

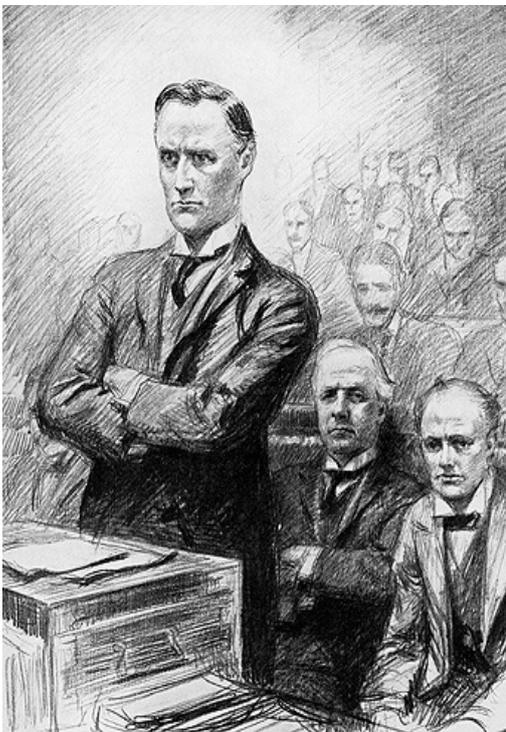
Public Lecture

The Appeal to Honour and the Decision for War

Tuesday 12 August 3.00pm

Dr Robin Archer, London School of Economics

Coombs Extension Lecture Theatre 1.04 (Bldg 9), ANU



Foreign Secretary Grey speaking to the Commons on 3 August 1914

This paper marks the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. In Australia, the arrival of the war often seems to be treated like a bushfire or an 'Act of God'. And there is surprisingly little attention to how uncertain entry into the war was for Britain and its Dominions, and how finely balanced the forces for and against intervention were. The paper examines the role of appeals to honour in the decision for war in the English-speaking world. The argument is principally focused on the role of these appeals in convincing strategically located radical liberals to accept British intervention – something which many, both inside and outside the Liberal government, had vigorously opposed until just before war was declared. The paper also examines parallel appeals in the United States and Australia. It then offers some preliminary thoughts on why the language of honour was effective, and whether it still plays a role a century later, before concluding with some possible centennial lessons.

Dr Robin Archer is Reader in Political Sociology and Director of the Ralph Miliband program at the London School of Economics. He was previously the Fellow in Politics at Corpus Christi College at the University of Oxford. His works include *Economic Democracy* (Oxford, 1995) and *Why Is There No Labor Party in the United States?* (Princeton, 2007). He is currently working on a new project about opposition to the First World War and conscription, especially in the English-speaking world, and co-organizing an Academy of Social Sciences sponsored event on the conscription conflict in Australia. Some initial thoughts on this project can be found in Frank Bongiorno et al, *Labour and the Great War* (2014). He has been a visiting fellow at Princeton, Columbia, the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University, the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, Sydney University, and most recently, NYU and the ANU.

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