



A Classless Society: Britain in the 1990s

Alwyn W. Turner

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"Superb" NICK COHEN, author of *What's Left?* "Tremendously entertaining" DOMINIC SANDBROOK, *Sunday Times* "Like his previous histories of the Seventies and Eighties, *A Classless Society* is an extraordinarily comprehensive work. Turner writes brilliantly, creating a compelling narrative of the decade, weaving contrasting elements together with a natural storyteller's aplomb...engaging and unique" IRVINE WELSH, *Daily Telegraph* "Ravenously inquisitive, darkly comical and coolly undecieved...Turner is a master of the telling detail" CRAIG BROWN, *Mail on Sunday* When Margaret Thatcher was ousted from Downing Street in November 1990, after eleven years of bitter social and economic conflict, many hoped that the decade to come would be more 'caring'; others dared to believe that the more radical policies of her revolution might even be overturned. Across politics and culture there was an apparent yearning for something the Iron Lady had famously dismissed: society. Yet the forces that had warred over the country during the 1980s were to prevent any simple turning back of the clock. The 'New Britain' to emerge under John Major and Tony Blair would be a contradiction: economically unequal but culturally classless. While Westminster agonised over sleaze and the ERM, the country outside became the playground of the New Lad and his sister the Ladette, of Swampy and the YBAs, of Posh and Becks and Jarvis Cocker. A new era was dawning which promised to connect us via the 'information superhighway' and entertain us with 'docusoaps'. It was also a period that would see old moral certainties swept aside, and once venerable institutions descend into farce - followed, in the case of the Royal Family, by tragedy. Opening with a war in the Gulf and ending with the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, *A Classless Society* goes in search of the decade when modern Britain came of age. What it finds is a nation anxiously grappling with new technologies, tentatively embracing new lifestyles, and, above all, forging a new sense of what it means to be British. "Deserves to become a classic" EDWINA CURRIE "Rich and encyclopaedic" ROGER LEWIS, *Daily Mail* "Excellent" D.J. TAYLOR, *Independent*

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