POLITICAL CULTURE AND IDEOLOGY

I. Political Culture – Definition and Sources
II. Commonalities and Cleavages in British Political Culture
III. The British Ideological Spectrum
IV. The Bounds of British Politics
I. POLITICAL CULTURE – DEFINITIONS AND SOURCES

- POLITICAL CULTURE: widely shared beliefs, values and norms concerning the relationship of citizens to government and to one another.
  - Political Culture v. Public Opinion

- POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION: The process by which we are taught and develop our individual and collective political beliefs.
  - Socialization occurs through family, education, church, peers, media, etc.

- Stability and Change in Political Culture
  - ‘Tectonic events’ and political culture
II. Commonalities and Cleavages in British Political Culture

- **COMMONALITIES**: Key orientations toward –
  - (A) Problem Solving: Empirical v. Rationalist
    - UK pragmatic (‘what works’), incremental, asymmetric
  - (B) Political System: allegiant orientation
    - Strong support for institutions of system (including the monarchy); more contingent support for those who occupy high office
  - (C) Cooperation: cooperative/conciliatory orientation
    - Northern Ireland as exception
  - (D) Orientation towards Other People: generally trusting of others
II. COMMONALITIES AND CLEAVAGES IN BRITISH POLITICAL CULTURE

- CLEAVAGES:
  - Social Class
    - Objective v. Subjective
    - Cultural/Social as well as economic
  - National/Regional
    - Scotland/Wales v. England
    - North-South divide
  - Ethnicity
    - Immigration largely from south Asia and Caribbean
    - Concentrated in certain urban areas
II. THE BRITISH IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM

- Understanding Ideology
- Liberalism
  - Gladstonian Liberalism
  - Progressive Liberalism
  - Thatcherite Neoliberalism
- Conservatism
  - Traditional Conservatism
  - One-Nation Tories
- Socialism
  - Fabian Socialism
  - Old Labour Socialism
  - New Labour’s Third Way

And their ideas never really took root...

TOP: Sir Oswald Mosley, head of the British Union of Fascists; BOTTOM: Karl Marx’s grave in Highgate Cemetery, London
IV. The Bounds of British Politics

- Public Services
- Taxation
- The Economy
- Personal Freedom
- Institutional Reform
- The British Union
- The European Union

“Don’t take our NHS…”
British Politics Exam #1

Average = 80; Median = 81