Question Time Scorecard – 11/6/2020

We have developed a scoring system to apply to BBC Question Time guests to gain a sense of how elite each weekly panel selection is. We score each guest either 0 (non-elite) or 1 (elite) in five categories: Income, Education, Connections, Honours/Titles, Political/Economic Views. Each guest achieves an overall elite rating out of 5, which is added to the scores of the other guests then divided by the number of guests to provide an overall rating for that week's panel.

Fiona Bruce, the presenter of the show, is a key figure in terms of directing debate and allocating panellists' speaking time so is always included in the calculation for that week's show.

For more information on why we are doing this and what we mean by "elite" check out this blog post.

If you'd like to get involved in the project tweet or e-mail us!

INCOME

Income is the most powerful indicator of elitism. Those with wealth have a wider range of options than those without and a vested interest (conscious or otherwise) in sustaining the economic framework that generates their affluence

Classification	0 (Non-Elite)	1 (Elite)
Criteria	Yearly salary < £68,000	Yearly salary > £68,000 OR Verified millionaire
Guest		***Fiona Bruce scores 1*** *BBC Salary for 17/18 listed as £259,9990*
		Robert Buckland scores 1 *Member of Parliament (Salary £81,932)*
		Vaughan Gething scores 1 *A Member of the Senedd's salary is currently £67,649 but they claim office and travel expenses in addition to this so income > £68,000*
		Liz Saville Roberts scores 1 *Member of Parliament (Salary £81,932)*
		Rocco Forte scores 1 *As Chairman of Rocco Forte Hotels, which has 14 hotels and thousands of staff his net worth in unquestionably in the millions*
	Bernardine Evaristo scores 0 *Booker prize-winning author with high-ranking positions at Brunel University and the Royal Society of Literature suggests earning power in region of £68,000 but this cannot be satisfactorily verified*	

EDUCATION

The Sutton Trust reported in 2016 that Oxford and Cambridge recruit more students from eight independent/highly competitive schools (such as Eton) than almost 3,000 UK state schools put together. A linked government report stated that "Our examination of who gets the top jobs in Britain today found elitism so stark that it could be called 'Social Engineering'", with independent schools and Oxbridge a key component in this social selection.

Classification	0 (Non-Elite)	1 (Elite)
Criteria	State school attendee Non-Oxbridge higher education	Attended a private/independent school OR Attended Oxford, Cambridge or equivalent elite overseas university in top ten of Times Higher Education Rankings
Guest		*Fiona Bruce scores 1* *Attended Hertford College, Oxford*
		Robert Buckland scores 1 *Privately educated at St Michael's School*
	Vaughan Gething scores 0 *Meets criteria*	
	Liz Saville Roberts scores 0 *Meets criteria*	
		Rocco Forte scores 1 *Attended Pembroke College, Oxford*
	Bernardine Evaristo scores 0 *Meets criteria*	

CONNECTIONS

It's not what you know, it's who you know shouldn't apply in a democracy…but most would agree that it does. Many high-ranking politicians and journalists (e.g. The Millibands, the Dimblebys) are embedded in the elite through family ties or are members of private clubs whose "exclusive" status marks them out as networking hubs for the elite. Moreover, if QT guests count as friends/kin people who occupy positions of power throughout politics, business and the media this again makes them less likely to reflect common opinion or present an unbiased view of institutions in which a loved one, confidante or network acquaintance plays a key role.

Classification	0 (Non-Elite)	1 (Elite)
Criteria	No close family, friendship or networking ties to high-ranking figures in politics, business, the media or other powerful institutions	One or more close family, friendship or networking ties to high-ranking figures in politics, business, the media or other powerful institutions
Guest		*Fiona Bruce scores 1* *Father a high ranking businessman, regional managing director of Unilever (2017 turnover 53.7 billion euros)* *(source)* *Husband Nigel Sharrocks a high-ranking businessman, CEO of the marketing company Aegis Group Northern Europe which represents companies with cumulative turnover of £500 billion* *(source 1) (source 2)*
		Robert Buckland scores 1 *Parliament's Register of Members Financial Interests highlights that the was given a £2500 campaign donation from the wealthy and illustrious United and Cecil Club*
	Vaughan Gething scores 0 *Meets criteria*	
	Liz Saville Roberts scores 0 *Meets criteria*	
		Rocco Forte scores 1 *The Guardian report that he hosted a victory party for Boris Johnson at his Mayfair Hotel*
	Bernardine Evaristo scores 0 *No clear connections to figures/institutions outlined in criteria*	

HONOURS/TITLES

It seems fair to assume that those vested with hereditary titles such as Earl, Duke, Baronet, etc can be classed as elite. Prestigious titles bestowed by unelected bodies, such as OBEs, membership of the House of Lords and Church titles like Bishop and Archbishop, are often awarded regardless of background (e.g. OBEs to sports stars from poor backgrounds) but nonetheless suggest elite approval of these individuals – they are "vetted by the elite".

Classification	0 (Non-Elite)	1 (Elite)
Criteria	No high-ranking hereditary title No high-ranking honour/title bestowed by an unelected body	Possesses a high-ranking hereditary title OR Possesses a high-ranking honour/title bestowed by an unelected body
Guest	*Fiona Bruce scores 0* *She does not have high-ranking title…yet!*	
		Robert Buckland scores 1 *Appointed Lord Chancellor, an unelected position recommended by the Prime Minister and bestowed by the Queen, in 2019*
	Vaughan Gething scores 0 *Only title is a democratic one – Member of the Senned*	
		Liz Saville Roberts scores 1 *Sits on the Privy Council of the United Kingdom, a formal body of advisers to the Sovereign with individuals appointed (for life-long membership) on the advice of the Prime Minister*
		Sir" Rocco Forte scores 1 *Appointed a Knight Bachelor in the 1995 New Year Honours*
		Bernardine Evaristo scores 1 MBE

POLITICAL/ECONOMIC VIEWS

It isn't entirely fair to classify someone as financially elite because they are wealthy. There are examples of financially elite individuals who have campaigned for redistribution of wealth. Therefore, we take into account economic and political viewpoints expressed verbally or through voting patterns

Classification	0 (Non-Elite)	1 (Elite)
Criteria	Political outlook prioritises what we might call "public wealth" – redistribution of wealth, living wage, wage rises in line with or above inflation, protection or investment in public services, union and worker's rights, nationalisation of industries	Political outlook prioritises what we might call "private wealth" – low tax rates, downsizing of state, privatisation of state services, benefit freezes or cuts, public sector pay freezes, limitation of trade union powers
Guest	*Fiona Bruce scores 0* *As a journalist she does not express strong views in this area**	
		Robert Buckland scores 1 *Voting record indicates that he "Consistently voted for a reduction in spending on welfare benefits" and "Consistently voted against increasing the tax rate applied to income over £150,000", a general pattern documented on* [They Work For You](#)
	Vaughan Gething scores 0 *Affiliated to TUC trade union*	
	Liz Saville Roberts scores 0 *"Almost always voted against a reduction in spending on welfare benefits" and "Almost always voted against reducing the rate of corporation tax" as per* [They Work for You](#)	
		Rocco Forte scores 1 *Donated £100,000 to Conservative Party and is a businessman, both indicate support for private wealth*
	Bernardine Evaristo scores 0 *Creative figure whose political views are not sufficiently well known to classify*	

* We accept that the burden of proof for making an "elite" judgment lies with us. Therefore, when sufficiently clear evidence to classify a panellist as elite cannot be found they will be classed non-elite in that category as a default. We may, for example, strongly suspect that someone has an income above £68,000 or influential contacts but if we can't access information that suggests this beyond reasonable doubt we will classify them as non-elite for these categories.

Overall elite ratings (for guests and the panel as a whole):

Total Score	0	1	2	3	4	5
Corresponding Status	Not Elite	A Little Elite	Quite Elite	Elite	Very Elite	Exceptionally Elite

Fiona Bruce scores three out of five – she is **Elite**

*Robert Buckland scores five out of five – he is **Exceptionally Elite***

Vaughan Gething scores one out of five – he is A Little Elite

Liz Saville Robert scores two out of five – she is Quite Elite

Bernardine Evaristo scores one out of five – she is A Little Elite

*Rocco Forte scores five out of five – he is **Exceptionally Elite***

Combined score of panel = 3 + 5 + 1 + 2 + 1 + 5 = 17

Divided by no. of panellists (6) = 2.83, rounded to closest no. = 3

OVERALL ELITE RATING FOR THIS EDITION OF QUESTION TIME IS:

3 – ELITE