

## 1. Hoggart

### Life and book

**Richard Hoggart** was a British academic whose career was centred in **British popular culture**. Unlike the Leavises, he was brought up in a working-class family in Leeds. He founded on **1964** the **Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies** and wrote ***The uses of Literacy*** (1957). It dealt with **descriptions** and **meanings of everyday events**, how new forms of **mass culture** had an impact on **traditional customs**. **Emphasizing his personal experience**, given that he belonged to their same class, not only gives him an **insider view**, but also a sense of **authenticity**.

### Working class culture

He divided working class culture into 2 categories, like F.R. Leavis did (**traditional organic** and **mass culture**). The first one is **'the older'** which **he experienced in his youth**. Hoggart supported the idea that his type of life could be **'a full rich life'** by having a **rich culture, leisure time** and **hobbies**. In ***The uses of Literacy*** he narrated routines of working people and how they used to relax and entertain themselves.

The second category is the **Americanized mass entertainment**. By the **1950s**, the **working class** had more money to **spend on things they didn't even need**. Therefore, by the creation of this mass culture, the **urban culture** of the **working people** was being **destroyed**. Moreover, he did not like the arising behavior of youngsters: the **'Teddy Boy Culture'**. They **wore drape suits** and had a **bad posture** and **slouch**, a **lazy walk** associated with **Hollywood films**. They were of **little to no intelligence** and were **more vulnerable** to **'the debilitating mass trends of the day'**.

### Hoggart and Leavises

Hoggart had a different education than Leavis. He was a country person and was afraid of the city. They defended the traditional culture.

Nevertheless, Hoggart saw it. Hoggart is not dominated by Leavis.

### Conclusion

In short, **working class people** had their **own culture** and could have a **'full rich life'** just like any other class even if they differed and had different customs. The problem was that **other cultures**, the American in this case, could be a **bad influence** for those with a **weaker mindset (youngsters)**.

## 2. Thompson.

### Book and working class

E. P. **Thompson** was a **historian** who published ***The Making of the English Class*** (1963) attempting to trace the **formation** of the **working class** and how it **became conscious** as a class between **1780** and **1832**. He states that the working class **'did not arise like the sun at an appointed time'** but that it took some time to create or form itself.

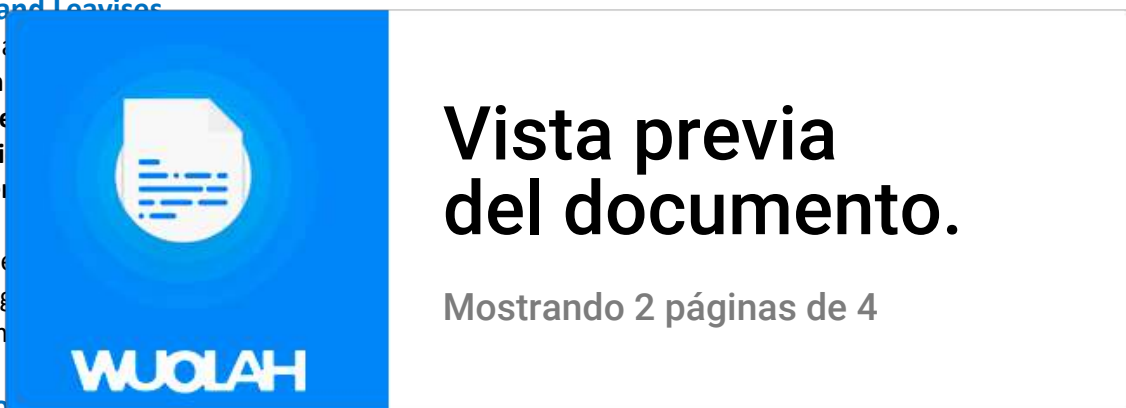
The working class realised that they had **more in common between themselves**, and as against their rulers and employers. They became a **conscious** class when they saw themselves as **different** from other classes **and fought for their rights**.

### The development of working-class consciousness and Chartism

According to Thompson, the working class **set up institutions** like **trade unions**. This way, they were an **active agent of change** rather than pawns to be moved around. **Corresponding Societies** were groups formed by working men that began **asking** for **social** and **political reform**. By these **associations**, their **consciousness grew**.

In **1838**, a working class movement called **Chartism** emerged. Its main goal was **to gain political rights** for the **working classes**. **Francis Place**, an English social reformer, drafted the **People's Charter** demanding:

- **Universal male suffrage not just wealthy middle-class ones (Reform Act 1832)**



- Annual elections for Parliament
- Secret votes.
- Equal electoral districts.
- Abolition of property requirements for becoming a member of the Parliament
- Salaries for members of the Parliament.

### Thomas Paine, Luddism, Jacobins, the Poor Law, Peterloo, Captain Swing

In 1791, Thomas Paine wrote *The Rights of Man* which was one of the most important book in terms of political radicalism of the working classes. Thomas Paine attacked the Monarchy and rulers (unjust and cruel creatures) and fought for the rights of all men. He stated that every time the working class fought for their rights they were repressed and banned. Paine himself was imprisoned a few times and his book was banned in 1800, becoming more famous and read in secret.

Luddism was a social movement of British textile artisans who protested by destroying mechanized looms, which they felt were leaving them without work. The government suppressed all rebellions using the army. The movement is believed to be called after Ned Ludd, a man known from breaking machines who became a popular hero.

The English Jacobin agitation emerged as radicals demanded political reforms inspired by the Jacobins of the French Revolution of 1789.

### Conclusion

To sum up, we have seen that the formation of the working class was not done in a day. People had to fight for their own rights and they became conscious as a class when they saw that they were way more different from the ruling classes than from themselves.

## 3. Virginia Woolf

### Background and work

Virginia Woolf was an English author known for her pioneering feminist texts. She was born into a privileged household in 1882. She was a very well-educated woman and she started writing at a young age. Woolf studied at the Ladies' Department of King's College in London where she met some radical feminists. She had a press with her husband and she earned her livings selling her books. In the press, they printed women's writings making visible their work.

With her work *Three Guineas*, (written the night before the breakout of WWII) she showed her views on war and feminism. It was an essay with a fictional situation in order to discuss feminists' issues. It is divided in 3 parts.

In the first one, Virginia Woolf answered the letter of a man who had asked her for money to rebuild a woman's college. Woolf explained that there was a difference in the money available for men and women's education since the latter was controlled by men. As it was rare for a woman to study at university, their view of the world was different.

The second part had to do with a reply to a letter asking for a subscription to a society to help the daughters of educated men to obtain professions and employment. Women were unemployed and those who worked had