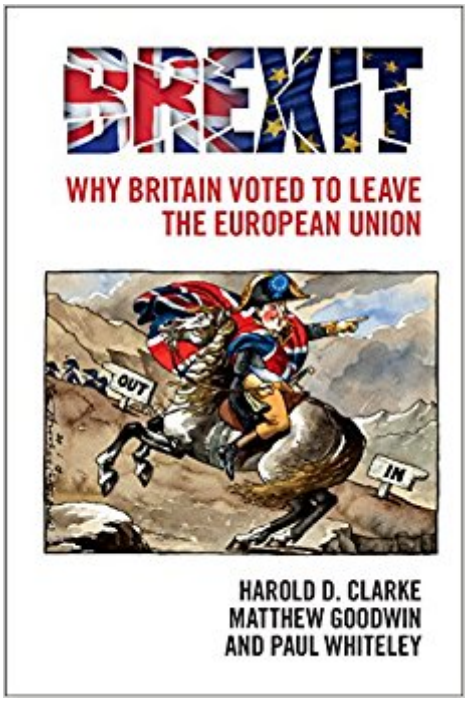
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Brexit: Why Britain Voted To Leave The European Union



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Synopsis

In June 2016, the United Kingdom shocked the world by voting to leave the European Union. As this book reveals, the historic vote for Brexit marked the culmination of trends in domestic politics and in the UK's relationship with the EU that have been building over many years. Drawing on a wealth of survey evidence collected over more than ten years, this book explains why most people decided to ignore much of the national and international community and vote for Brexit. Drawing on past research on voting in major referendums in Europe and elsewhere, a team of leading academic experts analyse changes in the UK's party system that were catalysts for the referendum vote, including the rise of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), the dynamics of public opinion during an unforgettable and divisive referendum campaign, the factors that influenced how people voted and the likely economic and political impact of this historic decision.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'It would be hard to come up with a better line-up of analysts to dig into both the long- and short-term drivers of Britain's decision to leave the EU. Whether you're a Leaver or a Remainer, the vote for Brexit needs explaining - and this is just the book to do it.' Tim Bale, Queen Mary University of London and author of The Conservative Party from Thatcher to Cameron'Do not read Brexit - unless you want truth rather than propaganda, objectivity rather than bias and evidence rather than prejudice. Harold D. Clarke, Matthew Goodwin and Paul F. Whiteley have written a book that will

still be standing when the post-truth claims of those on both sides of the referendum have rightly crumbled to dust.' Peter Kellner, former President of YouGov'Clarke, Goodwin and Whiteley have written what is sure to be a standard reference on Brexit. A wonderfully written history of the rise of the UKIP and the Brexit referendum lead to a diverse array of empirical analyses: a survey of UKIP members, longitudinal national surveys and pre-post referendum surveys. Instead of simple explanations, they show the variety of diverse factors that produced the final referendum outcome and discuss the implications for British politics going forward.' Russell J. Dalton, University of California, Irvine'An empirically rich and insightful analysis of the dynamics of the Brexit vote. Essential reading for understanding the social and political forces underlying one of the most important and consequential electoral decisions of our times.' Lawrence LeDuc, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto'Brexit: Why Britain Voted to Leave the European Union isn't a book of opinions about why the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union but a close look at what the statistics tell us. It's an ... informative read.' Sue Magee, The Bookbag (www.thebookbag.co.uk)'The British public does not have a settled view on Europe. ... The authors conclude that the British are not unusually racist among Europeans ... The British appear easily swayed.' Danny Dorling, The Times Higher Education

A comprehensive, authoritative study by leading experts showing why the United Kingdom voted for Brexit in the referendum of June 2016, based on a wealth of survey evidence conducted over more than ten years which tells the full story of why the vote turned out the way it did.

Thorough and scholarly evidence based political commentary.

The 23 June 2016 referendum decision for Britain to leave the European Union was a pivotal moment and one that confounded the overwhelming majority of media commentators, pollsters and academics who concluded that Remain would win, given the weight of advice to that effect from national and international figures and organizations (including the Prime Minister, most of his Cabinet, a large majority of MPs, the CBI, the World Bank and the IMF), in addition to the dire warnings of the consequences of leaving, emanating from the likes of George Osborne (talk of a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“DIY recessionÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“punishment budgetÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•) and Barack Obama (saying that a Britain outside the EU would have to go to the ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“back of the queueÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• in any trade negotiations with the US).ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœBrexitÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Harold D. Clarke, Matthew Goodwin and Paul

Whiteley seeks to explain why Leave won, to analyze whether the result should have come as such a surprise, and to examine the likely consequences of BritainÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s departure.This last ambition is particularly tricky as looking into the future is always difficult but especially so when one lives in such fast-moving times and thus some statements - such as Anand MenonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“lingering uncertaintyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• in the Prologue, over where UKIP voters Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“might go should they decide to withdraw their supportÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• - have already been rendered dated.When one hears from its social scientist authors that this volumeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s USP is that it is Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“the first to draw on longitudinal aggregate- and individual-level survey data to examine the drivers of support for leaving the EU in a more holistic fashionÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• than rival volumes, specifically making use of the Essex Continuous Monitoring Surveys (ECMS) and a November 2014-January 2015 survey of nearly 15,000 UKIP members, then one might understandably fear an abstruse text periodically punctuated by opaque tables. Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœBrexitÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ is, in fact, surprisingly readable, if you can cope with tables with titles such as Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœIndividual-Level Logistic Regression Models of Voting for UKIP in the 2014 European Parliament Election and 2015 General ElectionÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢.The best feature of the book is the way in which it is able to meld statistical analysis of grass-roots changes in sentiment with an appreciation of the impact of the actions of the principal political actors, for example showing the EU Referendum to be merely the last in a long list of moves which reveal David - Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m a winnerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• - Cameron to have been an habitual political gambler.Boris Johnson understandably receives considerable attention as he crucially represented a popular figurehead for the Leave campaign for those squeamish about aligning themselves with Farage, although weÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re mistakenly told that Boris announced his decision to join the Leave campaign Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“immediately after Cameron had announced the date of the referendumÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• when in fact - as mentioned elsewhere in the book - he did not do so until the following day.Several of the authorsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ conclusions Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ such as that whilst Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“the 2016 campaign may have changed some peopleÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s minds and motivated them to cast a ballot, when it came to Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ whether to vote for Brexit, some key attitudes had been in place for a long timeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• or that most of those who joined UKIP Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“were elderly, white men who mainly became politically active because of their strong desire to leave the EU and reduce immigrationÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ are hardly very surprising, although thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s obviously some merit in having the seemingly self-evident statistically

underpinned.Other conclusions are fairly inconclusive (ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“even if everyone who was eligible to vote had gone to the polls, there is a distinct possibility that Remain could still have been defeatedÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•) or even close to contradictory (ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“strong public concern over the large numbers of immigrants entering the country was front and central to Leave securing victoryÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• versus ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“no one single factor ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â| shaped how people thought about EU membershipÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•).Most contentious, however, in my opinion, is the statement that ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“while UKIP was propelled into the mainstream by public opposition towards the countryÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s EU membership, there have also been other sources of support for the partyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• including ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“the peopleÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s negative judgements about how respective Governments have managed the economy, the NHS and immigrationÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•.Surely UKIP supporters tend - or at least tended - to see virtually everything through the lens of EU membership (or immigration), believing that departure from the EU provided the solution to all the UKÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s difficulties? That is certainly the charge commonly levelled at their representatives, whilst the view that their raison d'ÃƒÆ'Ã Âªtre has largely disappeared with the success of the Leave campaign and the triggering of Article 50 largely explains their emasculation at the local government elections of 4 May 2017. Thus if most UKIP supporters at the time with which this book is concerned did not really see the economy, the NHS and immigration as issues separate from EU membership it is a rather artificial exercise to treat these issues as discrete when seeking to explain UKIP support.To sum up, on first appearance ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœBrexitÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ is like a plane with a very sturdy undercarriage, which should enable it to resist buffeting and take an impressive payload into the air with great ease. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll certainly take the reader from A to B quite efficiently but it never soars quite so high or flies quite as smoothly as its basic design promises.

Matthew Goodwin, one of the authors of "Brexit," was compelled to eat (physically eat) part of it on television after having lost a bet about the performance of the Labour Party in this year's snap election. I too lost a bet on the performance of the Labour Party, but all I had to do was pick up the winner's bar tab. When I heard of Goodwin's gastronomic feat I resolved to read "Brexit."I have no opinion on the book's edibility, but it is fairly readable at only 229 pages. I deduct one star because some of the tables are boring -- sufficiently boring to put me to sleep in the middle of the day. The data, while no doubt correct, aren't presented in the best way. Other tables and figures were very interesting, such as the one that demonstrated how joining the EU changed the growth rate of the various national economies. If the figures on that one are to be believed, Germany is the biggest

loser, having grown 6% more slowly since it joined the EU as opposed to before. Of course, immediately before Germany joined the EU, it was rebuilding from the war. Lithuania is the biggest winner, having grown 4% faster since it joined the EU. Britain is among the majority of countries that grew more slowly after joining the EU, though not by as much as Germany.The book's argument depends on two points, one of which is no doubt accurate, the other of which seems to have gone by the boards. The accurate point is that for those who voted in the Brexit referendum, immigration was by far the most salient issue. As the twenty-first century has gone on, the number of immigrants coming to Britain every year has increased until there were hundreds of thousands. The majority of Britons weren't willing to accept hundreds of thousands of EU immigrants every year, let alone that number from outside the EU (which seemed to be a live possibility in 2015 and 2016 as Angela Merkel and the Swedish government invited up to 1% of their populations in Syrian refugees alone to settle in their countries each year). Of course, only a "hard" Brexit, severing Britain even from the EEA, would stanch the free movement of labor and that doesn't seem to be in the cards now that May has entered a confidence and supply agreement with the DUP, whose priority is to keep the people of Northern Ireland happy and able to travel to the south.The more debatable point is the authors' insistence that UKIP is here to stay. In both local and general elections this year, UKIP's strength has dissipated. Indeed, this result was not hard to predict for two reasons. First, the authors' hard look at UKIP revealed that it is mostly made up of older, less educated males (of whom there will be fewer as time goes by). Second, in a first-past-the-post system, major parties blunt the impact of third parties by adopting their ideas. That is essentially what happened after Brexit with May's Conservative Party embracing the concept of a post-EU Britain, thereby denying UKIP a reason to continue existing. For their part, the authors observed the decreasing vote share of the major parties in Britain and assumed this trend had a ways to go yet. That was why Goodwin made his infamous prediction that Labour would not get 38% of the vote this year.The good news (which I can't dispute) is that Brexit has not swiftly led to a recession in Britain as many of the Remain campaigners predicted it would. The authors wisely reserve judgment on where the British economy will be in ten to fifteen years, but point to the negative impact of EU membership on British growth historically (although they admit that British EU membership also coincided with the oil shocks of 1973, perhaps the most important event in the entire postwar economic history of the West). There'll always be an England and good writing about it. Just drink lots of coffee before plowing through the third and fourth chapters.

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