Editorial

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Welcome to the second issue of Volume 7 of *British Politics*. The first paper for this issue, from Alex Nunn, examines the subject of social mobility. Focusing largely on the policy approach taken by the Coalition government, the author argues that contemporary political rhetoric on social mobility has been used as a means of framing debates around social justice in such a way as to displace questions about the neo-liberal assumptions of competitiveness on which they are based, and to legitimise the prevailing programme of austerity. Our second contribution, from Robin Pettitt, remains with the theme of political rhetoric and communication. On the basis of a quantitative analysis of self-referencing by Labour Party leaders, the paper shows that this practice has varied widely between leaders, that it has been used by different leaders for differing purposes and that contrary to assertions about a Presidentialisation of *British Politics* there has been no linear increase in the incidence of self-referencing over time.

The third paper for this issue comes from Faith Armitage. This examines the procedures that are used to select a speaker for the House of Commons, and considers the impact of democratic reforms to this process that have been implemented since the turn of the century. The paper shows that these reforms have undermined the previous control of a narrow Commons elite, and, as a result, have made the process an increasingly unpredictable one. Staying with the theme once more, our fourth paper, from Norman Bonney, examines the inner-workings of the British constitution in terms of its procedures for installing a new monarch. Here, the analysis reveals the uncertainty that surrounds the relevance and the applicability of existing procedures, and demonstrates the substantial latitude that is available to a new sovereign in sustaining or challenging these various practices. Following this, our final paper for this issue, in the form of a research note, comes from Ben Clements. In this, the author examines British public opinion on the issue of climate change, and explores the key social and political factors that shape, influence and explain these attitudes.

Steven Kettell
University of Warwick, Coventry, UK
E-mail: s.kettell@warwick.ac.uk

Peter Kerr
University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK
E-mail: p.kerr@bham.ac.uk