

Saturday 31 January 2015

Michael Clark

Director of the Royal United Services Institute

'Are other people's wars really our wars?'

Britain has deployed forces to 11 different wars since the Cold War came to an end in 1991 and spent around £45 billion fighting in them. None of these wars was a direct threat to the territory, or the people, of the United Kingdom. What was the strategic rationale for military involvement, did it work, and does the rationale still apply? The presentation will also consider the ways Britain might defend its values and interests in light of current challenges and insecurities.

Saturday 28 February 2015

Judith Kirton-Darling

Labour Member of the European Parliament for NE England

'Trade deals: realistic concerns or rabble-rousing?'

A number of international trade deals currently generate public concern. What is the truth about them? What exactly are the down sides, and what could the possible benefits be? Over one million people have signed a petition against TTIP (the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership), a deal for which there isn't even a draft text. Are social media and the 24 hour news cycle behind an ill-considered response? Jude will

consider whether the EU's trade policy is capable of regulating globalisation, promoting sustainable development and addressing the new world order.

Saturday 14 March 2015

Emma Briant

Lecturer in Journalism Studies, University of Sheffield

'Propaganda and Counter-terrorism: Strategies for Global Change'

Dr Briant will discuss the illuminating interviews she conducted with British and US government sources for her recently-published book. She will present a unique account of Anglo-American attempts to adapt propaganda strategies to global terrorist threats in a post-9/11 media environment.

Saturday 18 April 2.00pm – 4.00pm

'Any Questions?'

The Parliamentary Candidates for the Hexham Constituency

*Lower School Hall
Queen Elizabeth High School
Whetstone Bridge Rd
Hexham NE46 3JB*

If you wish to submit a question for the candidates to answer, please arrive promptly at 2.00pm so that a selection may be made. The Hustings will commence at 2.30pm.

Saturday 9 May 2015

Paul Rogers

Professor, Bradford University Department of Peace Studies.

'Conflicts in the Middle East - what are the chances for peace?'

With the multiple problems of crises and conflicts in the Middle East, is there any prospect of making progress in Syria and Iraq? Can a peaceful and just settlement be achieved in Israel/Palestine and are there at last prospects for an improved relationship with Iran?

Saturday 20 June

Polly Higgins

Barrister, and Lawyer for the Earth

'Ecocide, the Missing 5th Crime Against Peace'

There is one law that could change the world: one that prohibits corporate and legal developments that cause Ecocide. Polly Higgins will speak about how an international crime of Ecocide would trump TTIP (the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership), existing corporate law and World Trade Organisation rules.

Video Recordings of Series 7

of the Hexham Debates can be found at <http://vimeo.com/channels/717550/videos>

Michael Clarke is currently the Director General of the Royal United Services Institute and is also Visiting Professor of Defence Studies at King's College London. He previously taught international politics at Universities on both sides of the Atlantic. He has been a Specialist Adviser to the House of Commons Defence Committee since 1997, having served previously with the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee and the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Bribery. He is the UK member of the United Nations Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. In 2009 he was appointed to the Prime Minister's National Security Forum and in 2010 to the Chief of Defence Staff's new Strategic Advisory Group. He also serves on the Strategic Advisory Panel on Defence for UK Trade and Industry.

Judith Kirton-Darling grew up in Middlesbrough. She studied history and politics at Sheffield University and has Masters degrees from the Universities of Bath and Pavia. She began her political career as a programme assistant with the Quaker Council for European Affairs and remains in Membership of the Religious Society of Friends. With nearly 15 years of experience working within the Labour and trade union movements directing European trade union work in the areas of energy, industrial policy, environment and health and safety, Judith was elected Confederal Secretary at the European Trade Union Congress in 2011. In the European elections in 2014 she became one of two Labour MEPs for the North East. In the European Parliament, she is a member of the International Trade Committee and is the European Labour Party's spokesperson on TTIP.

Emma Briant gained a BA from Coventry University and MRes from Glasgow Caledonian University before completing her MA and PhD at the University of Glasgow. Her research interests are in the areas of propaganda, influence and censorship in the US and UK, war-reporting, counter-terrorism and governmental adaptation to a changing media environment. Her doctoral research examined Anglo-American counter-terrorism propaganda and 'strategic communication' since 2001, which is now the subject of her new book. Her other recently published research includes analyses of media coverage of disability and asylum in the UK, written with the Glasgow Media Group where she worked before coming to Sheffield in 2013. Emma is now an associate fellow of the Sir Bernard Crick Centre for Public Understanding of Politics in the Department of Politics at Sheffield University.

Paul Rogers is a biologist by academic origin, and Professor at the University of Bradford's Department of Peace Studies. He is also the Oxford Research Group's Global Security Consultant. He has worked in the field of international security, arms control and political violence for over 30 years. He lectures at universities and defence colleges in several countries and has written or edited 26 books. He writes monthly Briefings for the ORG website analysing the international security situation, and reports for ORG on international security and the 'War on Terror'. He is a frequent commentator on global security issues in both the national and international media, and writes regularly for openDemocracy. His family home is a smallholding near Huddersfield which contains a broadcasting studio, installed because of the frequency with which he is called by radio stations at home and abroad.

Polly Higgins is a barrister, author and speaker whose vision is of a world that works from one overriding principle: 'first do no harm.' Her books examine in depth how the power of a law of Ecocide could enable individuals, communities, governments and NGOs to bring to court prosecutions to examine the evidence of a given Ecocide. Such a law could prevent, prohibit and in some instances pre-empt the mass damage that is causing significant harm to the Earth. In 2013 she received an honorary Doctorate from the Business School of Lausanne and became Honorary Arne Naess Professor at Oslo University. She was named the 'Earth's Lawyer' by Change Awards and 'One of the world's top ten visionary thinkers' by the Ecologist Magazine. Her current focus of enquiry is on leadership crime, closing the door to dangerous industrial activity and creating a legal duty of care. She advises at governmental, legal and non-legal levels, and connects with a wide-range of organisations, NGOs and lawyers.

The Hexham Debates seek to carry on the tradition of active, radical debate essential for ensuring freedom and justice for all. We hope that this programme will demonstrate ways in which a government's power depends for its legitimacy on the consent of its citizens – and perhaps reveal how far we have moved away from that ideal.

Hexham Debates Series 8

Justice
Peace
Democracy

Saturdays in 2015

31 January

28 February

14 March

18 April *held at QEHS 2.00pm-4.00pm*

9 May

20 June

11.00am - 12.30pm *except for April event*

The St Mary's Centre
St Mary's R C Church
Hencotes, Hexham
NE46 2EB

Chair: George Hepburn

Admission Free – Retiring Collection

Organised by Northumbrians for Peace and Hexham Quakers

Contact Northumbrians_for_Peace@hotmail.co.uk