



light touch with technical jargon—unfamiliar terms are explained with examples—there is a feeling that amusement arcades chime with the industrial and cultural development of Britain throughout the twentieth century. Vertical integration, a byword for success in home consumer electronics from Apple to Zynga, was a touchstone of the Thomas family who pioneered inland arcades in the 1950s (98). In spite of the almost closed communities of traveling showmen, the amusement industry was global in outlook and responsive to geopolitical shifts. During the postwar years, where Germany's economic stimulus program mandated that fruit machines be removed from circulation after three years, British distributors could purchase discarded but fully serviceable "fruits" at pennies in the pound (54–55) for use in the burgeoning—and undersupplied—British market. While Britain is typically—although not always fairly—regarded as entering industrial decline in the mid-twentieth century, Meades identifies the country as having its own Silicon Valley clustered around amusement machine manufacture. Companies from Japan and the USA including Namco and Bally tested, promoted, and sold new ideas and machines in British arcades, where, if agreeable to the discerning and demanding British consumer, translated to success in overseas markets.

Ultimately, as recession and unfavorable currency exchange rates deflated the consumer bubble of the 1980s, Britain's amusement machine distributors and manufacturers were picked off at low prices in the 1990s. They were subsequently repurposed to manufacture videogames designed in Japan for sale across the European Economic Community, cutting export costs and red tape from Japan into the single market. The zenith of this—ironically largely after the dissipation of the videogame amusement arcade "golden age" of the 1980s—was the £45 million SegaWorld theme park that opened in London's Trocadero center in 1996 (225). SegaWorld was cataclysmic for Sega, substantially diminishing development of new hardware. Less well known is the tragic effect it had on Funland, one of the largest and best-stocked amusement arcades in the country. Situated below SegaWorld in the Trocadero, it saw income drop by 70% in the weeks following SegaWorld's opening (228).

Given the impact that amusement arcades have made on everyday life in Britain, it is perhaps surprising that Meades doesn't offer greater perspicacity into the links between arcades and the health and wealth of the nation. Equally, outside of occasional critique of the sometimes insular focus of game studies—a discipline anchored in media studies and particularly cinema and television—there is little conceptualization of the social and economic currents of the twentieth century, which cast it as an age of extremes. Yet, in the plurality of narratives and documentation that convey the centrality of amusement arcades to these same forces, Meades speaks for those who are elided. In doing so he builds a plinth for future research into the uniquely British amusement arcade.

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## Jasper Miles. *The Labour Party and Electoral Reform*

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In *The Labour Party and Electoral Reform*, Jasper Miles delivers a distinctive reading of the history of the Labour Party, focusing on attitudes within the party toward the electoral system,

and how these were shaped by the wider political context. Blending a historical account of the party's position on electoral reform during the twentieth century with a consideration of more contemporary developments, Miles draws upon political pamphlets, parliamentary interventions and speeches, and diaries and memoirs, as well as interviews with leading figures in the Labour Party. Miles argues that the recurring debates over electoral reform that have taken place within the Labour Party are of continued significance, linking them to "wider discussions" on the political Left "concerning the nature of the British constitution, political tradition and British state" (2). In doing so, Miles places his study in dialogue with influential works on Labour Party ideology by David Marquand, Henry Drucker, and Ralph Miliband.

Miles approaches the topic chronologically. Chapters 1 and 2 provide a discussion of the place of electoral reform in Labour politics from the party's foundation until the 1980s. Chapter 3 examines the revival of interest in questions of electoral reform visible within the Labour Party during the late 1980s and early 1990s, culminating in the publication of the Plant Report in early 1993. In Chapter 4, Miles explores Labour's stance on electoral reform during the 1990s and early 2000s, when, under the leadership of Tony Blair, a potential realignment on the political left was mooted, which would have seen Labour and the Liberal Democrats cooperate more closely and perhaps even merge. Here Miles dedicates significant attention to the Commission on the electoral system established after Labour's victory at the 1997 general election and chaired by Roy Jenkins, then a Liberal Democrat peer but also a former Labour Cabinet minister, and which endorsed electoral reform to little avail. In chapter 5 he considers the apparent willingness of Gordon Brown to countenance electoral reform during his short tenure as Prime Minister. Miles addresses more recent developments in chapter 6, concentrating on how the Labour Party responded to the ill-fated 2011 referendum on the introduction of the Alternative Vote (AV) system, held as a consequence of the coalition agreement reached by the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats after the 2010 general election.

Miles shows that the Labour Party was, from its foundation, shaped by the first-past-the-post electoral system in place at Westminster; as he notes, the electoral pact negotiated with the Liberals in 1903 was motivated by a "fear of splitting the anti-conservative vote" (15). Nevertheless, this awareness of the challenges created by the existing electoral system did not produce a consensus in favor of reform; while the introduction of proportional representation was official party policy at times during the early twentieth century, by the late 1920s there was, as Miles shows, little interest in electoral reform within the Labour Party. Instead, as Labour grew in parliamentary strength during the 1920s, becoming the main opposition to the Conservatives, electoral reform came to be viewed as a measure that would merely prop up a declining Liberal Party, to the detriment of Labour. Further, the collapse of the minority Labour administrations in 1924 and 1931 instilled a suspicion toward any electoral system that would make coalition governments more likely. Better, it seemed, to focus on securing a parliamentary majority that would allow a Labour government to implement a socialist program unencumbered by the need for compromise. This stance was vindicated by the majority secured by Labour at the 1945 general election, and the program of nationalization and social reform pursued thereafter.

As Miles makes clear, the experience of 1945 strengthened Labour's adherence to "the doctrine of the 'manifesto and the mandate'" (40), in which a Commons majority represented popular endorsement of a political platform. The primary purpose of general elections was to produce governments capable of implementing their policies; a more proportional voting system, while more representative, would only undermine the clarity and accountability that first-past-the-post elections delivered. The enduring influence of this worldview is the most striking aspect of Miles' analysis, with electoral reform being repeatedly dismissed by senior Labour figures as a defeatist creed and a distraction from the business of winning general elections; likewise, coalitions have continued to be viewed

with suspicion within the Labour Party. The result is that the conflict that Miles discerns between what he describes as the elitists within Labour Party, attached to Parliamentary sovereignty and the legislative authority that a Commons majority confers, and the pluralists, who see electoral reform as a route to a wider political realignment and the realization of a progressive electoral majority, has been a largely one-sided one in which the former have prevailed. If the party did consider electoral reform, as occurred during the 1990s, then a preferential voting system was the most that could be countenanced, and even then only if endorsed by the public in a referendum; proportional representation has never been seriously contemplated. The future may, however, bring changes given that the Party membership appears to be overwhelmingly supportive of reform (173).

While Miles's account offers much that is valuable, most clearly in his discussion of the Plant Report, there are areas where his analysis could have been expanded. Although Miles discusses the Labour Party's broader constitutional outlook in places, it would have been beneficial to have had a deeper consideration of the relationship between electoral and constitutional reform, particularly in relation to the devolved institutions, where different electoral systems are in place. Equally, the link between electoral reform and the referendum, and between issues of representation and sovereignty, might have been given more attention. Still, and notwithstanding certain presentational issues (the copyediting is, it must regrettably be said, inadequate), Miles has produced a worthwhile addition to the literature that will be of particular interest to scholars working on Labour politics in the 1990s and early 2000s.

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## **Amy Milne-Smith. *Out of His Mind: Masculinity and Mental Illness in Victorian Britain***

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In *Out of His Mind: Masculinity and Mental Illness in Victorian Britain*, Amy Milne-Smith recovers the figure of the madman within histories of nineteenth-century insanity. She argues that madness posed a challenge to dominant codes of masculinity well before World War I introduced the phenomenon of shellshock. Milne-Smith's study of male insanity in Victorian Britain highlights how a lunacy certification was felt as a powerfully emasculating experience, with both social and emotional consequences for men and their families.

Milne-Smith's book covers the period 1845–1914, a period bookended by the 1845 Lunacy Act and World War I. The 1845 Act established the Lunacy Commission, the reports of which, alongside asylum case notes, form the basis of the book's first chapter on care in the institution. By including male patients in criminal and military asylums, Milne-Smith corrects the notion that the asylum population was overwhelmingly women. She also emphasizes the diversity of treatment for mental illness in Victorian Britain, in line with recent