

ATTITUDES



OUTLINE

- I. Stereotypes and change
- II. English versus British
- III. Multiculturalism
- IV. Conservatism
- V. Being different
- VI. Love of nature
- VII. The love of animals
- VIII. Formality and informality
- IX. Public spiritedness and amateurism
- X. Privacy and sex

I. STEREOTYPES



- Societies change over time while their reputations lag behind.
- => This is the popular belief that Britain is a 'land of tradition'.

I. STEREOTYPES



At the level of public life it is undoubtedly true: ex. the military ceremony of 'trooping the colour' or the changing of the guard outside Buckingham Palace never changes.

I. STEREOTYPES



The country has fewer local parades or processions with genuine folk roots than most other countries have

I. STEREOTYPES



The English language has few sayings or proverbs in common everyday use.

=> The British are too individualistic

I. STEREOTYPES



English breakfast is more 'continental'

I. STEREOTYPES



This applies also to the tradition of afternoon tea with biscuits, scones, sandwiches or cake.

Coffee is largely consumed.

I. STEREOTYPES



Patient people?

=> The British hate having to wait and have less patience than people in many other countries.

II. ENGLISH VS BRITISH

- English culture dominates the cultures of the other three nations of the British Isles.
- British culture = English culture.
- **Anti-intellectualism:**
suspicion of education and high culture (lack of 'common sense')
ling. “gets all their ideas from books”, “clever”
- **The Scots, the Irish:** place a high value on education.
- Wales exports teachers to other parts of Britain and beyond.

III. MULTICULTURALISM



Multicultural society

III. MULTICULTURALISM



**Indian way of life predominates in London
(shop, languages, schools...)**

III. MULTICULTURALISM



- The divergence from indigenous British attitudes in new British communities is constantly narrowing.
- => British characteristics
- 'The new British' have made their own contribution to British life and attitudes.

IV. CONSERVATISM



The British may not behave in traditional ways, but they like symbols of tradition and stability.

IV. CONSERVATISM



Ex. politicians often cite their enthusiasm for 'traditional family values' (both parents and children living together) as a way of winning support.

IV. CONSERVATISM



They were reluctant to change their system of currency

IV. CONSERVATISM



- In general, the British value **continuity over modernity** for its own sake, they do not consider it especially smart, for ex., to live in a new house.
- They have a general **sentimental attachment** to older, supposedly safer, times

IV. CONSERVATISM



British Christmas cards usually depict scenes from past centuries.

IV. CONSERVATISM



The British like their pubs to look old

V. BEING DIFFERENT



- British can be particularly and stubbornly conservative about anything which is perceived as a token of 'Britishness'.
- For example, very difficult to imagine that they will ever agree to change from driving on the left-hand side of the road to driving on the right.

V. BEING DIFFERENT



- Developments at European Union (EU) level that cause a change in some everyday aspect of British life are usually greeted with suspicion and hostility.
- The case of double-decker buses is an example

V. BEING DIFFERENT

Distances: miles, yards

Tallness: feet, inches

Weights: stone, pounds, ounces, pints, gallons

A pint = a glass of beer

Financial year = beginning of April

V. BEING DIFFERENT



Even the use of the 24-hour clock is comparatively restricted

V. BEING DIFFERENT

Imperial

1 inch
12 inches (1 foot)
3 feet (1 yard)
1760 yards (1 mile)
1 ounce
16 ounces (1 pound)
14 pounds (1 stone)
1 pint
2 pints
8 pints

Metric

2.54 centimetres
30.48 centimetres
0.92 metres
1.6 kilometres
28.35 grams
0.456 kilograms
6.38 kilograms
0.58 litres
1.16 litres
4.64 litres

VI. LOVE OF NATURE



VI. LOVE OF NATURE



- Most of the British live in towns and cities, however, they have a reverence for nature and an idealized vision of the countryside.
- Countryside: peace, quiet, beauty, good health, no crime.

VI. LOVE OF NATURE

On the British side nobody wanted the rail link near them



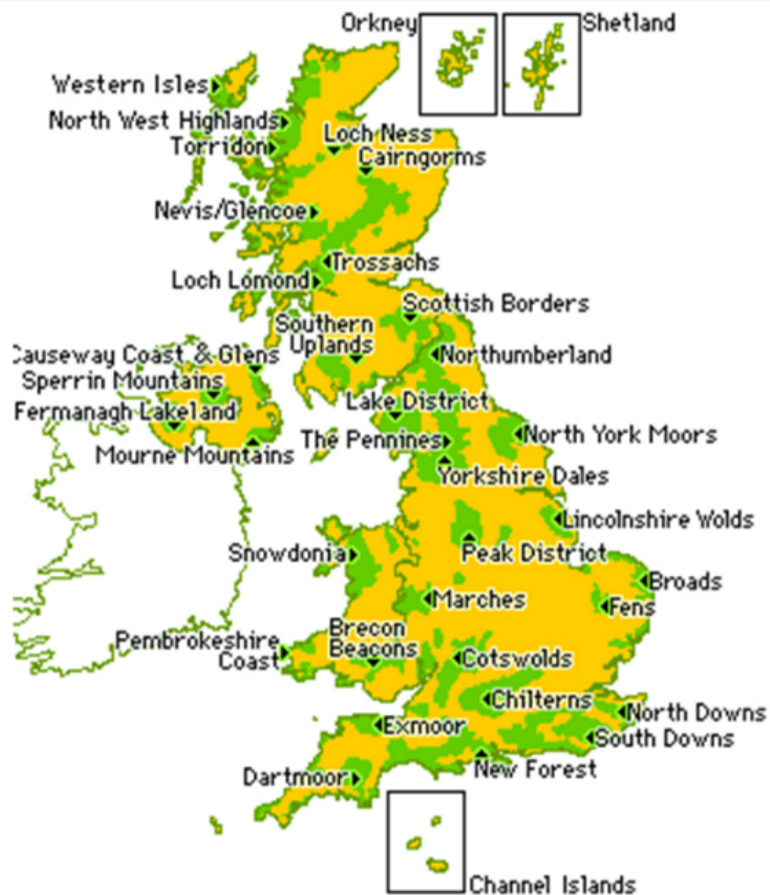
On the French side communities battled with each other to get the new railway lines built through their towns

VI. LOVE OF NATURE



The Channel Tunnel

VI. LOVE OF NATURE



Maps can be bought which mark, in great detail, the routes of all the public footpaths in the country

VI. LOVE OF NATURE



ramblers
at the heart of walking



VI. LOVE OF NATURE



The Youth Hostels Association is a charity whose aim is 'to help many young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside'.

VI. LOVE OF NATURE



The British like to grow plants. Gardening is one of the most popular hobbies in the country

VII. LOVE OF ANIMALS



Rossendale Memorial Gardens in Lancashire is just one example of an animal cemetery in Britain

VII. LOVE OF ANIMALS

Nearly half of the households in Britain keep at least one domestic pet.

VII. LOVE OF ANIMALS

- Wildlife TV programmes are very popular
- Tigglywinkles, the world's busiest hospital for wild animals
- Bird-watching is a popular pastime

VIII. PUBLIC SPIRITEDNESS AND AMATEURISM

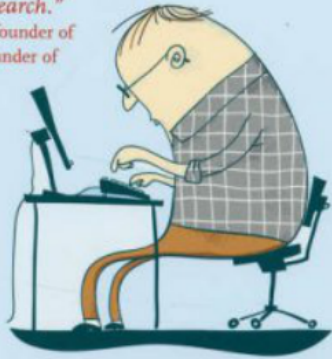
ANDREW KEEN

The Cult of the Amateur

How Today's Internet is Killing Our Culture and Assaulting Our Economy

"A thought-provoking and sobering book...really interesting insight and research."

Larry Sanger, Co-founder of Wikipedia and founder of Citizendium



In public life Britain has traditionally followed what might be called 'the cult of the talented amateur'.

VIII. PUBLIC SPIRITEDNESS AND AMATEURISM



There is a common assumption that society is best served by everybody 'chipping in '

VIII. PUBLIC SPIRITEDNESS AND AMATEURISM



'Professionalism' is beginning to have a positive connotation. Some new areas of amateur participation in public life have developed in the last decade.

VIII. PUBLIC SPIRITEDNESS AND AMATEURISM



Voluntary activity is a basic part of British life (raise money for charity work)

VIII. PUBLIC SPIRITEDNESS AND AMATEURISM



Well-known charities were set up in Britain

IX. FORMALITY & INFORMALITY

- Formality in the public sphere ('on duty')
- Informality in the private sphere
 - Friendly = informal:
 - Not addressing title (Mr, Mrs...)
 - Not dressing smartly
 - Not shaking hands
 - Not saying 'please'

IX. FORMALITY & INFORMALITY

- More reserved than other peoples
- Not the convention to kiss when meeting a friend
- “help yourself” => “one of the family”
- Buffet-type meals
- Recently more comfortable with public display of emotions (Princess Diana's death)
- Kiss (women-women, men-women)
- Worries about 'anti-social behaviour' (people being rude)

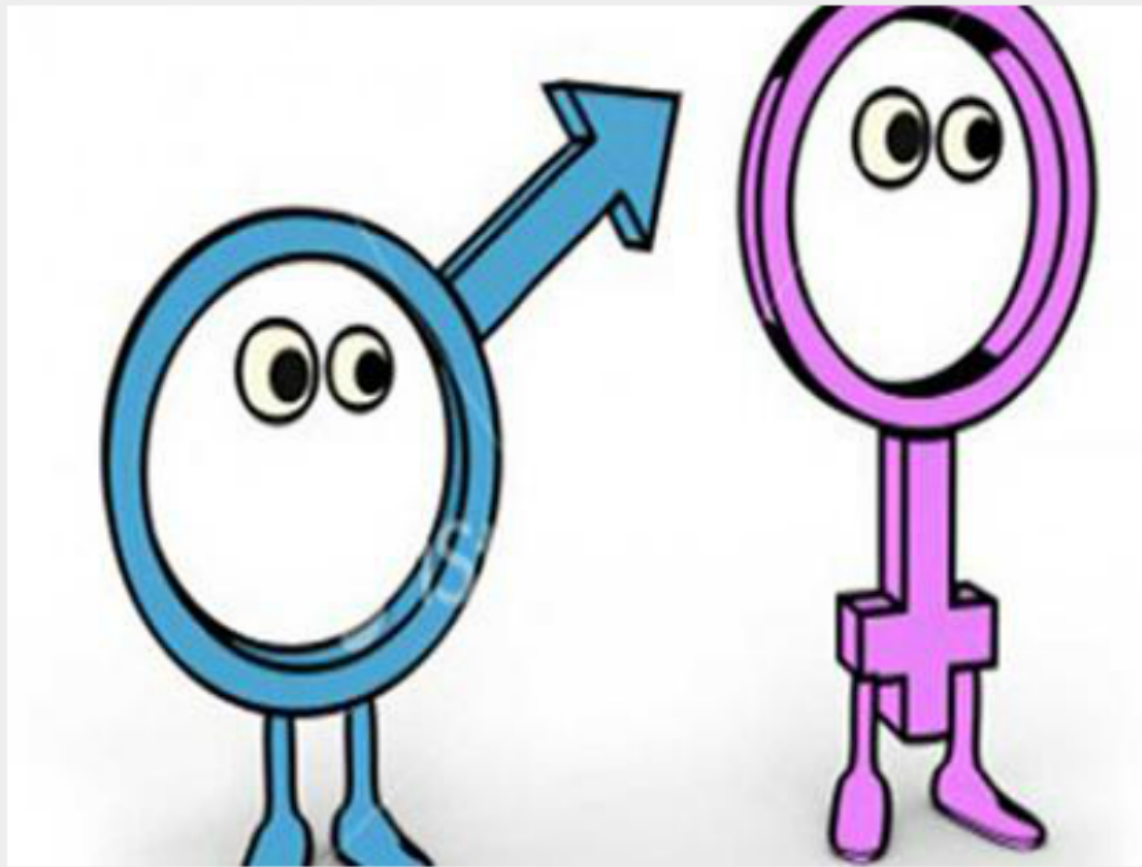
X. PRIVACY AND SEX



Respect for privacy underlies many aspects of British life (own home, individual's right)



X. PRIVACY AND SEX



At the public level, Britain seems to have dispensed with sexual puritanism

X. PRIVACY AND SEX



At the personal level, it seems that sex is an absolutely private matter. Sex may no longer be 'bad', but it is still embarrassing.

X. PRIVACY AND SEX

Mixture of tolerance and embarrassment:

ex. prostitution is legal, but is against the law to 'solicit' it.

Highest rate of unwanted teenage pregnancies in Europe.