

## **Lecture 1 handout: Introduction, and Governance and Representation**

### Introduction to module themes

#### **The impact of the French Revolution –**

why did 'democracy' become a positive rather than a negative idea? Why did ordinary working men and women begin to demand the vote? Why did governments attempt to restrict and suppress working-class political activity?

#### **Urban imperatives and rural idylls –**

What was the impact of the massive growth of towns and cities, their impact upon the countryside, and Britons' attitudes towards both – were they nostalgic towards a rural past, or happy to embrace an industrial future?

#### **Social reform and charity –**

How did Victorians attempt to address poverty in both the rural and urban environments? How did they explain poverty, and the purposes of charity? How effective was the New Poor Law?

#### **The Celtic regions –**

How secure was the United Kingdom? How did Irish, Welsh and Scottish nationalisms develop? What kept the countries together, and what points caused pressure? Why was Home Rule a controversial issue?

#### **Empire –**

how did the British Empire shape life in London? How did it affect working life, patterns of consumption and awareness of the world? Did the British empire change the way Britons thought about their monarchy and military powers?

#### **Religion, science and doubt –**

how did the Church of England cope with its rival sects and religions? How did it respond to the challenge of science, and particularly Darwinism? How did ordinary people participate in organised religion? What did the 1851 religious census really show about the state of religion in Britain?

#### **Family –**

What were the divides between the public and the private? Why was the family so important to the Victorians? How did work and class impact upon family relations? How can we find out about gender relations through looking at the family?

#### **Work and organised labour –**

How did industry develop? Was there an industrial revolution? How did workers organise to improve their conditions? Why did the government prohibit trade combinations between 1799 and 1825? How did trade unionism develop? Why was the Independent Labour Party formed in the 1890s?

**Leisure –**

With radical changes in the ways in which people worked, how did their use of their free time change? How might leisure reflect changing attitudes towards workers' rights? How was leisure shaped by class?

**Britain on the eve of war –**

How had British society and politics changed between 1800 and 1914? Why did the campaign for female suffrage emerge? What was 'new Liberalism' and what were its effects? What was the impact of the 'People's Budget' and the Parliament Act?