

ENGLISH SUMMARIES

Oscar Winberg

ARCHIE BUNKER AND CONSERVATISM IN THE SERIES *ALL IN THE FAMILY*

In 1971, the sitcom *All in the Family* premiered on CBS in the United States. The show soon became the most watched show in America, and held that position for an unprecedented five consecutive years. Archie Bunker, the main character of the show, almost instantly became a political icon and a representation of conservatism in the early 1970s.

This article explores the politics of the late 1960s television, from which *All in the Family* emerged, and then shows how Archie's politics on the show are too ambivalent to be described as conservative. While conservative on some issues, especially social issues, he does not align with conservative ideology. Instead of a laissez-faire attitude towards economic policy, Bunker supports both labor unions and government welfare in the form of Social Security. The efforts of Richard Nixon to deemphasize economic policy in creating a conservative majority, instead, explain the understanding of Archie as the embodiment of a new conservative majority.

Rami Mähkä

BASIL FAWLTY AND 'PRE-THATCHERISM' IN *FAWLTY TOWERS*

The article analyses the popular British situation comedy *Fawlty Towers* (BBC, 1975, 1979) as a comedic representation of conservatism and its lead character, Basil Fawlty (played by John Cleese), as a 'pre-Thatcherite'. The article discusses how Fawlty and the series can help us to understand the processes which led to Margaret Thatcher winning the election in 1979 and becoming prime minister. Fawlty promotes similar values to Thatcher, but with ambiguity as the series is a comedy; comedy makes interpretation of ideological issues problematic as it is an alternative meaning-making system to non-comedic forms.

The article understands conservatism and Thatcherism as discourses rather than political dogmas or programmes. Thatcherism, including its relationship with particular forms of conservatism, is ambivalent and in some cases contradictory. Basil Fawlty is a prime example of this. The article argues that Fawlty can be seen as a 'pre-Thatcherite'. He is the main target of laughter and ridicule in the series, but because of his witty remarks and sarcasm we are also laughing *with* him, not only *at* him. Despite his old-fashioned conservatism, he also represents values, such as patriotism, which can be seen as identifiable across political and ideological lines. This is exactly what Thatcher accomplished in the late 1970s.