



Popular Newspapers, the Labour Party and British Politics (British Politics and Society)

James Thomas

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Popular Newspapers, the Labour Party and British Politics (British Politics and Society) James Thomas 'IT'S THE SUN WOT WON IT', was the famous headline claim of Britain's most popular newspaper following the Conservative party's victory over Labour in the 1992 general election. The headline referred to a virulent press campaign against Neil Kinnock's Labour party, and dramatically highlighted one of the chief features of British politics during the twentieth century - the conflict between a socialist Labour party and a capitalist popular press. Labour's frequent complaints of the political and electoral unfairness of newspaper bias meant that some commentators considered that this dispute had a heritage as old as the party itself. Others, including the Labour leadership at the time, argued that despite past tensions, the 1992 election marked the culmination of an unprecedented campaign of vilification against the party.

Popular Newspapers, the Labour Party and British Politics assesses these competing claims, looking not only at 1992 but both back and forward to examine the continuities and changes in newspaper coverage of British politics and the Labour party over the twentieth century. The book explores whether the popular press has lived up to its claim of being a democratic 'fourth estate', or has merely, as Labour politicians have argued been a powerful 'fifth column' distorting the democratic process. Drawing on a range of previously unexamined sources this book offers the first original and comprehensive history of a fascinating aspect of British politics from Beaverbrook to Blair.

James Thomas is a lecturer at the Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University, and has published articles and essays exploring the relationship between the popular press and British politics.

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