Great Britain

I. Critical Historical Junctures
   (including Political Economy)
II. Governance and Policy-Making
III. Representation and Participation
IV. Culture and Identity
The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
The “Union Jack”

Genealogy of the Union Jack

St George’s Cross  
St Andrew’s Cross  
St Patrick’s Cross  
Union Flag 1606–1801  
Union Flag Since 1801
I. Critical Historical Junctures

- *Magna Carta* (1215)
- English Civil War (1642-47) and Commonwealth (1648-60)
  - Stuart Restoration
  - Glorious Revolution (1688) and Bill of Rights (1689)
- Reform Acts (Starting in 1832; ending 1928)
- Industrialization and Empire
- World Wars and Economic Decline
The British Empire circa 1919
I. Critical Historical Junctures

- The ‘Collectivist Consensus’
- 1970s and Economic Crisis
  - ‘Winter of Discontent’ (1978-79)
- Thatcher and Free Market Reform
  - Falklands War (1982)
  - Three Election Wins (‘79, ‘83, ‘87)
  - Forced Out (1990)
- Tony Blair and ‘New Labour’
  - Three Election Wins (‘97, ‘01, ’05)
- Brown Gets His Chance
I. Critical Historical Junctures

- John Major and the Institutionalization of Thatcherism
- Tony Blair and ‘New Labour’
  - Three Election Wins (‘97, ‘01, ’05)
  - The Drama of the Iraq War
- Brown Gets His Chance
  - The global financial crisis
- David Cameron and the Coalition Government
II. Governance and Policy-Making

A. CONSTITUTION:

- Gradual Development
- Constitutional Sources
  - Key Documents (i.e., Magna Carta, Bill of Rights)
  - Convention
  - EU Laws and Treaties
- Constitutional Principles
  - Constitutional Monarchy
  - Parliamentary Sovereignty (‘Elective Dictatorship’)
  - Rule of Law
  - Democratic Accountability
  - Unitary State
  - Membership in the EU
II. Governance and Policy-Making

■ A. House of Commons
- 650 Members of Parliament (MPs)
- Strict party discipline (always vote with party)
- Reactive body
- Backbenchers
- Question Time

■ B. House of Lords
- Hereditary & Life Peers
- Revising Chamber
- Lords Reform (or not)
II. Governance and Policy-Making

- Prime Minister
  - Powers of Prime Minister
  - Limitations on PM Powers
  - PM as ‘Elected Dictator’

- Cabinet and Ministers
  - Collective Responsibility
  - Secrecy
  - Cabinet Committees

- Civil Service
  - Permanence, Expertise and Loyalty/Neutrality

Cabinet Room
10 Downing St.
II. Governance and Policy-Making

DEVOLVED INSTITUTIONS:
- Parliament for Scotland
- National Assembly for Wales
- Northern Ireland Assembly (power-sharing)
- Regional Governments in England...NO
- Government & Mayor for London

Flags of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland
III. Representation and Participation

- Labour
- Conservatives (“Tories”)
- Liberal Democrats
  - Liberals, SDP and Merger
  - Back in Government
- Scottish and Welsh Nationalists
- Northern Ireland Parties
  - Unionist (DUP and UUP)
  - Republicans (SDLP and Sinn Fein)
- Campaigns and Elections
IV. Culture, Identity, and the Future

- National Identity
  - “Britishness” and Multiculturalism
- Britain and Europe
- Fixing the Economy
- The AV Question

“Sorry Darling, it’s all my fault.”

“By George, let’s swing the budget ax!”
Anglo-American Fiscal Woes

Comparisons Across the Pond

Size of Economies
Gross domestic product in 2009
- United Kingdom: $2.2 trillion
- United States: $14.1 trillion

As a percent of 2009 G.D.P.:
- Government Revenue: 37% (UK) vs 30% (US)
- Government Spending: 47% (UK) vs 43% (US)
- Government Debt: 61% (UK) vs 59% (US)

Figures include federal, state (in U.S.) and local governments.
Source: International Monetary Fund

The New York Times
RECOMMEND
Q: Which works better – a presidential or a parliamentary system?

Choose your favorite...

...the American Presidents...

...or the British Prime Ministers?