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Review of the 2007 Periodical Literature Related to the Period since 1945 and Relevant to the Study of British Economic and Social History

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This is my third and final year of reviewing the periodical literature on the economic and social history of the post-1945 years for the *Economic History Review*. This year, even more than previously, the amount of relevant material is daunting, as is the fact that much of it is in journals not normally read by contemporary historians (over a third of the articles discussed here are from journals outside the discipline, even broadly defined). Such is the volume of material, in fact, that I have again elected to publish this longer version of the edited text published in the *Economic History Review* (vol. 62 (2007), no. 1, 2008) because the space available to me in that journal (about a quarter of that used here) means that I cannot do justice to even half of the 166 articles I have found in 82 of the 195 journals I have checked. Even so, I must again apologise for any articles worthy of inclusion that I have missed amongst the vast quantity material I have trawled.

My review is divided into sections as follows

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The History of Economic Thought

In his HES presidential address, **Hands** argues that between 1945 and 1965 the similarities between mainstream economics and mainstream philosophy of science were ‘uncanny’. He postulates three alternative explanations for why both disciplines moved from plural theoretical approaches and research strategies in the 1950s to having a single, almost unanimously accepted, mainstream or standard view. He comes to no particular conclusions as to which explanation is more powerful, but hopes thereby to ‘start a conversation about a particular piece of intellectual history involving economics and philosophy of science’.

Hodgson proposes that a major new opportunity has emerged for a modern revival in Veblenian institutional and evolutionary economics and briefly outlines a Veblenian research agenda for the early twenty-first century: the development of an evolutionary concept of human agency; a theory of socio-economic evolution that encompasses individuals and institutions; an ontology of institutions and an improved understanding of the relationship of institutions, culture and technology to economic growth; and ‘a new formulation of micro-macro relationships involving interactions between heterogeneous agents’.

Other giants of economic theory are also the subject of enquiry. In a special issue of the *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Solow growth model, **de La Grandville** argues that although the model is still at the heart of modern growth theory its potential has yet to be fully tapped. **Murphy** turns his attention to Samuelson and his association of the equilibrium real rate of interest with the marginal product of capital. This became a staple of modern mainstream economics. But during the celebrated capital controversy of the 1950s and 1960s, many prominent critics (not least Robinson, Sraffa and Passinetti) questioned the validity of the marginal productivity explanation of interest payments. Murphy acknowledges the partial merits of both sides but argues that typical mainstream neoclassicals left themselves open to their Cambridge critics not because of any fundamental flaw with marginalist theory, but rather because their fascination with mathematical models led many of them to forget the insights of earlier thinkers.

George Akerlof’s famous dissection of ‘The market for lemons’ broke new ground in its examination of information asymmetries between buyers and sellers. Using data from used car guides in Britain and the USA, **Offer** evaluates the ability of the ‘lemons’ model to explain the marked difference in the 1950s and 1960s between the price of a new car and one that had just left the showroom. Using historical data he finds that any information asymmetry was largely covered by dealer warranties. Offer concludes that this confirms the importance of Akerlof’s extension of his basic theory to include warranties – the effect of which is to shift the risk of a car being a ‘lemon’ to the manufacturer or the dealer.

From time to time real-world events have called into question the social efficacy of the invisible hand. The unhappy consequences of the changes affecting postwar Western societies, suggests **Fontaine**, reminded economists that selfishness and self-reliance alone do not suffice to achieve social cohesion. With unselfishness now part and parcel of economics, Fontaine suggests we are in a position to consider how it came to be so. Drawing on archival material and oral history, he asks who were the main instigators of renewed interest in unselfish behaviour, why, what were they trying to achieve, and how did they achieve it?

Schor explores the growth of the literature on consumption over the past twenty–five years. She argues that it gained analytic power by positioning itself against consumer critics of the twentieth century such as Veblen, Adorno and Horkheimer, Galbraith, and Baudrillard. In Schor’s view these accounts were totalizing, theorized consumers as too passive, and simplified their motives, and she suggests that the literature moved towards micro–level, interpretive, often depoliticized and uncritical studies. She argues that developments that the emergence of a global production system, ecological degradation, and new findings on well–being warrant a reengagement with the critical tradition and with macro–level critiques.

Economics and Economic History

An historical appraisal of recent developments in the theory of very long run growth is offered by **Broadberry**. He focuses on linkages between wages, population and human capital; interactions between institutions, markets and technology; and how economic growth is sustained once it has started. He identifies a significant tension between the theoretical and historical literatures, particularly over the unit of analysis (the world or particular countries) and the role of historical contingency.

From the early–1950s to the early–1970s a large initial American productivity lead was quickly reduced by rapid European catch–up growth. **Crafts** explores this experience and evaluates claims that since the 1970s the latter has been undermined by weak competition and excessive regulation and taxation. He finds that the argument has some validity in the context of the ICT revolution. In the process, Crafts identifies a UK ‘productivity paradox’. With lower levels of employment protection than elsewhere in Europe, the UK was well–placed to benefit from ICT but nonetheless experienced a productivity gap – the causes of which Crafts identifies as historically–low investment combined with high employment of low–productivity workers.

Elsewhere, **Acemoglu and Johnson** exploit data on major international health improvements from the 1940s to estimate the effect of life expectancy on economic performance. They find no evidence that the large increase in life expectancy raised income per capita. Likewise, in his broad overview of eight decades of 20th century US economic growth, **Field** finds no evidence of a systematic positive relationship between rates of equipment investment and TFP growth.

Coutts and Norman’s study investigates the extent to which the increased integration of UK industry into global competition modified the pricing behaviour of UK–produced goods in domestic markets since 1970. Their results detail considerable heterogeneity in price responses to global competition between sectors and within manufacturing itself. They argue that prediction, trade policy and model specification needs to be sensitive to this finding.

In a fascinating analysis, **Epstein et al** investigate the evidence for convergence in per capita incomes across 115 economies during the period 1950–1998 and examine the impact that international trade had on this process. Their study suggests that Golden Age trade patterns were conducive to the formation of middle and high income clusters of economies, but similar trade patterns (dominated by the rich economies) do not seem to explain their perpetuation thereafter. **Nielson** analyses UK money demand 1873–2001, finding a single equilibrium relationship relating velocity to opportunity costs and identifying a significant link between excess money and inflation. **Barwell and Schweitzer** analyse the extent of rigidities in wage setting in Great Britain during

the 1980s and 1990s and suggest that real rigidities in wage setting were more prevalent than nominal rigidities, although the incidence of these real wage rigidities fell gradually over time. Their finding that if firms could not cut real wages in response to negative demand shocks they resorted to laying off workers tends to support the micro-foundations of the Phillips curve.

Originally published in 2006, **Blanchard**'s article in a special virtual issue of *Economic Policy* considers the major challenge posed by persistently high level of European unemployment since the 1970s, the ways in which economists tried to make sense of it over the years, and the policy responses implemented to address it. This compelling critique of the European labour market consensus recognises that workers need security and insurance against labour market risks but argues that labour market reforms were needed, though Blanchard thinks they could have been implemented against the background of a more relaxed monetary policy.

The discount function is the most basic building block of finance and in the case of the USA usually inferred from the Treasury yield curve. It is therefore surprising that researchers and practitioners do not have available to them a long-run history of high-frequency yield curve estimates. **Gürkaynak et al** fill that void by making public the Treasury yield curve estimates of the Federal Reserve Board at a daily frequency from 1961 to the present. The data, which will be updated, are posted on the website <http://www.federalreserve.gov/pubs/feds/2006>.

A fascinating and very detailed analysis by **Oliver and Hamilton** of internal government documents on the defence of sterling in the five years after the 1967 devaluation outlines contingency plans for blocking the sterling balances, discussions with the United States on the reform of the international monetary system, and the preparations made for floating the pound after the collapse of the Bretton Woods settlement in 1972.

Eichengreen and Hatasa consider the lessons of Japan's ending of its currency peg in 1971 at a time of rapid export-oriented growth. They find that the negative impacts on the economy were neutralized by strong global demand and domestic fiscal support. Their analysis suggests that a rapidly-growing, export-oriented economy can safely exit a peg for a managed float despite the presence of capital controls and the absence of sophisticated foreign currency forward markets. This underscores the importance of prevailing favourable global conditions and of using fiscal policy to support domestic demand to offset the impact of a rise in the real exchange rate on exports and investment.

Moscati reconstructs the experimental research in neoclassical demand analysis in the period 1930–70. The studies performed in this early phase of experimental economics basically involved the derivation of indifference curves and the evaluation of the transitivity hypothesis. Thereafter, experimental tests dealt with different issues, such as the negativity of the substitution effect, the existence of Giffen goods, or the validity of the revealed preference axioms. Experimentation on animal choice behavior was also introduced, but no further experiment on indifference curves or transitivity took place. After 1970, then, a new phase in the history of experimental research on riskless choices began. This phase could be the subject matter of a future study he suggests.

Historical Institutionalism

For some years now the role of institutions in economic change has been to the fore

not just in economics and economic history but in cognate fields in the social sciences. **Nelson**, however, is sceptical that a hunt for a single small set of institutions that are necessary or sufficient to support economic productivity and growth will yield results. Nonetheless, Nelson argues that while it will be hard the challenge is still better to understand how institutions promote growth.

In an applied analysis of why financial systems differ, **Monnet and Quintin** present a dynamic, general equilibrium model in which initial differences in the financial structure of two economies can persist even after fundamental characteristics have converged. In simple terms, they suggest that this occurs because channeling funds through the financial market is cheaper in economies that have borne the cost of building large financial markets in the past. To support their proposition they consider the economic histories of Germany and the United States and conclude that, though the legal frameworks of the two nations no longer differ much, the longer US history of financial market lending explains why financial markets remain a more cost-effective source of funds for U.S. firms than for German firms.

David, one of the progenitors of path dependence theory, discusses the diverse set of structural, micro-level conditions that can give rise to path dependence, and draws a further distinction between the property of path dependence and the existence of so-called “QWERTY-effects” characterized by market failure and “lock-in” to Pareto-inefficient equilibria. David ends by considering the implications of the existence of non-ergodic dynamics for the methods of economic policy analysis, and the nature of the guidance that can be obtained in regard to public policy affecting endogenous technological change and institutional evolution.

Path dependence theory has had a considerable impact elsewhere in the social sciences with historical institutionalists seeing it as an important contributor to institutional continuities. However, the theory’s emphasis on continuity has begun to give rise to concerns, particularly for those analysing welfare states that have been swept by a wave of reforms in recent years. **Bonoli** notes that Western welfare states were built during the postwar years with one key objective: to protect family (male) breadwinners against the consequences of income loss. Structures of social risk, however, have changed dramatically since then. Welfare states have adapted, but much more extensively in the Nordic countries than in continental and southern Europe. Bonoli seeks to account for this divergence in social policy trajectories. Likewise, **Boas** seeks to reconcile path dependence with change. He presents an alternative model of path dependence inspired by the example of the internet, a technology that has changed fundamentally since its invention. Boas argues that the path dependence theory can accommodate change, with complex political institutions subject to increasing returns able to evolve gradually over time through a changing mix of lower-level component parts. **Ross**, however, outlines a series of problems with path dependence theory. She argues powerfully that the apparent shortcomings of path dependence theory regarding change cannot simply be dealt with by layering a more dynamic framework on top of it. **Greener**, not entirely successfully, defends his amalgamation of path dependence theory with ‘morphogenetic social theory’, but in doing so he also argues persuasively that those seeking to question the utility of path dependence theory should not blind themselves to the positive feedback effects that are central to it.

For **Howell**, institutionalist approaches to the study of politics have long exhibited a tendency to emphasize continuity at the expense of change. He seeks to elaborate a

theoretical framework that explicitly integrates a theory of change with bringing the state back in. He uses it to examine the evolution of postwar British industrial relations institutions, arguing that they underwent two moments of rupture in the mid-1960s and 1980s and that in both cases the British state played a central role in dismantling existing institutions and constructing and embedding replacements.

Elsewhere in the field of institutionalism, **Kisby** sets out to develop Marsh and Smith's 'dialectical' approach to policy network analysis – adding in ideational structure and programmatic beliefs as an independent variable, defining policy network as an intermediate variable, and treating outcomes as the dependent variable. The analysis of policy networks is, of course, deeply bound up with the concept of 'governance' in political science. Ten years on, **Rhodes** argues that the 'differentiated polity' at the heart of the governance concept revealed important empirical gaps in the Westminster model (one implicitly embraced by many if not most contemporary historians). The decentred approach at its heart emphasizes the importance of bottom-up forces, a lesson that continues to be relevant in political science, as Rhodes asserts, but one of equal value to contemporary historians.

Political Economy

Turning now to political economy, **Goodfriend** surveys developments in monetary policy since the disarray of the 1970s. He considers how the world came to achieve an apparent working consensus on the core principles of monetary policy by the late 1990s, one that emphasized the priority for price stability; the targeting of core rather than headline inflation; the importance of credibility for low inflation; and preemptive interest rate policy supported by transparent objectives and procedures.

In the context of the move to grant operational independence to the Bank of England in 1997, **Burnham** analyses the extent to which a 'depoliticization' strategy was required to prevent ministers adjusting monetary policy for short-term political gain. But in assessing postwar monetary policy-making he argues that a distinction needs to be drawn between 'Treasury politicization', understood as the Treasury gaining ascendancy over the Bank (which he argues it did only after the Competition and Credit Control fiasco of the early-1970s), and 'Ministerial politicization', understood in terms of pressure being brought to bear on the Chancellor to alter monetary policy for short-term political gain (something he finds no evidence for).

Jönsson examines fiscal policy in 19 OECD countries between 1960 and 2000, finding a significant asymmetry in the effects of different fiscal policy tools during expansions and contractions, with transfers playing a central role in causing those asymmetries. His results imply that an expansionary fiscal contraction is more likely if the contraction is brought about by cuts in transfers, a finding which supports results from previous empirical studies.

Political History

A special issue of *Contemporary British History* is devoted to the 1964 general election. **Denver** argues, notwithstanding differences in aggregate turnout, in the main parties' share of the vote and a sharp decline in party identification, that the kinds of constituency that had relatively low turnouts in 2001 also had low turnouts in 1964. Likewise, social factors associated with variations in party support in 1964 were associated in much the same way in 2001. **Barberis** examines the Liberal Party's false dawn in an election that appeared to hold great promise for a decisive increase in

the party's representation at Westminster. **Fielding** questions the extent to which Labour's 1964 election campaign marked a break with the past, arguing that, despite impressions to the contrary, the party under Harold Wilson in most respects merely ventured a bit further down a Gaitskellite road. Whilst Britain's relative decline helped Labour build a case that it was 'time for a change', little attention was paid in this election to questions about Britain's international role and **John W. Young** finds this lack of debate noteworthy. **Wrigley** argues that the 1964 *Rookes v. Barnard* judgement was a major feature of trade unions' efforts to mobilize their members to vote Labour. **Tomlinson** examines Harold Wilson's claim that Labour's economic policies were central to its 1964 victory. Conservative and Labour policies converged on economic modernization, with economic growth a 'valence' issue. In opinion polls, however, voters appeared more concerned about inflation. The implication is that the focus on economic modernization as the route to higher growth owed more to declinism amongst political elites than it did to popular concerns.

Thorpe considers the panicked response of the British government to the oil embargo imposed following the 1967 Six-day War. He highlights ministers' willingness to cast aside established policies to secure oil and the increasing weakness of the British government machine in the face of the growing power of multinational companies, the agenda of OECD partners and the rising strength of oil-producing states. Then, moving forward into the 1970s, **Meredith** explores factionalism on the right of the Parliamentary Labour Party, analysing two 'organized' Right factions – the Jenkinsites and the Manifesto Group. Economic crises and the rise of the post-industrial economic sectors and classes, he argues, combined not just to promote factionalism on the Right, but also to reinvigorate Labour's Left and ultimately to produce a new model of social democracy. **Thomas** looks at the long-term impact of the 1978–79 'winter of discontent'. He highlights the late-seventies as a turning point in the use of popular history for political purposes – with images of the free-enterprise 'hungry thirties' which had underpinned progressive politics in the postwar years giving way to a right-wing myth of chaos and decline flowing from the putative failures of social democracy.

Staying with the Thatcherite revolution, **Sillars** examines the history of the 'Right to Buy' initiative and the mass sell-off of local government-owned council houses. Elsewhere, **Tomlinson**, turns his attention to Thatcherite macroeconomic policy. Drawing on the late Jim Bulpitt's influential analysis of Thatcherism as a product not of doctrine but of Conservative statecraft, Tomlinson emphasizes the importance of economic 'decline' as a Thatcherite electoral trope in 1979 and 1983 but is highly critical of poorly thought out and incoherent economic policies pursued with little understanding of the likely consequences. Moving on, **Heppell** evaluates John Major's travails as Thatcher's successor. A range of themes are explored such as the circumstances through which Major acquired the leadership; the betrayal thesis of the Thatcherites; the absence of a cohesive and enduring group of 'Majorities'; and the lack of credible unifying alternatives to Major.

The tenth anniversary of the election of 'New' Labour generates much attention. **Leggett** reviews the concept of a 'progressive consensus' as a successor to New Labour's somewhat discredited notion of a 'third way'. **Hennessy** again highlights the decline of cabinet government since 1997, the centralization of power in No. 10, and the need for a Civil Service Act. Like much of Hennessy's recent writings one is struck by the visceral nature of his disgust over the Iraq War.

Krieger finds it disconcerting that fifteen years since it gained ascendancy we are still debating the nature of the New Labour 'project'. He takes issue with those, most notably Driver and Martell, who claim not just that New Labour is a hybrid party but that hybridity is intrinsic to social democracy. He argues that Labour's evolution from a 'mass' party to a 'catch-all' party created an ideological vacuum and explains why New Labour cycled through a host of 'big ideas' and theoretical frameworks with none of them staying the course or decisively defining 'the project'.

Kitson and Wilkinson emphasize New Labour's Thatcherite inheritance in economic policy, arguing that it largely embraced the tenets of neo-liberalism and rejected most aspects of Keynesianism, not least the use of active demand management policies. However, an interesting article by **Clift and Tomlinson** challenges the assumed exhaustion of the Keynesian economic policy paradigm. New Labour's doctrinal statements are analysed and the authors argue that, although New Labour explicitly renounced the 'fine tuning' often (somewhat problematically) associated with post-war Keynesian political economy, its redesign of British macroeconomic policy framework and institutions created a capacity for 'coarse tuning'. **Hay**, takes issue with this, arguing that whilst they do largely succeed in showing that New Labour has not 'decisively repudiated' Keynesianism, they do not show that it has actively embraced it. **Clift and Tomlinson's** defence of 'qualified Keynesianism' goes on to make an important point when it asserts that 'Old' Labour's Keynesianism, particularly in the 1960s, is often exaggerated.

This relationship between 'New' and 'Old' Labour continues to excite interest. One particular aspect of the debate concerns 'New' Labour's claim to be part of a revisionist tradition within the party, and particularly its appeal to Anthony Crosland's *Future of Socialism*. In a response to Meredith's (2006) assertion of an underlying continuity from Croslandite to New Labour conceptions of equality, **Hickson** continues to identify both a discontinuity in terms of the means used to achieve equality and a shift from equality of outcome to equality of opportunity. **Wickham-Jones** sees the debate about the Croslandite inheritance as flowing in large part from *The Future of Socialism's* lack of substance and its potential malleability. New Labour's appeal to Crosland's imprimatur, he argues, allowed it to claim that its project was social democratic; but the fact that the book can be differently interpreted makes it highly unlikely that it can be used to resolve the identity crisis at the heart of New Labour.

Kerr anticipates that academics will likely try to place David Cameron's transformation of the Conservatives in the context of an ongoing party consensus between Labour and the Conservatives. He argues however, that the 'consensus' concept will hamper rather than aid understanding. More generally, **Berlinski et al** analyse the determinants of ministerial hazard rates in Britain from 1945 to 1997. Their findings are that the more educated a minister the greater their capacity to survive; female ministers have lower hazard rates; older ministers have higher hazard rates; experienced ministers are more at hazard than newly appointed ministers; but the more senior a minister is the better their capacity to survive. **Cohen and Morgan** provide the latest contribution to the debate on the ways in which the International Lenin School in Moscow did or did not act as a means by which the Comintern could produce in Britain a new Communist Party cadre free of the taint of reformism. **Langer** explores the media's personalization of politics since 1945 in her analysis of reporting by *The Times*. She confirms a clear trend towards personalization, but not so great as to justify grand claims about the transformation of contemporary politics. One

cannot help but feel, however, that the easily online availability of *The Times* may be distorting the analysis, and that this is true not just in this article but in contemporary British history more generally.

Finally, an interesting review article by **Fielding** considers the emergence of a ‘new political history’ over the last decade or so. In many ways, he suggests, this can reconcile the long-established interest of ‘traditional’ political historians in leadership and institutions with a more innovative interest in the culture of representative politics and how this related to the people at large. He reminds us that there is little that is novel in this but, nonetheless, is adamant that political history needs to address issues that transcend conventional notions of party politics if it is not to be increasingly seen as a worthy but intellectually moribund part of the discipline.

Foreign and Commonwealth Policy

We now turn our view outwards, beginning with the Commonwealth. Firstly, **Austin and Uche** examine the collusion between the only two major banks to operate in British West Africa for most of the colonial period after 1916, Barclays and the Bank of British West Africa. They consider the reactions of African and European customers and of the colonial governments, analyze the motives and political circumstances that sustained the collusion for so long, and explore the implications of the cartel for the colonial economies. Also in West Africa, **Decker** notes British businesses created a publicity strategy in the 1950s that couched their presence in terms of a commitment and a positive contribution to the new states’ development, modernity, and industrialization. With the passage of time, however, British companies felt bound to try to “Africanize” their corporate image.

Turning to foreign policy, **Deighton** examines Bevin’s proposal for an imperial grouping led by Britain and France with economic and defence components and social-democratic values; the idea being to secure raw materials, bolster European economies and ultimately create a global, strategic space between the superpowers. She argues that Bevin’s vision failed not just because it was trumped by the demands of cold war bipolarity but because it was poorly conceived, badly managed, and failed to take into account postwar antagonisms between Britain and France. Two aspects of the latter, divergent views on relations with the United States and on the development of European integration, are explored by **Ellison**. The British proved unable to overcome de Gaulle’s resistance to their membership of the EEC, but Ellison argues that Britain’s fortunes in Europe were nevertheless improved by the Wilson government’s response to de Gaulle’s actions in the Atlantic Alliance.

Britain, of course, was only too aware in these years that it was continuing to lose ground strategically to the USA, and nowhere was this clearer than in the Middle East. **Simon C. Smith** examines Britain’s experience in the Gulf from 1956 until its withdrawal in the early 1970s. While acknowledging the benefits of US support, Britain continued resolutely to defend its traditional role as the leading external power in the region. For its part, argues Smith, the US strongly encouraged Britain to maintain its presence as a means of preserving regional stability, a tendency that became more pronounced as the Vietnam conflict developed and which illustrated the limits of US influence. Also in the Gulf, **Marsh** uses Iran’s nationalization of its oil industry in the early-1950s to argue that British and American governments found the oil majors to be indispensable in addressing the crisis. They also found, however, that the companies were able to impose de facto limits on Anglo-American ‘crude

diplomacy', and that in doing so they sometimes changed the balance of Anglo-American exchanges.

Elsewhere, **Baxter and Twigge** exonerate Whitehall from charges that it bowed to ministerial pressure to cover up the Suez fiasco and **Simon C. Smith** explores the attempted incorporation of Malta into the United Kingdom in the 1950s. Britain, he argues, saw this as a way of preserving its strategic interests in the island. But the idea was also supported by Mintoff, who saw the extension of the British welfare state to Malta as a means by which Maltese living standards might be raised. Nonetheless, as concerns about the cost of the scheme rose in Whitehall so British enthusiasm for integration waned.

Strategic Policy and the Cold War

Moving on more explicitly to strategic issues, there is much on the Cold War. Firstly, **Cox** complains about the tendency in the historiography to view the end of the Cold War through US eyes and argues that we need to recognize the part that Europe played in terms of a) the economic and political success of the EEC; b) the attraction for Gorbachev of the 'social model' as a reform template, and c) the way in which Thatcher became Gorbachev's 'door into European politics'.

Notwithstanding Cox's qualms, the USA was incontestably the most important actor in the Western Alliance. In his article in the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, **Ken Young** examines a hitherto unexplored aspect of the 'special relationship', the development of arrangements to coordinate U.S. and British forces in a joint nuclear strike against the Soviet Union. Although this raised difficult issues for the UK Air Staff (not least because it was committed to the maintenance of an independent nuclear deterrent) the advantages of joint strike planning were such that by 1962 Bomber Command's planning had become fully integrated with that of Strategic Air Command. **Danchev**, however, is sceptical about the 'special relationship'. Considering its use and abuse during the long Cold War, as cultural referent, rhetorical construct, and political imperative, he warns of the hubris inherent in the presumption of specialness.

Since the end of the Cold War we have seen many new documents become available, allowing detailed archival examination of early nuclear weapons policy for the first time. **Maguire** highlights intense differences among the small group of ministers, military professionals, scientists and civil servants selected to guide Britain's nuclear weapons programme. In the *Journal of Contemporary History*, **Ken Young** considers the importance of British forward bases for US atomic capability during the Berlin crisis of 1948. This signalled to the Soviet Union America's resolution to stand fast in defence of Western Europe, but Young is not convinced that the USA then had the capability to deliver an atomic attack on the USSR from British bases, and he sees the deployment as a way to secure for later use the forward airbases required by US war plans. The Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) at Fylingdales in Yorkshire was designed to provide early warning of a Soviet attack using nuclear ballistic missiles. **Spinardi** notes that doubts about whether it would work reliably without causing false alarms and about the utility of short warning times faded in the light of the organizational utility of Fylingdales to the RAF. The credibility of the V-bombers depended on their ability to scramble before being attacked on the ground, and Fylingdales was fundamental to the RAF's justification of a deterrent role for their bombers as an alternative to Polaris.

Of course, the Cold War was not always cold. **Deery** considers one of its hot spots,

Malaya. The Attlee government justified action in Malaya between 1948 and 1960 as necessary to counter the USSR's use of local communists to support its expansionist designs. In Deery's view, subsequent commentators and historians have tended too easily to accept this judgment. In reality, he argues, the rebellion was inadequately planned and poorly executed and cannot be understood without recognizing the influence of indigenous pressures and internal developments, which were more crucial than the external Cold War dimension.

Europe

We turn now to another aspect of British foreign policy, its developing relationship with the new Europe. Britain's entry into the EEC in 1973 coincided with an American initiative aimed at redefining relations between the USA and Western Europe. **Hamilton** argues that this confronted British diplomats with a serious dilemma for they wished both to maintain close collaboration with Washington and to expand on their recently achieved reconciliation with France, a country whose Gaullist elite rejected any further institutionalization of transatlantic relations.

Callaghan examines the roots of European unity, and Britain's relationship to it, primarily in terms of foreign policy and the failed alternative political economy of the empire / Commonwealth. He argues that a commitment to a continuing world role for Britain, its strong Atlanticist orientation, and attempts to maintain a special relationship with the USA underpinned a bipartisan approach in the postwar years. The article shows how the British left attempted to comprehend European unity in terms of the prospects for socialism and left-wing reform. The relationship between the British Left and Europe is also explored by **Mullen**, who argues that the British Left underwent three significant shifts in its policy towards Europe: the first (from indifference to support) during the period 1945 to 1970; the second (from support to opposition) in the period between 1971 and 1987; and the third (from opposition to support) thereafter. Elsewhere, **Strange** explores the political economy of British trade union policy towards the EEC in the 1960s and 1970s.

Finally, **Daddow**, considers why history plays such a key role in British discussions about European affairs; arguing that it does so because of the discipline's intimate connection with the making of national identities and because Europe has long been historicized as the 'other' against which the British identify themselves.

Social History

This was a busy year for writing on social history. We begin with sex and sexualities, move onto gender studies, and then broaden the discussion out into social history more generally. Firstly, **Lomas** explores the relationship between fashion, gay masculinity and shopping and highlights the impossibility of separating gay sensibilities in this field from their wider, social and historical context. **Mort** turns his attention to striptease in mid-twentieth-century London. From the static nudes of the Windmill Theatre to 'the fabulous Raymond girls', at the Raymond Revuebar, he traces the rise of the 'permissive society' through the lens of live sexual entertainment in the capital. In doing so, Mort successfully shifts the analysis towards both a more closely textured study and a longer range history of the changing relationship between sexuality and commercial culture in London during the period from the 1930s to the 1960s.

The late 1940s and 1950s has been presented as the apogee of domesticity in modern Britain, a time when marriage and the home were vigorously promoted to men through the ideals of the ‘companionate marriage’ and the ‘family man’. **Francis**, however, argues for the recognition of a significant post-war male restlessness and a yearning for the all-male camaraderie of service life. What he terms a male ‘flight from commitment’ took place. But it did so not on the social or institutional level, as in Tosh’s late Victorian ‘flight from domesticity’, but within an imagined male world, which Francis sees as epitomized by fantasized adventure narratives in cinema, fiction and war memoir.

Baker documents the early movement against sexual harassment in the USA during the 1970s. She notes that the first organized resistance to sexual harassment grew out of the women’s movement, emerging at the intersection of activism against employment discrimination and feminist opposition to violence against women.

Jackson and Tinkler consider whether fears and claims about the behaviour of some contemporary young women in Britain are exclusive to the present. They highlight continuities in the representation of ‘troublesome’ youthful femininities in their comparison of contemporary representations of ‘ladettes’ in national and local newspapers with the equivalent treatment of the ‘modern girl’ between 1918 and 1928.

Legislation on employment equality was at the heart of the political drive towards sexual equality. **Dickens** tracks a positive yet hesitant, uneven and incomplete trajectory from anti-discrimination towards equality, and from piecemeal and patchwork coverage towards inclusiveness and integration. For all its limitations argues Dickens, anti-discrimination legislation had a positive impact, but further progress will not be made without further reform. A paper by **Gregg et al** analyses the increase in mothers’ employment in Britain between 1974 and 2000, using the General Household Survey. The results suggest that maternity rights had a profound effect on employment, but this effect varied according to the wage opportunities of mothers. This turn towards working amongst married mothers was most marked among better educated and higher paid mothers.

Changes in the roles of women within society and the family are explored in **Lees–Mafei**’s analysis of the ‘servant problem’. Managing a home unassisted was an enduring topic for British and North American domestic advice writers between 1920 and 1970. Before the Second World War domestic advisors assumed that their readers employed staff but by the 1970s no such assumption could be made. However, Lees–Mafei notes that, rather than reapportioning labour to other family members, the solutions offered by domestic advisors revolved around reshaping domestic space and its uses in order to facilitate the simultaneous performance of multiple tasks by women. **Treleaven**, in his discussion of the European Union’s attempt to bring order to clothes sizes, cites interesting data on the changing shape of European women since the 1920s.

Moving onto relationships between women and men, how and where couples met in twentieth century Britain is the subject of investigation by **Lampard**. The continuities are as striking as the changes, with social networks maintaining a consistent level of importance, but with trends towards meeting at places of education and work, and away from meeting in public places for drinking, eating or socializing. **Langhamer** explores the power dynamics of such romantic encounters. She argues that through their everyday practice young women exercised real, if bounded, agency here. But

despite shifts in women's employment opportunities and earnings, and despite the rhetoric of companionate marriage, the economy of serious courtship continued to reflect a male breadwinner model, even if that model was under threat, and dominant discourses of romantic love ultimately worked to contain men and women within heterosexual monogamous marriage.

Turning now from profane to sacred, until around 1989 it seemed that the slide from faith in Britain was and both relentless and relatively painless. **Brown** argues against this, seeing secularization as sudden, culturally shocking, and intimately connected to the changing nature of the organized and unorganized religion that survived. **Harris and Spence**, however, explore aspects of religious revivalism in the 1950s and conclude that, rather than seeing it as a last-gasp revival of old-fashioned Christianity before a plunge into secularism, it might best be seen as part of a shift towards new configurations of religiosity.

In education, **Sanderson** notes that the disciplines of economic history and the history of education have drawn closer since the 1960s, notably in exploring the connection between education and social mobility. Economic historians have sought to relate education to changes in the quality of labour, productivity and economic growth and rates of return on investment in education. Sanderson sets out a future research agenda that includes an assessment of the 1960s 'new' universities; more regional work on literacy; and attention to intersection between formal education and the labour market. The attempt to comprehensivize British state education is the subject of study by **Limond**, who examines the debate via the personal experience of Miss Joyce Lang, a teacher at a London comprehensive who criticized claims that comprehensivization would 'level-up' children. Miss Lang and her troubles are long forgotten, but for Limond the question whether or not comprehensive schools have served well those 'ordinary' pupils in whose interests they were conceived remains open.

With the 40th anniversary of Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech' in prospect, **Brooke** uses Powell's recently opened personal papers to shed new light on the nature of Powell's thought on immigration, and in particular, what he sought to achieve with his 1968 speech. Brooke repudiates suggestions that Powell's primary concern was a post-imperialist desire to sever links with the New Commonwealth, arguing that his objections to immigration were established long before he abandoned his fierce love of empire in 1954. Powell's example, argues Brooke, suggests that British attitudes to mass immigration may owe more to the experience of empire than to post-war changes in national identity.

Craig reviews 60 years of black and Asian immigration in the Britain, arguing that Britain developed an increasingly repressive and restrictive stance towards immigration and that politicians, supported by a strident media, portrayed minorities and migrants as undermining British culture and values and 'sponging' on the welfare state. For Craig, postwar race relations policies and attempts to promote community relations of successive governments did not fundamentally address the racism inherent in their immigration policies and practice. The consequence, he argues, was profound inequality and the entrenching of racism in government policy and practice.

Cultural History

For the past twenty-five years, the new cultural history that arose out of the social history revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s has contained within it two broad impulses or interpretive directions, argues **Wickberg**. The dominant one, especially in modern

European and American history, has been influenced by various forms of cultural studies and the foregrounding of categories of race, class, and gender in social history itself. The movement from social history to cultural history has been a movement from the primacy of social experience to the primacy of discursive representation. But, suggests Wickberg, if this focus on the representation of fundamental cultural categories has been the dominant interpretive direction of the new cultural history, alongside it has existed another direction, a 'history of sensibilities' that owes as much to the 'old' cultural history as to the 'new'.

The cultural history of consumerism has been a lively research topic for some years now. **Hilton** notes that consumption became a political project intimately bound up with the state. By the 1950s, governments across the world worked to promote a vision of consumer society based around access and participation – affluence for all – rather than choice and luxury for the few. Hilton notes the links between this vision and the geopolitics of the cold war, but his article points to processes of global convergence in consumer politics that saw the development of consumer political thinking in the Soviet bloc and the development of supranational protection regimes at the European level. Elsewhere, **Hilton** explores the nature of activism in a consumer society by offering a case-study of organizations in both the developed and developing world that engaged with the products and culture of affluence: that is, the comparative-testing consumer movement, which refused to develop an ideological stance on consumption and instead sought to assess the pros and cons of each issue, product or service facing the consumer.

Schwarzkopf studies the reception given to consumer motivation research in the UK between the early-1950s and the 1970s. The Austro-American market and consumer researcher Ernest Dichter advised American corporations on how to use psychoanalysis in order to research the 'hidden' motivations of their consumers. When Dichter arrived in London, British market researchers proved resistant to his ideas. Schwarzkopf argues that Dichter's experience shows that the transfer of marketing practices across cultures can meet considerable resistance not only from civil society and pressure groups but also from local professional elites.

Much was published this year that was related to the study of postwar broadcasting. **Chignell** notes that the IRN and LBC archives are the largest commercial radio archives in Britain, encompassing 7,000 reel-to-reel recordings that will shortly be made available on-line. **Ginsburgh and Noury** analyze the voting behaviour and ratings of judges in every year of the Eurovision Song Contest since 1956. Their somewhat surprising conclusion is that votes were driven by the quality of the participants as well as by linguistic and cultural proximities between singers and voting countries. Elsewhere, an interesting piece by **Kaye** looks at the British Overseas Television Service. She argues that government film production, starved of funds after the demise of the Crown Film Unit in 1952, was revitalized after the Suez crisis. Nonetheless, she suggests that if Suez was the trigger it was global expansion of television, and the fear that the United States might dominate it, that pushed the government into using the new medium to project Britain to an international audience. Lastly, **Wayne** responds to last year's revisionist account by Chapman of the censorship of Peter Watkins's 1965 drama-documentary 'The War Game'. Whilst Chapman argued that the prevention of the film being broadcast on television was not the result of 'a political conspiracy', Wayne argues that the state was intimately involved in the BBC's decision.

The history of music in the workplace is a neglected area of study. **Robertson** explores the pioneering use of music by Rowntree and Cadbury factories from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century, placing it in the context of a widespread adoption of tannoyed music in factories. She argues that music was played to ease the monotony of factory work whilst simultaneously aiming to improve productivity levels, though women workers experienced music in ways not always in tune with management objectives.

A piece by **Bell-Williams** explores the interrelationship between gender and modernity in postwar Britain, focusing upon the representation of women in the popular film genre of the 'marriage comedy'. It uses a case study of the 1951 film *Young Wives' Tale* to explore post-war ideas about the 'companionate marriage' and the emergence of a 'modern' British society.

Finally, **Dodds et al** link political history with the cultural turn in his exploration of the 1953–54 royal tour and the geopolitics of the Iberian Peninsula. They find the Gibraltar leg of that year's Royal Tour to be an intense locus of performances linked to the politics of empire, colonial rights and anti-imperialism.

History of Welfare

We turn now to the history of welfare. A thoughtful introduction by **Anderson and Carden-Coyne** to a special issue of the *European Review of History* on disability emphasizes the importance of new work on the history of disability and the way in which the polarisation of the medical and social models of disability is being reassessed via diverse new perspectives in thinking about the intersection between lives, histories, institutions and cultural contexts.

It was widely assumed in the early-1950s that the welfare state had 'abolished poverty'. A fascinating piece by **Taylor and Rogaly** mines a rich seam of archival material on what we now term the 'underclass' (poor families with anti-social habits), dissects contemporary debates about 'problem' families, and explores the postwar experience of deprivation before poverty's 'rediscovery' in the mid-1960s.

Since its election in 1997, New Labour has been criticized by many Labour traditionalists for failing to follow the democratic socialist vision of the welfare state set out by the Attlee, Wilson and Callaghan governments. **Page** agrees, arguing that, while New Labour continues to maintain that the welfare state should be used to tackle opportunity barriers, it no longer believes that the task of the welfare state is to extend opportunities for selflessness, enhance social solidarity or deliver greater equality of outcome.

Compared with last year there is little attention to the 'pensions crisis', but **Sanz and Velázquez** consider the role of ageing in the growth of government and social welfare spending in the OECD since 1970. They identify ageing as the main driving force, though note a reciprocal process as other age groups react to ageing, with institutional reforms aimed at reducing the impact of ageing on pensions in recent years and pressure to restrict increases in benefits for retired people. **Disney**, also, presents data that clearly demonstrates that demographic ageing is associated with a larger welfare state.

Mold and Berridge consider the dramatic increase in illegal drug use in Britain since the 1980s and the policy responses it generated. Coupled with the inadequacy of existing drug services (especially in the regions) and a desire to shift away from a

purely medical or psychiatric approach to the drug problem the result was a dedicated funding program for drug services. However, the authors argue that service provision was also influenced by broader changes in the nature of the welfare state in Britain.

Medical History

In medical history, the 1962 Hospital Plan is often seen as the pinnacle of NHS command and control. **Biddle** examines its impact at the local level, documenting a shift from optimism to anger as it became clear that high expectations would not be fulfilled. In the process, he reveals the extent to which implementation of the Plan was a matter for negotiation at the local level. Elsewhere, **Robson** examines accounting and managerial reform in National Health Service from 1958–74. His study confirms a deeply embedded respect for local self governance rather than central ‘command and control’.

Medical care was about more than the NHS of course. **Nottingham and Dougall** consider the development of medical social work in Scotland from the outbreak of the Second World War until the mid–1970s. They argue that it was not illogical, indeed virtually inevitable, for medical social workers to throw in their lot with the new generic profession of social work. Yet, this meant the exchange of a subordinate, but not subservient, position within medicine for an uncertain future in a profession which was combative, muddled, short of resources, and broadly unsympathetic to the skills and outlook of medical social workers.

Local and Regional

In the arena of local and regional histories, the British Association for Local History, celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2007. **Cowan**, former administrator of BALH, reflects upon the precursors of the organization. He notes, in particular, the changing context and circumstances of local history in Britain and the ways in which the subject itself has altered.

Elsewhere, **Michaels** considers the consequences of resource–based regional specialization. While much of the literature argues that such specialization is beneficial to the region concerned, recent work suggests it may have long–term disbenefits. He examines this issue empirically, using data on the location of subsurface oil in the southern USA. He finds that for many decades oil abundant counties were highly specialized with higher per capita income and a better educated workforce than other nearby counties. Though the gains from specialization were large, the price was an attenuated manufacturing sector, below average human capital accumulation, and a narrowing of per capita income differentials.

Turning to the UK, **Cragoe** offers a new reading of Conservative approaches to territorial government after 1951, when Scotland gained a new Minister of State and a Minister for Welsh Affairs was appointed. Hitherto, these concessions have been explained primarily as a response to local nationalism. Cragoe argues that the changes were instead bound up with Conservative attempts to champion an alternative to Labour’s vision of a uniform and centralized state; a limited state in which local patriotism could be celebrated as a cornerstone of a distinctively ‘British way of life’.

Moving onto the 1970s, **Johnes** explores the processes that led to the creation of the county of South Glamorgan – based upon Cardiff and its immediate hinterland. It was widely seen as an artificial creation designed to give the Conservatives a presence in South Walean local government but Johnes argues that, for all its artificiality and lack

of popular support, South Glamorgan quickly became accepted as a unit of local government. Its real problem was not so much its political and artificial nature but the practical challenges of establishing a new local authority from scratch.

In Scotland, in the later stages of the Cold War both Strathclyde and Fife were designated as the home of the UK's Trident nuclear-submarine-launched-missile fleet. **Jamison** argues that Westminster, determined to replace its outgoing Polaris nuclear deterrent, employed inflated narratives on job creation and consistently advertized and overstated in Scotland the employment opportunities this programme might provide.

We turn now to Northern Ireland, the subject of a number of articles this year. **Walker**, for example, highlights the importance of populist 'ethnic' politics in Northern Ireland and the way in which this constricted the governing Unionist party's capacity to modernize in the 1940s and 1950s. **Browlow** suggests that links between those awarding government grants in Northern Ireland and those receiving them, coupled with the lack of an industrial policy seeking to move resources from declining to new industries, were significant contributors to the province's poor economic performance in the 'golden age'. **Edwards** explores the British Labour Party's policy towards Northern Ireland in the 1950s and early-1960s. He shows us a party willing to consider aiding its comrades in the NILP through minimalist gestures. However, he argues that any chances of a closer integrationist policy towards Ulster expired with the deaths of General Secretary Morgan Phillips and Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell in 1963.

One reason for the interest in Northern Ireland this year is surely the looming 40th anniversary of the start of 'the troubles'. **Jeremy Smith**, for example, argues that the opening up of various official papers over the past few years allows a more sympathetic assessment of Heath's early attempts to deal with the situation in Northern Ireland after 1970. This assessment suggests that Heath's policy, far from being barren and directionless, was beginning to evolve in innovative and radical directions as it sought to stabilize and reform Northern Ireland, directions that pre-figured the imposition of direct rule in 1972 and the 1973 Sunningdale Agreement. The latter is the subject of investigation by **Farrington**, who examines the role of the Irish government in the Sunningdale negotiations. He seeks to explore the contrast between the discourse of reconciliation underpinning the Council of Ireland, the key institution of the Sunningdale communiqué, and the meaning subsequently attached to its functions, which was closer to traditional nationalist aims. For **Mulholland**, analyses of the Provisional IRA in the 1970s tend to underplay its political strategy in the 1970s, whereas the persistence of militarism in the 1980s, he argues, is often obscured by the attention paid to a 'new' republican political orientation. His article seeks to draw attention to the IRA's evolving attitude to the 'problem' of Ulster unionism, and republicanism's changing estimations of the likely efficacy of violence.

Finally, **Foster** considers the history of the Republic of Ireland since about 1970, after which its history moved into a fast-forward phase culminating in an extraordinary economic boom, but against the background of violence in Northern Ireland. This article considers the forces and events behind dramatic and unforeseen change in politics, economics, cultural influence, religious profession and gender roles. Foster discusses how far the 'key' is to be found in American rather than European models and influence but, interestingly, also considers how change was accompanied by a retreat into atavistic attitudes (in terms of the construction of Irish 'identity' and the

packaging of Irish history) and a growing acceptance of partition.

Urban History

In urban history, **Coop** sets out to illustrate the value of the notion of planning doctrine in urban planning history, arguing that the development of a planning doctrine explains the pattern of Cardiff's urban planning. He suggests that the doctrine was nurtured, sustained and modified (but not renounced) as economic and political circumstances changed because it had a valuable function in sustaining a broad socio-political consensus on the main priorities and directions in the city's urban development.

For many British cities, the received history of post-war reconstruction suggests a fairly swift and harmonious development and implementation of a plan, conceived and driven forward by one or two key individuals such as a city engineer, a main planner and, perhaps, a lord mayor. **Essex and Brayshay** call this thesis into question. Their paper utilizes a theory of actor networks to reveal new insights into the reconstruction of Plymouth by evaluating the mismatch between the intentions set out in post-war urban reconstruction plans devised by a small elite network of key actors, and their actual implementation, which drew in other much larger groups of actors and interests with different agendas.

From the early 1950s onward, the inner residential districts of London began to be transformed by a phenomenon that did not then have a name. **Moran** investigates this early period of 'gentrification', when the process was particularly rich in cultural meaning and symbolism. His paper focuses on the distinctive culture of the gentrifiers, interior and exterior design, gastronomy, entertaining, networking, and amateur property speculation. The gentrifiers promoted an idea of the "urban village" that enabled them to be both part of the inner city and separate from it, close to its amenities but cut off from its social problems.

The history of suburbs has received much scholarly attention in recent decades. **McManus and Ethington** take stock of what has been established in order to discern aspects of suburbs that are still unknown. To date, the main lines of inquiry have focused on the origins, growth, diverse typologies, culture and politics of suburbs, as well as newer topics such as the gendered nature of suburban space. But the vast majority of these studies have been about particular times and places and the authors propose a) that the development of the suburbs should be examined in the context of metropolises to which they were attached and which often enveloped them later; and b) that investigation of these 'transitions' should be undertaken in parallel with the changes lives of their residents..

Elsewhere, **Moran** investigates the cultural and political meanings of everyday landscapes in postwar Britain. He identifies a striking continuity at the general level of debate, with a persistent preference for the local and traditional against centralized modernity or globalized anonymity, a belief in clear distinctions between urban and rural, and profound disdain for suburbia and for its spread, a dystopian attitude summed up by Ian Nairn's term 'subtopia'. Within this continuity, however, Moran notes that the target of condemnation have changed over time: airfields, lampposts, and fast-growing conifers, much condemned in the 1940s, replaced as aesthetic *bêtes noires* by the end of the century by speed humps, mobile phone masts, and roadside advertising.

Finally, **Collins and Margo** consider the economic aftermath of race riots in

American cities during the 1960s. Using census data from 1950 to 1980 they measure the riots' impact on the value of central-city residential property, and especially on black-owned property. Their paper suggests that the riots led to population outflows from in tracts that were directly affected by riots and depressed the median value of black-owned property between 1960 and 1970, with little or no rebound in the 1970s.

Statistics

O'Hara outlines the attempts of British central government in the 1950s and 1960s to react to the perceived inadequacy of official economic statistics. He notes that although quality did improve they continued to be seen as deficient, particularly as a basis on which to pursue a Keynesian macro-economic policy. One problem was that more detail took more time to produce. Another was that expert staff were hard to find. Successive administrative reorganizations also absorbed energies. But the fragmented nature of British government and wider economic institutions was a problem, as was their resistance to attempts to collect more data, especially when it showed them in an unflattering light.

Government statistics are, of course, only part of the enormous wealth of statistical data available to economic and social historians. The spatial database behind a new website ('A vision of Britain through time', <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk>) brings together a huge range of data, including historical mapping and Mormon enumerators' books. It is primarily aimed at schools but could prove a useful undergraduate teaching resource. However, in **Southall's** introduction to the site, it becomes clear that having spent £2 million building the site its running costs are only covered until the end of 2008. In this author's view, this all too familiar story again highlights the need to include ongoing maintenance costs into funding decisions.

Business History

As last year, this was a busy year in business history, though works on agriculture were conspicuous by their absence. We begin with acquisitions. There is considerable evidence that many acquisitions fail, often because of post-acquisition problems. Although business historians have examined the role of acquisitions in the restructuring of advanced economies after 1945, the historical and management literatures have been poorly integrated. **Jones** seeks to address some of the issues raised in the management literature by contributing a longitudinal case study of the use of acquisitions by Unilever to build the world's largest ice cream and tea businesses.

Examining the performance of British manufacturing in the postwar 'long boom', **Matthews** questions the notion that British manufacturing did not fail in the years between 1950 and 1973. He argues that by all the traditional measures of performance (output growth rates, productivity growth rates and levels, exports, and profitability) British manufacturing was out-competed by its rivals.

Of course, even in times of economic growth successful companies fail. **McGovern**, considers the decline of Dunlop, arguing that for much of its history the firm operated in a protected home market and pursued anti-competitive strategies. This, he suggests, contributed to management complacency and inertia that left Dunlop poorly placed to cope with increased competition from the mid-1950s on. Then, focusing on a firm that represented one of the most spectacular of all postwar company failures, followed by an equally spectacular revival, **David Smith** examines Rolls Royce's

development of its civil aerospace business since 1945.

Studies of wholesaling are uncommon but this year two articles focus on this sector. Firstly, **Manton** notes that in 1945 the Labour Party was determined to nationalize the wholesaling industry and considers why it remained in private hands. **Quinn and Sparks** explore the evolution of grocery wholesaling in Ireland and Britain since 1930, focusing on similarities and differences in the processes and drivers of the wholesaling in the two countries. They note that the pathways of industry evolution identified here differ from those seen in manufacturing.

In the financial sector, **Bátiz-Lazo and Wardley** examine technological innovation and mechanization by British financial institutions. Discussion of the established literature for the high street banks is combined with archivally informed analysis of similar, but previously undocumented, developments in building societies. By taking a long-term view of these developments in the twentieth century, and by comparing the experiences of two different sets of institutions, the article highlights the strategic factors that influenced the decisions taken by senior managers in their transformation of British retail financial services. **Billings and Capie** consider British banking capital in the fifty years before 1970, at which point the requirement that they disclose 'hidden reserves' gave us for the first time a true picture of British banks' capital underpinning. Using archival evidence they demonstrate that banks maintained much higher levels of capital than implied by their published accounts, without reduced or less risky lending. However, official restrictions forced them to operate with lower capital ratios than they desired.

Turning to the insurance industry, **Werner** examines the international performance of the US reinsurance industry and its struggle to gain a foothold in international markets. And **Keneley and McDonald** explore the twentieth century development of the Australian insurance industry and the fundamental impact on that development of a collusive code of conduct called 'the tariff'. The collusive agreements gradually broke down, however, as new entrants and products entered the market in the 1950s and self-regulation gradually gave way as the 'rules of the game' changed. The result was a period of instability before new competitive practices, and more direct and specific regulatory requirements emerged in the 1970s.

Turning to the car industry, **Boschma and Wenting** consider the importance of location in a study that combines insights from evolutionary economics and economic geography to analyse the industry's spatial evolution. The analysis suggests that spinoff dynamics, agglomeration economies and time of entry had a significant effect on the survival rate of car firms during the period 1895–1968. Concentrating on a single car plant, **Gilmour's** is a fascinating study of industrial relations at Linwood using union records. What is clear is that the growing number of wildcat strikes at Linwood was the product of a shop floor organization responding to the immediate needs, grievances and day-today concerns of its members rather than by a specifically left wing agenda.

Gilmour's article is one of several on postwar British industrial relations. **Phillips** discusses the 1960s and 1970s, combining history with theoretical perspectives from industrial relations and management literatures and focusing primarily on coalmining and dock working. The article treads familiar ground, but is a timely reminder of the role that economic contingencies can play in shaping industrial conflict. **McKinley and Quinn** consider the transformation of relations between employers and unions in commercial television since 1979. Their insightful article charts the ways in which the

destruction of the entrenched power of craft unions by the employers Balkanized the industry and thus served, ironically, to weaken its market power.

Union attitudes towards European immigrants have rarely been studied in a post-war context. **Phillips et al** address this in their focus on trade union reactions to the increasing use of European workers in the Lancashire cotton industry between 1946 and 1951. The evidence presented reveals a defensive attitude that limited the number of European workers in individual mills, as well as acting as a barrier to such workers advancing into skilled work.

The political significance of legislation in the 1960s and 1970s to give greater rights to workers, overshadowed as it was by conflicts over collective labour law, has been little explored. **Whiting's** interesting discussion of the reforms suggests that they sought to strike a balance between recognizing the complexity of work in a modern society and preserving managerial authority. But the reforms served a Conservative agenda in that they rooted an individual interest in work in a legal process; de-emphasized the collective character of work relations via individualized contracts of employment; and marginalized trade unions.

History of Science and Technology

It is a busy year in the history of science and technology. **Schön's** paper, one of four in a special issue on convergence in the *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, considers aspects of OECD and European growth and convergence from 1950 to the early-2000s. He discusses the role of the second and third industrial revolutions in relation to the perspectives of traditional and new growth theory on convergence/divergence, and he seeks to develop the measure of these latter forces as processes over time.

Hills sets out to demonstrate how regulation, markets and technology can be intertwined. She argues that the introduction of technology in a regulated market, such as that of international telecommunications, must be seen in terms of its impact on economic and political alliances in that regulatory market. Her article is a case study of the first transatlantic telephone cable, TAT1 – a joint USA / British / Canadian project – and a coaxial cable proposed by the US company International Telephone and Telegraph. In both cases, she argues, the British attempted to use the cables to alter existing British and US domestic regulation of international telegraph transmission.

Clarke considers the use made by the Colonial Office of the fund for scientific research established by the 1940 Colonial Development and Welfare Act. She argues that the latter years of British colonialism saw an attempt, in which the fund played an important role, to restore the credibility of colonial policy by stimulating development via metropolitan intervention and innovation.

Scientific and technological flows were two-way of course. **Horrocks** reminds us that the establishment of research and development (R&D) laboratories by the UK affiliates of overseas-controlled firms was a long-standing feature of the R&D landscape. From their foundation they served as sites for international scientific and technological collaboration and exchange and their integration into international research networks, already a feature of the inter-war period, was increasingly common by the early-1960s. Far from being a 'new collaborative mode' in the late twentieth century, Horrocks concludes, cross-border networks of industrial laboratories have long contributed to the internationalization of science.

In a case study of R&D in the electronics revolution, **Hyungsub** examines RCA's initial foray into the field of solid-state electronics in the late-1940s, when the firm deliberately broke down the boundary between the laboratory and the factory. By the end of the 1950s, however, RCA was utterly compartmentalized. Hyungsub sees this shift to be bound up with broader changes in the U.S. political economy including postwar demobilization, rising military funding for industrial R&D, antitrust consent decrees, and rapid technical change.

We are all familiar with Solow's famous IT productivity paradox, but the focus tends to be on the productivity effects of IT rather than on its productivity growth.

Nordhaus analyzes computer performance over the last century and a half. He concludes that three results stand out: i) a phenomenal increase in computer power over the twentieth century; ii). a major break in the trend around World War II; iii) price declines using performance-based measures are markedly larger than those reported in the official statistics.

Transport History

In the field of transport history, **Schipper** begins with the initial dissatisfaction in Washington with regard to the lack of attention to road transport in the European response to the Marshall Plan. It subsequently explores how unremitting US insistence on the benefits of roads helped smooth the process by which road transport became the dominant mode in Europe.

Forty years after the 1967 Torrey Canyon oil-tanker disaster, **Sheail** considers the political response to the immediate stranding and destruction of the tanker, the pollution of the beaches, the legal and scientific advice tendered, and the longer-term repercussions for 'the machinery of government'. He argues that, if not a trigger, such exposure to public criticism accelerated the incremental pace by which ministers and their officials responded to increasing public concern about pollution.

Crompton examines the brief and unsuccessful career of the privately-owned infrastructure company, Railtrack and the decision of the British government to replace it with a new not-for-profit company, Network Rail. Two earlier, and broadly successful, examples of not-for-profit companies in British transport history – the Port of London Authority and the London Passenger Transport Board – are used for comparative purposes.

Methodologies and the Future of the Discipline

In this last section we turn to methodological issues. **Costa et al** seek to place the new journal *Cliometrica* firmly within a trend toward a more elaborate, convincing and scientific economic history that can appeal to the economic profession at large, and not solely to economic and other historians. In the same issue, **Demeulemeester and Diebolt** consider what economics could gain from history, and the contribution that cliometrics could make to help economists close the gap between theory and empirical analysis and thus aid the development of economics as a discipline. Elsewhere, however, **Weintraub** warns that historians of economics have essentially lost their battle to be taken seriously by economists and that the cost of engagement has been a reduction in the field's institutional vigour. He calls for historians of economics to shed their professional identification with economists and return to history, noting that this will require them to build new links with scholars, and with institutions, that are more amenable to their craft.

Management and organizational history is experiencing its own 'historic turn'. **Mackay** debates and advances the prospects of using virtual history in management and organization theory. He concludes that counterfactuals already constitute an important part of both our cognitive and scholarly processes of reasoning, already influence judgements and decision-making, and consequently have the potential to make valuable contributions to both the theory and practice of researching and managing organizations.

A thoughtful review article by **Blaazer** considers the implications of globalization for historians and concludes that the sacrifice of the nation state as an heuristic would be as grievous a loss as the sacrifice of class has been. On the other hand, he argues that extensive reinterpretation of national and imperial histories in the light of recent insights into the historical dynamics of globalization could enhance our understanding of political ideas, money, markets and, not least, globalization itself.

Wasserstrom considers the ways in which the history profession has changed during the past forty years by comparing a series of commentaries on the state of historical studies by E.P. Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm and others that the *Times Literary Supplement* ran in 1966, and two recent books on the state of the discipline, Geoff Eley's highly personal *A Crooked Line* and a multi-author volume edited by David Cannadine, *What is History Now?* For Wasserstrom, what is most striking between then and now are the vastly increased number of works historians now have to read, and the greater engagement with the "extra-European" (i.e. non-western) world. But there are also important continuities, not least the way in which rapid change is creating a popular interest in the past yet it is still hard to get published a monograph that might sell 500 copies. For Wasserstrom, however, perhaps the most obvious continuity is that the discipline remains rooted in a readiness to show 'creative disrespect' for accepted hierarchies of all sorts. Amen to that.

Finally, **Caplan** discusses the periodization of 'contemporary history'. As Caplan points out, when one turns from repeated and intense debates about contemporary history in Germany, most British discussions of the same subject seem tame. The absence of clear national turning points, or at least ones we are willing to confront, makes for a quiet life politically but also a duller one historically. Might this, she wonders, be why Britain has such an unhealthy fixation on the history of National Socialism? However, is Caplan right to talk about an absence of turning points in contemporary British history? Plainly **Lowe** thinks not. In a fascinating review article, he argues that contemporary historians covering the postwar period as a whole cannot avoid the huge 'sea change' in the 1970s. This produced a fundamental change in British politics and society but also in the way in which those changes could be analysed. To date, however, there has been surprisingly little scholarly attention to this decade and Lowe argues that filling this lacuna is essential if we are better to understand the history of postwar Britain. There is a huge research agenda here for contemporary historians of all stripes.

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