

Speaking in Parliament: history, politics, rhetoric

Queen Mary University of London

6-7 April 2016



Thanks to the presence of television cameras in its debating chambers, the spectacle of Parliament is familiar to everyone who watches the evening news. For those who wish to venture beyond the sound bites, BBC Parliament now offers exhaustive coverage of proceedings in the chambers and committee rooms at Westminster. Yet despite this prominence in the public eye little has been done to assess the impact of parliamentary speaking on the political culture at large and its history as a rhetorical form remains to a large extent unwritten. Parliament's development as an institution, its changing

constitutional role, the political alignment and realignment of party groupings within it, and its contests with organised opinion out of doors have been the theme of many conferences but few have looked closely at one of the activities that most make it distinctive, the practice of speaking itself.

Jointly organized by the History of Parliament and Queen Mary University of London, this two-day conference will be an opportunity for practitioners and scholars across a range of disciplines to explore approaches to parliamentary speaking, past and present, in a forum dedicated to that topic.

Programme

Wednesday 6 April

9.30 Registration

10.00 Opening remarks: Chris Reid and Paul Seaward

10.10 *Keynote lecture:* Richard Toye (University of Exeter)

‘Great pleasure and advantage: Winston Churchill’s parliamentary oratory’

11.00 Coffee

11.20 *Panel 1: Identity, gender, and the representation of speech*

Ben Griffin (University of Cambridge), ‘Parliamentary speech and identity politics in Britain, 1850-1931’

Claire Dunlop (University of Exeter), ‘Coming out on top? The use of personal testimony and confessional narratives in British sexuality debates’

Maggie Inchley (Queen Mary University of London), ‘Representing Margaret, Voicing Britannia’

Robert Jones (University of Leeds), ‘Sheridan, speech and the limits of art’

1.00 Lunch

2.00 *Panel 2: Occasions, genres, and speech acts*

Daniel Seward (Franklin University), 'Bishop John Alcock and the Roman invasion of Parliament: Introducing Renaissance civic humanism to the Tudor opening address'

Ugo Bruschi (University of Bologna), 'The Ventriloquist: the paradox of the monarch's voice in the eighteenth-century Westminster Parliament'

Noel Thompson (University of Swansea), 'Rhetoric and resonance: Legitimation and identity in the perorations of twentieth-century Budget speeches'

Kari Palonen (University of Jyväskylä), 'Vote as the last speech act in parliamentary debate'

3.40 Tea

4.00 *Panel 3: Parliamentary procedures and the conditions of speech*

Hannes Kleineke (History of Parliament), 'Language, procedure and social dynamic in the fifteenth-century English Parliament'

Andréa Cullen (Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly), 'The art of persuasive discourse in parliament: an Australian perspective'

Christoph Konrath (Austrian Parliamentary Administration) and Melanie Sully (Go-Governance Institute, Vienne), 'All the World's a stage – parliamentary debates from mewling to sans everything: a look at the Austrian Nationalrat'

Marc Geddes (University of Sheffield), 'Interpreting parliamentary scrutiny: towards an interpretive understanding of parliamentary select committees'

Thursday 7 April

9.30 Registration

10.00 *Keynote lecture:* Alan Finlayson (University of East Anglia)

'What is the point of parliamentary debate?'

11.00 Coffee

11.20 *Panel 4: Voice, silence, and parliamentary reporting*

Josephine Hoegaerts (University of Helsinki), ‘Peals of thunder and tiny falsettos: unconventional and pathological speech in the nineteenth-century second chamber’

Theo Jung (University of Freiburg), ‘A rhetoric of silence: silent members in the July Monarchy chamber of deputies (1830-1848)’

Ian Harris (University of Leicester), ‘Politics and knowledge: another look at debate writing at Westminster, c. 1780-99’

John Vice (Hansard), ‘Hansard and interruptions’

1.00 Lunch

2.00 *Panel 5: Case studies: parliamentary speakers*

Robin Eagles (History of Parliament), ‘ “I who always speak unpremeditately”: the earl of Mulgrave’s speeches against corruption and in defence of his honour, 1692 and 1695’

Roland Quinault (Institute of Historical Research), ‘Lord Randolph Churchill as a parliamentary speaker’

Jean Garrigues (University of Orléans), ‘Masters of rhetoric in the first period of the Third Republic 1871-1885’

Jonne Harmsma (University of Groningen), ‘ “A rhetoric of truth”: economic expertise as a political style – a Dutch case’

3.40 Tea

4.00 *Panel 6: Audience, reception, and influence*

Kathryn Rix (History of Parliament), ‘ “Noisy Tom” Collins and “beer-barrel” Kearsley: Commons characters and the reception of parliamentary speech, 1832-1868’

Andreas Serafim (Trinity College Dublin/Open University of Cyprus), ‘Rhetorical humour in ancient and contemporary public speaking’

Henk te Velde (University of Leiden), ‘The perception of nineteenth-century parliamentary oratory’

Pasi Ihäläinen (University of Jyväskylä), ‘Parliamentary speaking as the nexus of transnational policy discourse: cross-national intertextuality, international comparisons and transnational transfers in the reform debates of 1917’