wing publishing houses of the time were not sympathetic to works that would be seen as attacks on Britain's erstwhile ally, Stalin.^{lxx} Orwell's anti-Stalinism was characteristically born out of his experience serving with the POUM in the Spanish civil war. The conformism of the intellectual left in its support of Stalin was a major concern for Orwell. Interestingly, Waugh was full of praise for Orwell's works though he regarded them as flawed because of Orwell's lack of religious conviction. How could a character like Winston Smith resist 'Big Brother', for example, without a deeper faith in something stronger than Orwell's humanism?^{lxxi}

Orwell's work in these two novels is precisely in keeping with tory anarchism: the hostility to the state, the defence of the individual and of liberty, the need to rebel against authority and conformism. Orwell's politics were of the anti-statist left, though given his avoidance of doctrinal approaches to politics it is perhaps ambitious to pin him down more than this. Certainly he was equally at home amongst Britain's anarchist left as he was amongst the POUM militia in Spain.^{lxxii} In terms of political satire it is almost impossible to overstate Orwell's importance though even sympathetic critics have tended to note that neither work stands amongst his best writings. More than Waugh, Orwell believed in a public sphere that would enable people through the critical and precise use of language to see the true horror of totalitarianism and injustice, though as he noted, being able to recognise what is in front of your nose is often the hardest of tasks.^{lxxiii} Again the importance of the British Empiricist

tradition is revealed in Orwell and Waugh's method. Hence these works should be seen as polemics and provocations, rubbing the audience's noses in the truth of what was in front of them all the time, particularly the class of English intellectual leftist that Orwell had no time for.

A superficial reading would suggest that Peter Cook's work is perhaps the least politicised of the tory anarchists featured here but in fact Cook has had a lasting and important impact on British popular and political culture. His purchase of *Private Eye* magazine in 1964 was to prove far-sighted as it remains Britain's longest running and most notorious satirical magazine that has, over the years, taken on every manner of bully, crook and cheat in public life, risking bankruptcy and imprisonment along the way. The weapons of *Private Eye* are straightforward: iconoclastic humour and relentless investigative reporting, personified in the work of former contributor Paul Foot. Current editor Ian Hislop insists that *Private Eye* has always been politically ecumenical but there is no doubt that it became a haven for tory anarchists including former editor Richard Ingram's and Evelyn Waugh's son Auberon.^{lxxiv} The tone of the magazine is very much infused with Cook's surreal humour and as long-term owner he was a regular contributor. Equally important however was Cook's earlier work with *Beyond the Fringe* and the 'Establishment Club' where satire as public performance in mainstream popular culture first took root in post-war Britain.^{lxxv} It is difficult to appreciate the bravery of Cook's stance now in mocking the MacMillan Government and the social mores of a conformist era, but his colleagues from *Beyond the Fringe* attested to this in a posthumous collection of essays and interviews on Cook's life and work.^{lxxvi} Cook's influence over subsequent British comedy has been immense and the notorious *Derek and Clive* records and film went on to break new ground in scatological humour of a kind that hadn't been experienced in British comedy before. The *Derek and Clive* works are a watershed in British comedy in that they opened the way for future comedians to broach the most extreme and taboo areas of life and language. In themselves these works polarise Cook's fans and a viewing of the *Derek and Clive get the Horn* movie is an uncomfortable experience, deliberately so as the filming of the performance was sprung on Dudley Moore by Peter Cook as an unexpected 'surprise' on the day of recording. The general tone of these works is that of two men on the verge of a nervous breakdown but there is no doubting the impact that they had, with the first *Derek and Clive* album topping the UK album charts. Throughout his career Cook remained a public figure, readily available to appear on chat shows and radio. Apparently wracked by an almost terminal boredom and depression in his later life, his work varied from contributions to the Amnesty International Secret Policemen's Ball to what was at the time a series of relatively anonymous contributions to a late-night Radio London talk show where he would adopt the guise of 'Sven' a Norwegian migrant to Britain. The impression left by Cook's work is that of a comic genius whose boredom threshold was low and in constant need of challenging. Towards the end of his life he returned to a stock character, the aristocratic eccentric Sir Arthur Greeb-Streebling, for a series of often uncomfortable exchanges with Chris Morris on Radio 4. Morris adopts his customary sub-Paxman persona to interrogate Sir Arthur and is unrelenting in his treatment of Cook who by then was suffering badly from alcohol-related health problems.^{lxxvii}

Cook's politics remain ambiguous and his friends straddled the political divide.^{lxxviii} He was claimed equally by the right and the left but it seems that he did at one point consider standing as a liberal candidate in Hampstead so that he could contest the seat with Labour's Glenda Jackson. Whether this was out of a deep-seated commitment to liberal principles or merely because it was an opportunity to poke fun at and deflate the political ambitions of Glenda Jackson is less clear.^{lxxix}

Morris's work in the public sphere is wide-ranging and includes television and radio shows. I want to concentrate on his work *Brass Eye* and in particular the special edition produced in 2001 called 'Paedogeddon'. Morris's work on *Brass Eye* has four themes that connect him most explicitly with tory anarchism:

- a criticism of conformism and stupidity in popular culture,
- a surreal sense of humour,
- a moral critique, however indirect, of social norms,
- and a devastating critique of the power of the media to construct an understanding of what is real or true, all themes that connect Morris with the work of Waugh, Orwell and Cook.^{lxxx}

For Morris what is important is the way in which the media works in apparently free and democratic societies where they are geared towards satisfying the needs, wants and desires of avaricious consumers. The contemporary media construct and shape our understanding of what is real and true through the use of mind-numbing graphics, meaningless statistics that crudely quantify social life, the use of celebrities who know nothing about the subjects on which they are asked to speak, and television hosts and producers so desperate for the latest sensation that they are wilful participants in creating the stories they cover, as though they are the modern incarnation of Waugh's characters from *Scoop*.^{lxxxi}

As I mentioned earlier there is some overlap with Baudrillard's view of the hyper-real in Morris's work as he sets out to parody and mimic the excesses of the media. Thus the *Brass Eye* special 'Paedogeddon' was a critique of the ways in which the media in Britain had covered and hyped fears about paedophiles in the community. More deeply it was an examination of the irresponsibility of the media coupled with its manifest hypocrisy. The show provoked by rubbing viewers faces in the ways in which popular culture sexualises children, from children's beauty pageants to popular music in the form of artists such as Britney Spears and Jennifer Lopez. Rather than the *Lolita* of Nabokov's work this is children being used by corporations as a means to sell goods to adults and children alike. The real threat to children comes from a culture where children gain value and respect from peers and adults by the extent of their sexual maturity. Needless to say, few of these points were raised in the media coverage of the show other than in a few articles in UK papers such as *The Independent*. Instead the programme was lambasted in predictable manner by press and politicians alike. A blind Home Secretary condemned a show he could not have seen and MP Beverley Hughes attacked the programme in the House of Commons while at the same time

acknowledging she hadn't actually watched it, life imitating art in almost unbearable stupidity. The then culture secretary Tessa Jowell moved to have Channel 4 amend its constitution so that such a show could not be broadcast again. Amongst the hysterical and ridiculous press coverage pride of place goes to the tabloid *Daily Star* who condemned the programme under the heading 'Sick show goes on regardless', while on the adjacent page of the newspaper a picture of a buxom Charlotte Church is headed with the phrase 'She's a big girl now' and that the singer was looking 'chest swell'. Charlotte Church was 15 years old at the time.^{lxxxii}

The *Brass Eye* special was a classic example of tory anarchist provocation, holding up a mirror to the hypocrisy of contemporary society without a need for a didactic moralism in order to make its point. Tellingly the show received the highest ever response from viewers at the time of broadcast, producing a record number of phone calls condemning the show, and a record number praising it. At least it can be said that the British public held to a more complex understanding of the programme than the media and political elites that almost uniformly condemned it. Morris's work brings tory anarchism up to date and examines the role that the media play in post-modern Britain. The biggest concern in Morris's work appears to be with a nihilism that infects British culture. In the subsequent and what appears to be one-off series 'Nathan Barley', Morris presents the eponymous star of the programme as symptomatic of modern moral malaise. Nathan Barley is a 'webmaster, guerrilla filmmaker, screenwriter, DJ and in his own words, a "self-facilitating media node".' In fact as a new media figure Barley is concerned only with feeding his own ego and desires and has no qualms as to how he achieves fame or gratification, whether it is through sex with an apparently 13 year old girl, the trivialising of rape or the unintended killing of his colleague, all are fair game for Barley in his desire to become a cool celebrity. Barley himself is a former public school boy, one of Waugh's 'bright young things' brought up to date, the logical outcome of 80 years of decadence and debauchery amongst the upper classes in modern Britain. Although Morris doesn't appear in the programme it is hard not to think that the forlorn hero of the show, Dan Ashcroft, represents Morris. As the programme's website says of Ashcroft, '[he] writes searing columns for Sugar Ape. He's considered astonishingly cool, but only by those he despises. He is surrounded by idiots and practically worshipped by Nathan (whom he considers to be their king). He is 34. Why has he failed to move on?'^{lxxxiii} O the irony indeed.

KICKING AGAINST THE PRICKS? THE LIMITATIONS OF TORY ANARCHISM

The biggest problem in writing about tory anarchist's is that at any moment an analysis can be undermined by the claim that they are, as Roger Law put it, just 'arsing around.' In a sense this is of course true, tory anarchists are permanent adolescents who do indeed enjoy arsing around. My point in this paper is two-fold, that they are doing more than this and that their cultural criticism is something that requires explanation. My explanation is that tory anarchism emerges in the context of and in reaction to the relative decline of the UK (more specifically England) as a global power and the changing meaning of British identity. As a consequence there is no reason to suppose that tory anarchism will disappear from British culture as the particularities of

the UK's decline and social transformation continue to generate the grounds for its existence. The permanent tension that exists in tory anarchism is between the recognition that the world is always potentially chaotic and without order and the need for certainty in order for society to function, between its rebellious impulse and its defence of the natural order of things. At its extreme this means the tension between either nihilism or authority, with satire as the means to negotiate this spectrum. As this article has made clear, they have particular strengths but these are, in turn, also part of their inherent weakness as cultural critique.

Taking their strengths first, tory anarchism is foremost an important source of rebellion in British culture. They show that rebellion does not have to be the product of the oppressed classes but that it can emerge from amongst the privileged too, rebelling against the failings of their own class and culture. Tory anarchists provide an alternative commentary on capitalism, modernity and the state, setting out their failings from a position rooted in defence of a conception of Britain that is both appealing and illusory. Perhaps their most important strength is that they bring humour into the realm of cultural critique as a weapon to deflate the pretensions of the pompous, the over-mighty and the arrogant. In a world driven by the ambitions of a puritan political class and a utilitarian economic class, they are a refreshing defence of indulgence, disorder, idleness, quality of life over quantity and what Cobbett called 'Merry England', the home of 'life and liberty' and endless eccentricity.

At the same time the limitations of tory anarchism are apparent. Orwell aside, their anti-political stance is unlike left-wing anarchism in that there is no sense of a political alternative to what exists, no desire to promote a different conception of a good society. Being a tory anarchist has built in limitations, it is a minority sport rather than a social or political movement. Its social ideas rest on an appealing and partial vision of Merry England that exists as an important myth in British culture. Whilst the tory anarchist rails against capitalism for its debasement of social values, against the state for its erosion of liberty and sweeping social engineering, and against modernity for its attempts to build a good society on the basis of abstract reason, it doesn't offer a coherent analysis of these issues. And nor should it, the purpose of tory anarchism is to be bloody-minded in defence of the indefensible, to expose societies hypocrisies and vices to public gaze, though rarely to condemn them, rather to laugh at them and invite others to start laughing too. Although it doesn't comment directly on abstractions such as the UK's decline in the world system, tory anarchism tells us much about it indirectly and in a way that is a mixture of the tragic and the hilarious through its ongoing commentary on the changing nature of British culture. For that it deserves its place in the annals of British political and popular culture.

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Notes

ⁱ Waugh says that ‘satire is a matter of period. It flourishes in a stable society and presupposes homogeneous moral standards... It is aimed at inconstancy and hypocrisy. It exposes polite cruelty and folly by exaggerating them. It seeks to produce shame’ as quoted in David Wykes, *Evelyn Waugh: A Literary life*, (London: Macmillan, 1999), 7. Waugh rejected the idea that he was a satirist.

ⁱⁱ John Gray and David Willets, *Is Conservatism Dead*, 40.

ⁱⁱⁱ R. J. White, *The Conservative Tradition*, (London: Nicholas Kaye, 1950), 36.

^{iv} Patrick West disagrees on this point and says that tory anarchists can be found in many parts of English society. I am agnostic on this point but my primary concern is with the tory anarchist as public figure. Email to the author dated 22nd November 2005. The magistrate Thomas Colpepper (played by Eric Portman) in Powell and Pressburger’s film *A Canterbury Tale* has something of a tory anarchist outlook.

^v On Swift’s mixture of libertarian and conservative views see Ian Higgins, *Swift’s Politics*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), 67. On William Cobbett see Richard Ingrams, *The Life and Adventures of William Cobbett*, (London, Harper Perennial, 2005).

^{vi} Immanuel Wallerstein, *After Liberalism*, (New York, The New Press, 1995).

^{vii} Ian Gilmour sets out a coherent overview of the history of conservatism in the UK in the following works: *Inside Right: Conservatism, Policies and the People*, (London, Quarter Books, 1978); *Whatever Happened to the Tories?* (with Mark Garnett), (London, Fourth Estate Paperbacks, 1997).

^{viii} On the death of conservatism see John Gray, *The Undoing of Conservatism*, (London, The Social Market Foundation, 1994). See his exchanges with David Willets for a challenge to this idea, in *Is Conservatism Dead?*, (London: The Social Market Foundation, 1997).

^{ix} As Waugh says, ‘there are still things which it is worth fighting against’, *The Sayings of Evelyn Waugh*, (London, Duckworth and Co. Ltd, 1996), 33.

^x On Orwell’s politics and his relationship to the political left and right see Christopher Hitchens, *Orwell’s Victory*, (London, Penguin, 2002).

^{xi} Waugh and Orwell held each others work in mutual regard and for Timothy Garton Ash they were satirical brothers under the skin in his ‘Orwell in 1998’, *The New York Review of Books*, October 22nd 1998. See also John P. Rossie, ‘Two irascible Englishmen: Mr. Waugh and Mr. Orwell’, *Modern Age*, March 22nd, 2005, 148-152.

^{xii} *George Orwell at Home (and among the Anarchists)*, London, Freedom Press, 1998: 17. Orwell was clearly sympathetic to anarchism in theory but in practice thought it impossible to bring about, as Vernon Richards, Colin Ward and Nicolas Walter note in their essays in the book.

^{xiii} D.J. Taylor refers to ‘the anarchic and the conservative sides of his mind’, *Orwell: The Life*, (London, Random House, 2003), 83.

^{xiv} John Newsinger, *Orwell’s Politics*, (London, Macmillan, 1999), 48.

^{xv} See D. J. Taylor, *Orwell: The Life*. Hitchens too acknowledges these tendencies in Orwell. See his *Orwell’s Victory*, chapters 3 and 6.

^{xvi} George Orwell, *Coming up for Air*, (London, Penguin, 1989), 228.

^{xvii} Terry Eagleton, ‘Reach-me-down Romantic’, *The London Review of Books*, 19th June, 2003.

^{xviii} Selina Hastings, *Evelyn Waugh*, (London, Vintage, 2002).

^{xix} Malcolm Bradbury, *Evelyn Waugh*, (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966), 16-17.

^{xx} On Orwell see Bernard Crick, *George Orwell: A Life*, (London, Penguin, 1982); Michael Sheldon, *Orwell: The Authorised Biography*, (London, HarperCollins, 1991); Jeffrey Meyers, *Orwell: Conscience of a Generation*, (London, W. W. Norton, 2000)

^{xxi} Orwell, ever sensitive to the layers of social class, saw himself as being born into a ‘lower-upper-middle class family’. Timothy Garton Ash, ‘Orwell in 1998.’ See D. J. Taylor for a detailed account of Orwell on class, *Orwell: The Life*.

^{xxii} As with Waugh, Cook denied that he was a satirist. John Bird makes the case for this interpretation of much of Cook’s work by quoting Northrop Frye’s definition of the satirist: Satire demands ‘fantasy, a content recognised as grotesque, moral judgements (at least implicit) and a militant attitude to experience.’ John Bird, ‘3. The Last Pieces’ in *Something Like Fire: Peter Cook Remembered*, 210.

- xxiii Morris has commented in interview that he grew up near Huntingdon, attended ‘public school to get the right accent, catholic school to get the right guilt complex.’
- xxiv Morris has been scornful of the ways in which satire has become institutionalised in Britain through shows such as ‘Have I got news for you’, because of their collusion with the establishment they claim to criticise. Morris said, by contrast, ‘I think you can only really get underneath by deception.’ Euan Ferguson, *The Observer*, 22nd July 2001.
- xxv Michael Gorra, ‘Through comedy towards Catholicism: A reading of Evelyn Waugh’s early novels’, *Contemporary Literature*, 29, 2, 1988, 209.
- xxvi Cook confirms this when he said ‘my impersonation of Macmillan was in fact extremely affectionate. I was a great Macmillan fan’, in Harry Thompson, *Peter Cook: A Biography*, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1998), 78.
- xxvii Evelyn Waugh, *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, (London, Penguin, 1972 edition), 14.
- xxviii George Orwell, ‘Fascism and Democracy’, in his *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters: My country, right or left: 1940-43*, (London, David R. Godine Publishers, 2000).
- xxix Patrick West makes this point when he says the ‘tory anarchist laughs at the human condition because we despair often of its cruelty and ignorance. Auberon Waugh, for instance, was anti-death penalty. In my opinion Morris so brutally satirised anti-paedophile campaigns because, like myself, he felt disgusted at the cretinous and blood-thirsty behaviour of ‘anti-paedo’ lynch-mobs.’ Email to the author dated 22nd November 2005.
- xxx On Cook’s life and times see Harry Thompson, *Peter Cook: A Biography*,
- xxxi Declan McHugh, ‘Wanting to be heard but not wanting to act? Addressing political disengagement’, in *Parliamentary Affairs*, 59, 3, 2006: 546.
- xxxii Timothy Garton Ash, ‘Orwell in 1998’.
- xxxiii On Waugh and Orwell’s relationship to the end of empire and issues of class see Christopher Hitchens, *Blood, Class and Nostalgia*, (London, Chatto and Windus, 1990).
- xxxiv Selina Hastings, *Evelyn Waugh*, p. 227.
- xxxv On the Establishment club see John Bird in *Something Like Fire: Peter Cook Remembered*, (London, Arrow Books, 2003). See also Peter Barberis, ‘the 1964 General Election the ‘Not Quite, But’ and ‘But only Just’ Election’, *Contemporary British History*, 21, 3, 2007, for an account of the satire boom inaugurated by Cook and his cohorts on the party political culture of the time.
- xxxvi Nicholas Luard in *Something Like Fire: Peter Cook Remembered*, 39.
- xxxvii See the chapters by Alan Bennett and Nicholas Luard in *Something Like Fire: Peter Cook Remembered*.
- xxxviii Waugh commented that ‘the most valuable possession of any nation is an accepted system of classes’, *The Sayings of Evelyn Waugh*, 41.
- xxxix Burke shared this view of class as integral to the nation, saying that the task of government was ‘to secure every man, in every class, from oppression’, in Noel O’Sullivan, *Conservatism*, (London: J. M. Dent and Son., 1976), 12.
- xl David Wykes, *Evelyn Waugh*, 36. Waugh is often at his bilious best in his portrayal of the ruling classes, even when they were his friends. Upon hearing of a successful operation on his war-time comrade and great friend Randolph Churchill, for example, Waugh said, ‘it was a typical triumph of modern science to find the only part of Randolph that was not malignant and remove it,’ *The Sayings of Evelyn Waugh*, 45.
- xli Cook saw a rigid distinction in the morality of his personal and professional life. According to long-time friend Roger Law, Cook’s theory of satire was that everyone was a potential target, no subject could be taboo and that you should be completely unjust to those you were attacking. Cook, like Chris Morris, felt that to remain credible as a professional you could never become cosy with the establishment for fear of losing your autonomy, in Harry Thompson, *Peter Cook: A Biography*, 297.
- xlii Former Tory Cabinet minister George Walden notes Mrs Thatcher’s lack of enthusiasm for ‘non-utilitarian studies’, subjects that did not contribute directly to the economy, in George Walden, *Lucky George*, (London, Allen Lane, 1999), 273.
- xliii Cook commented in interview that he found the Thatcher governments more offensive than any other, though it should be noted that he was liable to say different things to different friends on political issues, Harry Thompson, *Peter Cook: A Life*, 295-296. Disraeli had commented upon the danger for conservatives of a world dominated by a commercial middle class and of ‘falling under... the thralldom of capital,’ R. J. White, *The Conservative Tradition*, 19-20. Similarly Maurice Cowling noted that conservatism was more than defence of

economic liberalism but must seek to preserve the existing social structure, as quoted in Frank O’Gorman, *British Conservatism*, 227-228.

^{xliv} R. J. White, *The Conservative Tradition*, 47.; Anthony Quinton, *The Politics of Imperfection*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), 16; Ian Gilmour, *Inside Right*, 142-144.

^{xlv} Roger Scruton, *The Meaning of Conservatism*, (London: The Macmillan Press, 1984), 38.

^{xlvi} Interview with John Freeman for the BBC, 18th June 1960, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/audiointerviews/profilepages/waughe1.shtml>, last viewed 11/5/2007.

^{xlvii} Nisbet suggests that for conservatives rational bureaucratic organisation is a development to be feared as it can lapse into Jacobin social engineering where the nation is like a conquered territory to be reconstructed by enlightened planners, Robert Nisbet, *Conservatism: Dream and Reality*, (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991), 34-35.

^{xlviii} Historically patriotism has tended to be regarded as a conservative idea against the more cosmopolitan and internationally inclined liberal, socialist and anarchist traditions. See Frank O’Gorman, *British Conservatism*, (New York: Longman Group, 1986), xiii. Unlike Orwell, however, O’Gorman links patriotism with imperialism.

^{xlix} See Orwell’s pamphlet *The Lion and the Unicorn; Socialism and the English Genius*, (London, Penguin, 1982), for example,

^l See Orwell’, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, (London, Penguin, 1975 edition), chapters 11-13.

^{li} John Gray and David Willets, *Is Conservatism Dead?*, p.viii.

^{lii} Euan Ferguson reports one friend of Morris who says that the latter is motivated by ‘pomposity of any type and stupidity.’ Ferguson, *The Observer*.

^{liii} In an interview in 1960 Waugh said that his greatest fault was his irritability with, ‘absolutely everything, inanimate objects and people, animals...’ Interview with John Freeman for the BBC, 18th June 1960,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/audiointerviews/profilepages/waughe1.shtml>, last viewed 11/5/2007.

^{liv} See George Walden’s *The New Elites: Making a Career in the masses* (London: Penguin, 2000) for a persuasive conservative defence of high values against populism in art.

^{lv} Brooke Allen, ‘Vile Bodies: A Futurist Fantasy’ *Twentieth Century Literature*, 40, 3, 1994, 318-328.

^{lvi} Nisbet notes that conservatives have always been alert to the dangers of populism in art and culture, Nisbet, *Conservatism*, 92.

^{lvii} David Wykes, *Evelyn Waugh*, 4. Waugh summarises his method in a letter to Robin Campbell where he says ‘Chaucer, Henry James and very humbly myself are practising the same art. Miss Stein is not. She is outside the world order in which words have a precise and ascertainable meaning and sentences a logical structure,’ *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, edited by Mark Amory, (London, Phoenix, 1995), 215.

^{lviii} Waugh was a strict defender of good grammar and clear expression, once commenting in scathing tone of the poet Stephen Spender, ‘to see him fumbling with our rich and delicate language is to experience all the horror of seeing a Sèvres vase in the hands of a chimpanzee’, cited in Simon Whitechapel, ‘Relative Values’, *Evelyn Waugh Newsletter and Studies*, http://www.lhup.edu/jwilson3/Newsletter_33.1.htm last viewed 1-11-2007.

^{lix} Even avid defenders of Orwell acknowledge that much of his writing is poor in style, leading Orwell himself to forbid the republication of his early novels after his death. Timothy Garton Ash, ‘Orwell in 1998’.

^{lx} Terry Eagleton, ‘Reach-me-down Romantic’.

^{lxi} Stephen Priest, *The British Empiricists*, (London: Penguin, 1990).

^{lxii} On Catholicism Waugh said ‘I reverence the Catholic Church because it is true, not because it is established or an institution.’ Interview with Waugh, ‘The Art of Fiction No. 30’, *Paris Match*, 1962.

^{lxiii} William Cook (editor), *Tragically I was an only Twin*, (London, Arrow Books, 2003), 116-121.

^{lxiv} Email from West to the author dated 22nd November 2005, where West says of Morris ‘Chris Morris’s main contribution is that he has changed the way many of us look at the media. His television programmes *The Day Today* (co-written with Armando Iannucci) and *Brass Eye* mercilessly exposed the way the media create stories, manipulate the viewers through devious editing and absurd graphics, and employ meaningless jargon. Most people will never read Marshall McLuhan or Jean Baudrillard, but Morris has done more to make a generation appreciate that what they see reported on television is not transparent and

objective. As one of the graphics on *The Day Today* said in a spirit of self-refutation: 'Fact times interpretation equals truth', as if to say 'truth' was a scientific entity.'

^{lxv} Malcolm Bradbury, *Evelyn Waugh*: 24.

^{lxvi} Michael Gorra, 'Through comedy towards Catholicism: A reading of Evelyn Waugh's early novels', *Contemporary Literature*, 29, 2, 1988, 202.

^{lxvii} Christopher Hitchens, 'The Permanent Adolescent', *The Atlantic Monthly*, May 2003.

^{lxviii} Orwell's preface to *Animal Farm*, <http://home.iprimus.com.au/korob/Orwell.html>, last viewed 11/05/2007.

^{lxix} Terry Eagleton, in 'Reach-me-down Romantic', Geoffrey Wheatcroft in 'Look right, look left, look right again', *New Statesman*, 2nd April, 1999, and biographer D. J. Taylor, *Orwell: The Life*, 410, all view 1984 as a satire though this is less clearly the case than with *Animal Farm*.

^{lxx} An interesting historical irony here is that Jonathon Cape rejected the manuscript after having initially accepted it, on the advice of an official from the Ministry of Information who subsequently turned out to be a Soviet spy, D. J Taylor, *Orwell: The Life*, 337.

^{lxxi} Waugh and Orwell began to correspond around the time of the publication of *Animal Farm*, which Waugh found to be an 'ingenious and delightful allegory,' see *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, 211. He was similarly praiseworthy of 1984. Waugh visited the dying Orwell in hospital, and John Rossi recalls Malcolm Muggeridge's observation, 'Malcolm Muggeridge thought the pairing droll--the bogus country gentleman gossiping with the equally bogus proletarian, "both straight out of back numbers of Punch."'

^{lxxii} See *George Orwell at Home (and among the Anarchists)*.

^{lxxiii} 'To see what is in front of one's nose needs a constant struggle. One thing that helps toward it is to keep a diary, or, at any rate, to keep some kind of record of one's opinions about important events. Otherwise, when some particularly absurd belief is exploded by events, one may simply forget that one ever held it...' George Orwell, 'In front of your nose', in his *Collected Essays: Journalism and Letters – In front of your nose, 1945-50, Vol. 4*, (London, Penguin, 1993.

^{lxxiv} Email from Ian Hislop to the author 22nd November, 2005.

^{lxxv} Christopher Booker provides an orthodox conservative commentary on this period in *The Neophiliacs* (London: William Collins and Sons. Ltd, 1970), 99, when where he notes that 'the upper classes in England had in fact been losing faith in their traditional values, and bourgeois self-confidence, for over half a century'.

^{lxxvi} See Harry Thompson, *Peter Cook: A Biography*, for a detailed account of Cook's early career with Beyond the Fringe, the Establishment and the Cambridge Footlights. Also, John Wells, 'The Mystic Spube' in *Something Like Fire: Peter Cook Remembered*.

^{lxxvii} See William Cook, *Tragically I was an only Twin*.

^{lxxviii} Nicholas Luard suggests that Cook was seduced by socialism in the 60s but came to reject it and adopt a 'small 'c'' conservatism for the rest of his life, *Peter Cook: Something Like Fire*, 42. See also Harry Thompson, *Peter Cook: A Biography*, 81, for an account of Cook's distrust of radical politics.

^{lxxix} Adrian Slade, 'Peter Cook: Thirty Seven Years a very rare friend', in *Something Like Fire: Peter Cook Remembered*, 18.

^{lxxx} Morris has mixed views on the possibility of effective of satire, saying that 'it is an essentially conservative form. As soon as you stand up in front of an audience, you're immediately relying on the consent of more than half the audience which neuters the whole exercise.' For satire to be successful it has to confront and potentially unsettle the audience as a whole. Interview with Simon Price, *Melody Maker*, 29th November 1999.

^{lxxxi} Morris makes clear that his view of satire is one that deliberately avoids a didactic stance, as with Michael Moore or Mark Thomas, saying that 'down that route lies Tariq Ali, and the most lame-arsed, unamusing botched attempts at satire... you have to be at best only half-aware of what you're trying... if you know what you're looking for, there's no attempt to do some real work', Robert Hanks Interview, *The Independent*, April 20th 2000.

^{lxxxii} *Daily Star*, page 6, September 8th, 2001.

^{lxxxiii} *Nathan Barley*, Channel Four,

<http://www.channel4.com/entertainment/tv/microsites/N/nathanbarley/>, last viewed 11/05/2007.