

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

2021

Anna Sobolíková

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni
Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

**The Impact of the Liberal Legislation of the 1960s on
Britain's Society and Culture**

Anna Sobolíková

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Studijní program Filologie

Studijní obor Cizí jazyky pro komerční praxi

Kombinace angličtina – francouzština

Bakalářská práce

**The Impact of the Liberal Legislation of
the 1960s on Britain's Society and
Culture**

Anna Sobolíková

Vedoucí práce:

PhDr. Alice Tihelková, Ph.D.

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Fakulta filozofická Západočeské univerzity v Plzni

Plzeň 2021

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval(a) samostatně a použil(a) jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

Plzeň, duben 2021

I would like to thank PhDr. Alice Tihelková, Ph.D. for supervising my bachelor's thesis, for her help, valuable advice and the time she devoted to it.

CONTENTS

- 1 INTRODUCTION 1**
- 2 1960s BRITAIN 3**
 - 2.1 Two points of view of 1960s Britain 3
 - 2.2 Spending money 4
 - 2.3 Economy 5
 - 2.4 Political background 5
 - 2.5 Education 7
 - 2.6 Women 8
 - 2.7 Literature and film 9
 - 2.8 Youth subcultures 10
 - 2.9 Fashion 11
- 3 THE DIVORCE REFORM ACT 1969 11**
 - 3.1 Historical background 11
 - 3.1.1 The Matrimonial Causes Act 1857 13
 - 3.1.2 Subsequent changes in law 13
 - 3.2 1960s 14
 - 3.3 Conclusion 17
- 4 CONTRACEPTION 18**
 - 4.1 Development of contraception 18
 - 4.2 Marie Stopes 19
 - 4.3 Contraception in Britain 20
 - 4.4 Conclusion 22
- 5 THE ABORTION ACT 1967 23**
 - 5.1 Historical background of abortion in Britain 23
 - 5.1.2 Situation in the 20th century before the change in law..... 24
 - 5.1.3 Backstreet abortions 25
 - 5.2 Arrival of The Abortion Act 1967 26

5.3 Conclusion	26
6 THE MURDER ACT 1965	27
6.1 Historical background of the death penalty	27
6.2 Cases that played role in the abolition of the death penalty.....	28
6.3 The last people in Britain sentenced to be hanged	29
6.4 Abolition of the death penalty in 1965	30
6.4.1 The first trial of serial murder after the abolition of the death penalty in Britain	32
6.5 Conclusion	33
7 THE RACE RELATIONS ACT 1965, 1968	33
7.1 Historical background	33
7.2 Arrival of Race Relations Act 1965 and 1968	34
7.3 Powellism	36
7.4 Conclusion	38
8 THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 1967	38
8.1 Historical background	38
8.2 1967 – the year of legalization of gay relationships and life after	39
8.2.1 Significant changes in the gay community	41
8.2.2 Subsequent changes in law	42
8.3 Conclusion	43
9 CONCLUSION	44
10 BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	46
11 ABSTRACT	55
12 RESUME	56
13 APPENDICES	57

1 INTRODUCTION

The bachelor's thesis focuses on the changes brought about by the liberal legislation of the 1960s in Britain and how this legislation changed British society and culture. The aim of this bachelor's thesis is to summarize the history associated with these topics and compare it with the situation that came after the change in the law. Moreover, the thesis seeks to provide an answer to the question whether Britain became more civilized as a result of introducing the liberal laws, an inquiry inspired by the chapter "Is Britain civilized?" from the Dominic Sandbrook's book *White Heat*.

The purpose of the first chapter is to outline the situation in the 1960s in Britain in general. There is a brief description of issues such as youth subcultures, women's situation, education and especially the political background, which is essential for this thesis. The following chapters discuss in more detail the specific liberal laws from 1960s and their impact on British society and culture. Specifically, the following laws were selected for the thesis: the Divorce Reform Act 1969 which introduced no-fault divorce, the Abortion Act 1967 concerning the medical abortion, the Murder Act 1965 which abolished the death penalty, Race Relations Act 1965 – first legislation addressing racial discrimination and the Sexual Offences Act 1967 that entailed the legalization of gay relationships in private. One of the chapters which is related to the abortions and women's situation in general is devoted to contraception, because a life changing contraceptive pill was invented in 1960s.

The topic of the thesis was selected because of the fundamental impact of the Sixties' liberal legislation on the development of British society, the role of women and the general cultural setting.

Several books and Internet resources were used to create the bachelor's thesis, e.g. *White Heat* by Dominic Sandbrook or *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics* by Mark Donnelly, as well as a number of newspapers/websites such as *The Guardian*, *BBC* or *Britannica*.

2 1960s BRITAIN

Susan Cohen, the author of the book *1960s Britain*, describes the British society in the early 1960s as: "... at large patriotic, class conscious and cautious, accepting of gender and race inequalities and accustomed to the traditional role of men as breadwinners and women as homemakers" (Cohen 2014: 7).

Divorces were condemned, the death penalty was applied, and abortion and homosexual relations were illegal. Nevertheless, these issues changed with a number of liberating rights that were implemented in the 1960s.

However, the reforms (such as the change in the law on abortion, divorce or homosexuality) that were enacted in the 1960s should not be seen as issues that suddenly took place in this decade, but rather as a result of a liberalization process that began earlier (Donnelly 2005: 122). Therefore, the history that preceded the individual reforms will be briefly discussed in the bachelor's thesis.

2.1 Two points of view of 1960s Britain

On the one hand, the 1960s are seen as a period of cultural renewal and social and economic progress. There was a combination of post-war materialism, sexual freedom, youth rebellion and artistic innovation. Living standards and consumer convenience increased, the novelty and modernity was worshiped (Donnelly 2005: 3-9), women gained more access to jobs, technological progress changed the way people spent their free time (thanks to colour TV and pocket radios, people spent time listening to music and watching TV) (Historic UK). In addition, there have been changes in the laws resulting in legalizing abortions, homosexuals ceasing to be criminals and divorcing without blaming the other. This was the optimistic point of view.

However, at the same time, the decade had also its negative side. Anxiety about the future and a premonition of the country's international decline and weakening world power hovered in the air (Donnelly 2005: 3), the cultural and social change was perceived as unwelcome by some. There was also seen the beginning of the disintegration of the order, a blank concentration on cultural trivialities rather than cultural self-improvement and the new was elevated above the established. From a Victorian point of view, there was a regret of diminishing values, such as self-discipline or a belief in moral certainty. This new Britain was also burdened by economic problems, international decline and political failure (Donnelly 2005: 5-7).

2.2 Spending money

The 1960s brought larger cultural choice and people could spend more money than before. For some, the cultural revolution of the 60s was not about sexual freedom and similar matters, but about spending. A large number of people had the opportunity to buy the things that made up their identity and style. Even the working classes could afford this, owing to an increase in the average wage (Donnelly 2005: 28-29).

A large part of money fell on households and activities related to it. Britain was transformed with a help of spending patterns from the early 60s. Consumer goods of long-term need, previously available to the richer minority, have now become matter of course, due to technological progress, better production techniques and instalment sales. As a result, by the end of the decade, nearly every British household had a television, washing machine, vacuum cleaner and refrigerator and about half of the households had a telephone. By 1966, half of the households also owned a car, unlike in 1961, when less than one third owned a car. Between 1960 and 1970, car ownership doubled. The number of supermarkets also increased. Before the beginning of

the 60s there were about 300 of them and at the beginning of the 70s there were about 5000 of them (Donnelly 2005: 30-31).

2.3 Economy

Domestic prosperity grew significantly, but people preferred products imported from abroad to British ones. The main weak points of British economy were the low level of exports, balance of payments problems and inflationary pressures (Donnelly 2005: 49).

2.4 Political background

In the early 1960s, Britain was ruled by the Conservatives seeking economic change and retreat from colonialism. This was the case until 1964, when their long tenure ended in victory of the Labour party, led by Harold Wilson. He had to deal with problems that had accumulated during the previous Conservative government, including poor labour productivity or unrest in trade unions. His government in conclusion proved unpopular (Britannica).

However, Wilson's government supported the liberalization of abortion, divorce, censorship and homosexuality laws and eventually abolished the death penalty. During his reign, major steps were taken to stop the discrimination against women and ethnic minorities. His government is also behind the creation of the Open University, which will be mentioned in the following subchapter (Gov.uk). The Labour party remained in power until 1970, when the Conservatives returned to the helm.

The Labour Party targeted the so-called "middle majority", meaning young voters, women, white-collars and professional workers. The Party gave rise to the idea of a new Britain, which marked a chance for change, revival, new confidence and a change in the face and future of Britain. Harold Wilson (Labour leader) promised the British an end to economic privileges, the eradication of poverty in the midst of abundance, and the creation of real equality of

opportunity. In short, the overarching theme of the Labour manifesto was modernization (Sandbrook 2015: ch.1).

The legal reforms of the 1960s, which are associated with the term "permissive society", are mainly attributed to Roy Jenkins and Anthony Crosland, who were members of the Gaitskellite right. Roy Jenkins (see appendix I) became the new Labour Home Secretary and while Wilson was primarily concerned with economic issues and modernization, Jenkins was interested in human freedom. He wanted to make the state less restrictive of personal freedom, more supportive of the arts and wished that there would be an environment conducive to cheerfulness, tolerance and beauty, and where there would be no room for puritanical restrictions, hypocrisy and an unpleasant pattern of life. The hanging seemed barbaric to him, laws banning male homosexuality brutal and unjust, and he considered them a restriction of personal freedom that must be removed. He viewed abortion and divorce laws as obsolete and harsh. Jenkins contemplated the change in these issues to be more important in the long run than the economy (Sandbrook 2015: ch.16).

Jenkins' agenda was not well supported, yet during his time at the Home Office, he accomplished a fulfilment of his program through careful preparation, courageous leadership, and excellent political strategy. In particular, he mobilized backbench bills and supported their promoters (especially David Steel, who introduced the abortion bill), which was decisive (Adonis, 2013). In addition to supporting the legalization of abortion, Jenkins also supported the legalization of homosexuality, the abolition of theatre censorship and the strengthening of race relations legislation (Stockley; Liberal History).

The reforms that took place in the 1960s were not introduced as a government initiative, but as bills from private members. The House of Commons voted according to a personal inner feeling rather than a party policy. Most Labour MPs were very mistrustful of social reforms, and the government was careful not to be associated with liberal legislation. According to a 1969 poll, Labour supporters were more hostile to social reform than their Tory opponents.

Only 5% considered changes in the laws concerning homosexuality, abortions, etc. to be their favourite development, and more popular development was the increase in the state pension, which 50% of people indicated. It should be mentioned that each reform was the result of concrete pressure and merit, it was not a mass permissive disintegration of laws. For example, some proponents of legalizing homosexuality have simultaneously opposed abortion reforms (Sandbrook 2015: ch.16). As mentioned earlier, the social reforms of the 1960s were the result of decades of progressive campaign, not of a more bohemian lifestyle from the late 60's.

2.5 Education

There were no kindergartens in Britain in the 1960s. Most of the women were at home and did not work away from home, so the children were separated from mothers for the first time when they started school. The School Broadcasting Council played an important role in education in the 1960s, thanks to which children exercised at school. With a generation of "baby boomers" coming after World War II, there were over 30 students in the classroom in the early 1960s (Castelow, 2017).

The year 1969 was important for British education, as a new university that was open to all was established. The Open University was started during the reign of Harold Wilson, but the greatest credit for its launch went to Jennie Lee. The Open University was conceived as a way to reach especially women whose choice after school was limited by marriage and the upbringing of children or those who for any reason could not participate in traditional university studies. The Open University was created in an effort to change, for example, the assumption that higher education was only for the elite (Riley, 2018).

2.6 Women

The British society was patriarchal, and the 1960s, with the help of women fighting for their rights, helped to change that. However, it should not be forgotten that women fought for their rights already before 1960s. In his book *Sixties Britain – Culture, Society and Politics*, Mark Donnelly divided feminism into three phases. The first phase was in the 19th century, when women fought for equal rights in education, the workplace and politics. The second phase was in the interwar years, when women focused on the family sphere and contraception and finally, the third phase, which took place in the 1960s and the feminists were more ambitious and thorough than their predecessors (Donnelly 2005: 158).

Small and informal groups began to form, in which women met to discuss personal freedom or self-expression. These meetings revealed how many women were dissatisfied with the experience of marriage or sex, which they considered to be something like compulsory housework. The women in these groups saw that they were not alone, and the fact that they did not experience the marital idyll they had seen in magazines did not mean it was their fault, but that the structure of gender relations in the family was to blame (Donnelly 2005: 159-160).

In 1968, women at the Ford car plants in Dagenham and Halewood went on strike and sought to achieve equal pay and rank as their male counterparts (see appendix II). The strike caught the attention of the national press and was notable for the mobilization of predominantly working-class women. The strike encouraged the trade unions and led to the creation of the National Joint Action Campaign for Women's Equal Rights. The first meeting took place in May 1969 and led to the Equal Pay Act of 1970, which stipulated that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work (Donnelly 2005: 163). Around the same time, there was a strike held by London women working as bus guides, who went on strike to demand the right to be bus drivers. These actions of ordinary working-class women were one of the things that were genuinely significant in

the changes in consciousness connected with the developments of the 1960s (Marwick 1998: ch.13).

Another change which happened in 1968 was that women began to assert themselves in the running of Britain, and Barbara Castle happened to be the first woman appointed First Secretary of State (Watson; Historic UK).

Women were disadvantaged by the British education system, and especially those in the working class who were not encouraged to continue their education. Their education was focused more on domestic work or low-paid employment. Few women went to university, and when they did, they mostly studied art or the humanity studies, not "male" disciplines such as science or philosophy. The Women's Liberation Movement, which emerged in the late 1960s, is responsible for the development of feminist courses in which the history, science and art of women were discussed (British Library, 2013).

2.7 Literature and film

At the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, a trend emerged in the publication of novels in which sexual themes appeared. With the changes in literary censorship, more books containing sexual matters (owing to this they were considered bolder at the time) were written and published. At the same time, older publications which had previously been banned because they had corrupted public morality, began to be published. The books began to be published in paperback editions for the mass market and the "paperback revolution" began (Marwick 1998: ch.4).

The censorship has also changed in the film. People began to be more open and no longer excessively ashamed not only of what they read, but also of what they watched and what they were doing, which heartened further development towards freedom as they began to see more topics that were previously taboo (such as homosexuality) in books, movies, or plays (Marwick 1998: ch.4). This manifested itself especially in the field of homosexuality after

the abolition of theatrical censorship in 1968, when by the end of the decade playwrights gained more freedom in representing homosexuality on stage (Buzwell, 2019).

2.8 Youth subcultures

In the 1960s, there were several youth subcultures in Britain, such as the mods, the skinheads or the hippies and each was characterized by its own specific style.

To begin with, the term "subculture" should be discussed. According to Dick Hebdige, the meaning of subculture is contradictory, and conflicting definitions clash most in style (Hebdige 1979: 3).

Style is important in a subculture. Its transformations go against something that is "normal" or in other words go "against nature". Members of subcultures use specific gestures or speak in a way that offends the "silent majority". This manifestation then calls into question the principle of unity and cohesion, which runs counter to the myth of consensus. Speaking of going against "normal", the subculture that wanted to move the most away from the normalized forms was the punks (Hebdige 1979: 18-19).

Youth subcultures are known mainly for their style of music and dressing. A significant development in the identity of British youth came about between 1960-1963. By the end of 1963, the youth subcultures were formed in such a way that it was associated with definite and liberating patterns of behaviour and ways of self-presentation, but at the same time it was not monolithic (Marwick 1998: ch.3). It was the baby-boom generation and their lifestyle differed from that of their parents. Young people enjoyed culture, employment, opportunities to spend money and freedom (Cohen 2014: 7).

As for music, a "skiffle" developed among the young, which was an offshoot of traditional jazz. Then came the more incisive influence of rock'n'roll (Marwick 1998: ch.3).

Young girls began to turn away from stereotypical magazines from the 50s. Some girls were inclined to be more independent, wanted to have control over things even after marriage, and did not want to dedicate their lives to men and many children (Marwick 1998: ch.3).

2.9 Fashion

Fashion was pushed forward by pioneers Mary Quant and John Stephen. Mary Quant designed and sold colourful miniskirts that were designed as a symbol of sexual freedom. The boutiques were innovative and sold clothes that even working-class girls could afford. (Marwick 1998: ch.3) Quant used simple geometric elements and colours, which gave women a new level of femininity. Women could therefore wear clothing that would have been considered inappropriate 10 years ago. The fashion of the 1960s reflected many social changes of the decade (Watson; Historic UK).

3 THE DIVORCE REFORM ACT 1969

3.1 Historical background

As far as Common law is concerned, women were considered only slightly more than the husband's movable property. Wives had barely few rights in Common Law, as husband and wife were seen as one through the eyes of the law. In practice, however, the fact that they were "one" did not mean that they were both involved in the same way, because the man prevailed. The wife was obliged to provide the man with services and her company, while the man had the right to consort his wife. Men could even punish or imprison their wife at home, but this right was taken from them in 1891 by decision of the House of Lords (Chloros 1978: 43).

Changes in legislation concerning marriage and divorce have not taken place for centuries, and this is due to the fact that there were powerful groups that were against any changes in law concerning marriage and divorce. The first group were the professional lawyers, especially those who worked in the church court. They benefited the most from the clutter and uncertainty in marriage and divorce laws. Another group was the Church of England clergy. The most powerful in this group were the bishops who opposed divorce until the 1960s. These bishops were well established in the House of Lords, and it was very difficult for their opponents to achieve legislative change regarding divorce. Another group were women, especially those from the elite and middle class, who feared that their husband would leave them. As they did not have sufficient education or career opportunities, the departure of their husband would mean financial difficulties for them. Although women were not politically strong, their active opposition made the role of divorce reformers more difficult (Stone 1990: 16).

The divorce through the court was firstly introduced in England in 1857 by the Matrimonial Causes Act. Until then, however, divorces also took place. The man could divorce if he proved that his wife had committed adultery, at the same time that he had not committed it and that no secret agreement had been reached between the parties. Nevertheless, the process was complicated. The man first had to obtain a divorce a mensa et thoro (an order that the spouses may live separately). Subsequently, he had to obtain a judgement that there was a 'criminal conversation', which meant adultery, and finally the man had to secure the enactment of a private law of parliament that definitively dissolved the marriage and allowed him to remarry (Cretney 2003: 162-163).

3.1.1 The Matrimonial Causes Act 1857

The Matrimonial Causes Act 1857 simplified the divorce process and divorces became more accessible to people who were not so rich (since before the act, the divorce was very expensive due to the Act of Parliament) (The Guardian, 2009).

With this act, women could also apply for a divorce, but for them it was more complicated than for men. Women had to prove the other party's adultery as well, but moreover that it was either an incest, that the husband was part of bigamy, that he abused his wife or left her for two years or more (Cretney 2003: 167-169).

Divorce has been seen to have become a little more accessible since the act was passed. Before, The Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes dealt with 200 applications a year and in 1900 there were 494 applications, which is more than 2x as much as before the passing of the act (Cretney 2003: 194-195).

3.1.2 Subsequent changes in law

As for another significant change in the law, it took place in 1923. A bill was introduced into the House of Commons, the aim of which was to achieve the equality of both partners. The bill was demanded by women who had recently been given the right to vote, and for fear of insulting this new electorate, the bill was approved and easily became law (Stone 1990: 395-396). This meant that 66 years after the introduction of The Matrimonial Causes Act 185, women could now prove "only" their husband's adultery with their divorce application, as was the case with men.

The grounds for divorce were extended by The Matrimonial Causes Act 1937. Both parties could now file for divorce on the grounds of adultery, if one of the spouses left the other without reason for at least three years prior to filing, in case of violence against the other, or that the other spouse was mentally

terminally ill and had been in continuous care and treatment for at least five years prior to the application (Cretney 2003: 251-252).

In 1937, after the introduction of the law, 4 900 divorces took place and the number increased to 8 200 in two years. After World War II, the number increased rapidly from about 8 000 applications a year to about 60 000 applications in 1947. The main cause was the wife's infidelity while the man was at war. However, after 1947, the number dropped again to 31 000 applications in 1950 and even to 23 000 in 1958. Even so, the divorce rate was higher than before the war (Stone 1990: 402).

In 1948, the Labour government started to provide an assistance to poor people in divorce proceedings. Thus, the number of divorce applications supported by legal aid increased (from a fifth to more than a half) and the share of manual workers among petitioners increased to 58 percent. A divorce was therefore accessible to the poor people for the first time in English history (Stone 1990: 401-402).

For many years, English law more or less adhered to the principle that divorce should only be granted to an innocent claimant who can prove that the defendant was guilty of marriage. Over time, the need for moral guilt of the accused fell away. Divorce should therefore be available to any party regardless of who caused the break-up of the marriage (Chloros 1978: 54).

3.2 1960s

With the growing popularity of contraception, when sex began to be associated with pleasure instead of reproduction, the idea of an ideal marriage also developed. In this new idea, both spouses were equal and had the same right to assert their views and decisions and held together (Sandbrook 2015: ch.32). Not only has the view of marriage changed, but so has the view of divorces, which led to further change in law.

In 1963, a bill allowing divorce after seven years of separation was introduced by the Labour MP Leo Abse. However, this attempt to change the law was unsuccessful. Three years later, the church commission advocated to cease the attributing of all guilt to one of the spouses, and that the "irreparable breakdown of the marriage" should be used as the basis for divorce. Nevertheless, proving the culprit in the breakup of the marriage did not end until the Divorce Reform Act of 1969 (Sandbrook 2015: ch.32).

A major change concerning divorce took place in 1969, when the Divorce Reform Act 1969 received royal assent. However, the act came into effect two years later, in 1971. With this act, it was stipulated that a sufficient reason for a divorce was that the marriage had broken down irretrievably. Nevertheless, it had to be fulfilled that either the defendant had committed adultery or acted in such a way that the plaintiff could not stand the concept of cohabitation, that the defendant had left the plaintiff continuously for at least two years or that the spouses had lived separately for at least two years (if both spouses have agreed to the divorce) or for at least five years (if one of the spouses did not agree to the divorce.) In the following years, it was determined that a good divorce law should be with maximum justice and minimum bitterness, distress and humiliation, and should support rather than undermine marriage (Cretney 2003: 374-377).

A petition for divorce was prohibited from being filed within three years of the marriage (under the Herbert Act), unless the judge allowed it because there was a case of extraordinary hardship on the part of the petitioner or exceptional corruption on the part of the respondent. However, the requirement to prove that the spouse had committed exceptional corruption did not merge with the aim of divorcing with a minimum of bitterness, distress and humiliation. The judges therefore had to assess whether the applicant's point of honour was sufficiently convincing. It was much more questionable whether this had any impact on the stability of the marriage. In 1984, the government adjusted this, and three years was reduced to one year (this period of time was considered

sufficient to represent the necessary symbolic promotion of the state's interest in maintaining the stability and dignity of marriage) (Cretney 2003: 378-379).

Prior to the enactment of the Act (specifically in 1965), there were 2.8 divorces per 1 000 married adults in England and Wales, 9.6 by the next ten years and to 12 by the next 5 years. Within twenty years of the change in the law, the annual number of marriages only slightly exceeded the annual number of divorces (Sandbrook 2015: ch.32). Divorces have therefore become more and more common in Britain.

The change in attitudes toward sexuality that took place in the 1960s (see, for example, the introduction of the birth control pill) contributed to extramarital affairs, and between 1950 and 1970 the number of divorces for wife's infidelity increased from 48 per cent to 70 per cent (Stone 1990: 403). The divorce rate has been steadily rising in general. In the mid-1950s, the rate was 7%, in the early 1970s increased by a further 3%, and at the end of the 1970s, every third marriage ended in divorce (Donnelly 2005: 122).

According to Pat Than, a professor of contemporary history at King's College London, the traditional family consisted of two parents who stayed together until death. Then arrived the 1960s, and people began to divorce, having more extramarital children, and some perceived British society as "broken." However, after 1969, divorce largely lost the stigma that surrounded it, since everything was public (Richardson, 2014).

The change in divorce law also reflected how the role of women changed (women became equal partners, they were not "anything less" than men) and at the same time marriage turned into a partnership based on comradeship, romance and affection (Sandbrook 2015: ch.32).

3.3 Conclusion

Previously, the roles of men and women in marriage or divorce were unequal. Until 1891, men even had the right to imprison their wives, and if they were rich, they could get divorced if they wanted to. Women did not have such an opportunity.

Changes in divorce law have not taken place in England for centuries. Divorce was first legalized in 1857 by The Matrimonial Causes Act. Women could also get divorced under this act, but it was more complicated for them than for men. This was the case for another 66 years, when in 1923 there was equality of both parties, which now had the same conditions.

Until 1937, a divorce could only take place if the infidelity of one of the spouses was proved. Since 1937, there have been other reasons added, namely that one of the spouses left the other without reason for a certain period of time, that there was a violence or that the other spouse was mentally terminally ill. In 1948, divorce became more accessible to the poor.

A big change came with liberal legislation, specifically with the year 1969, when the Divorce Reform Act passed and the reason that the couple lived separately for two or five years was added. As a result, for the first time in British history, people have been able to divorce without having to blame the other and having to prove their fault (such as adultery) since the act was approved. Divorce thus became much easier, and people did not have to stay in a marriage with which they were not satisfied. This can also be seen in the fact that the divorce rate rose rapidly, when over the next decade since the act was passed, every third marriage ended in divorce. However, more divorces also meant the break-up of the traditional family.

4 CONTRACEPTION

When discussing the 60s, it is perhaps necessary to mention the contraceptive pill, which changed the lives of many women. It is considered by numerous people to be the greatest invention of the 20th century. The birth control pill has its own history, which will be discussed in the following subchapter.

4.1 Development of contraception

The contraception is related to the female reproductive system. Not much was known about it until the 1840s, when Theodor Bischoff and Felix Pouchet discovered that the ovaries regularly release an egg. Until then, women were considered only as providers of beds for male semen, where it evolved into human, because life was created by men. The members of the Royal Society of London surmised that the male semen had something to do with pregnancy but did not know how. Over time, it began to figure out how the female reproductive system worked, and in 1921 a substantial finding was made – if there is a fertilized egg in the female system, ovulation does not occur and therefore there will be no further pregnancy (Asbell 1995: 13-17).

This led to the idea that the body could be fooled by receiving a signal that there was a pregnancy, even if it was not true and for that reason stopping the ovulation could be applied to contraception (Asbell 1995: 17-18).

The name Margaret Sanders is mainly associated with the creation of the birth control pill. Margaret already in 1912 imagined a “magic pill“ that would be used as a contraceptive. On the one hand, she was a feminist who fought for rights and opportunities for women and, on the other hand, she was a supporter of negative eugenics (in Lexico defined as “the practice of trying to prevent the birth of children to persons considered defective or in some way unfit to be parents“). In 1916, she and her sister opened the first birth control clinic in America (Eldridge 2010: ch.1).

Margaret Sanders took an important step by introducing Katherine Dexter McComrick (a wealthy heiress) to scientist Gregory Pincus. McComrick gave Pincus the money to find a “miracle drug”, and thus began the successful journey to contraceptive pill. Pincus was joined by a scientist Min Chueh Chang and a gynecologist Dr. John Rock. There were several issues on the way to miracle pill, such as the deaths of two women, which were probably caused by hormone exposure. However, despite all problems, the sale of the first contraceptive pill called *Enovid* (see appendix III) was approved in 1960, which changed the world forever (Eldridge 2010: ch.1).

Britain has a similar historic figure to Margaret Sanger, namely Marie Stopes, who should also be mentioned in this thesis and so the following subchapter is devoted to her.

4.2 Marie Stopes

Marie Stopes was a British pioneer in the field of hormonal contraception. In 1921, she founded her first birth control clinic. People assumed she had a medical education, but that was not true – Marie was an expert on fossil plants and coal (Falcon-Lang, 2010).

During her marriage with a scientist Reginald Gates, she discovered that Reginald was impotent. Sexually frustrated by an unhappy marriage, she wrote *Married Love*, the first sexual manual focused on women. It took her two years to find someone to print it out. One publisher even noted that if women demand too much sexually, they will not find a man. She later published a best-selling guide to birth control called *Wise Parenthood* (Falcon-Lang, 2010).

Marie Stopes was in contact with other pioneers in the field of contraception, such as the already mentioned Margaret Sanger. At first there was a friendship between them, but this subsequently turned into a rivalry. However, Marie was at the beginning affected by Margaret’s success in the field of birth control (Debenham 2018: 80).

Although on one hand she is considered a pioneer in the field of family planning, on the other hand Marie Stopes is also known for her support of eugenics and racism (Debenham 2018: 126).

On the other hand, she opposed the main eugenic view that the race should be improved by higher classes producing larger families and lower classes limiting their procreation. She argued that upper and middle class women have the right to control their fertility (Debenham 2018: 126).

In conclusion, it can be stated that Marie Stopes was a controversial woman figure. She was paving the way for birth control in Britain, and she was concerned with women's right to control their fertility. However, her eugenic views in many cases overshadow this fact.

4.3 Contraception in Britain

The contraceptive pill was introduced in Great Britain in 1961. Until then (and prior to proper expansion of the pill), condoms, intermittent intercourse and diaphragms were the most commonly used methods in the country. A 1967-1968 survey revealed that 47% of married women using contraception use a condom as a method of protection against conception. Nevertheless, by 1983 women used the pill more than twice as much as condoms and this led to increased awareness of sexually transmitted diseases. In the 1-8 years since the introduction of the pill, its use has risen from 50 000 women to almost a million and at the end of the 20th century it was approximately 3 750 000 million (Fpa.org).

The contraceptive pill was in Britain firstly used by women from the upper classes. However, it soon spread to other social classes. A research from the late 1960s manifested that 25% of working-class married couples were using the contraceptive pill compared to couples outside the working class using the pill, which was 22%. The survey also showed a decrease in condom use and withdrawal and an increase in the pill usage (Marks 2001: 190-191).

For the working class in Britain, the contraceptive pill marked a turning point in the field of contraception. Suddenly, women themselves could take care of protection and not have to rely on men. Most contraceptive methods before the pill were not very effective unless used with great caution. The society believed that all methods of contraception were at risk of failure. The advent of the pill changed this view. From the beginning, the pill was touted as 99% effective. Its effectiveness has aroused an interest in the effectiveness of other methods, and the question of the level of pregnancy risk has become important when choosing contraception. The fact that people could plan the size of their family allowed them to devote more time to, for example, women's education or career. Women could now plan when they would have children and how many of them (Marks 2001: 192).

Nevertheless, the pill has confused women about its use. One woman put it in her vagina, another in her ear because she confused the term "oral" with "aural" and some thought it was used during sexual intercourse. However, given the use of previous methods, this is not surprising. Many women chose the pill because its use was more natural and did not affect the sexual intercourse (Marks 2001: 193).

On the other hand, there were also women who had the opposite opinion and were against the pill. They realized that sexual intercourse was messier and they also found out that the pill reduced their libido. Some women even lacked the feeling of insecurity about menstruating or not, and they were also denied a natural process by using the pill (Marks 2001: 194).

In the beginning, women had to prove that they were married in order to receive a prescription for the pill. The husband had to sign an agreement that he knew about the potential side effects of contraception. If these conditions were not met, the woman did not receive contraception. Nevertheless, the situation began to change and single women found a way to get the pill. As one British doctor recalled, for example, by borrowing the same ring in the

waiting room. In 1964, a change took a place and single women could obtain the pill through special clinics. (Marks 2001: 202).

However, the pill did not only have a positive side. Some British women complained that the pill caused them a depression, a headache and that they were bloated. The doctors did not take their complaints seriously, so the women even lied many times, and when the doctors asked them if they had any problems, they denied it. It has also become better known that the pill can cause a thrombosis or heart problems, which were more serious side effects. When deciding whether to use the pill, it was up to the woman herself and the factors such as her health or background (Marks 2001: 210-212).

The contraceptive pill was instrumental in paving the way for later matters relating to abortion (which will be discussed in the next chapter). Most importantly, the pill separated sexual pleasure from fear of pregnancy (Asbell 1995: 7).

4.4 Conclusion

It cannot be denied that the contraceptive pill was a revolutionary invention that changed women's lives. In the days before the pill, methods that were not very effective were used, and their use was almost mostly dependent on men. With the advent of the pill, everything changed, and women could take control of conception. This mainly led to women starting to enjoy sex more because they did not have to deal with the fear of pregnancy. At the same time, women did not have to dedicate their lives only to children and could begin to devote more time to their careers or studies. Although the pill has its disadvantages, as it is to this day, its use has grown rapidly in the first few years, and over time, the pill has become available to all women.

As stated in a book named *Sexual Chemistry: A History of the Contraceptive Pill* where its author Lara V. Marks traces the scientific origins of the pill to Europe and Mexico in the beginning of the twentieth century and

addresses the impact of the pill: “Many women felt that in reducing the fear of pregnancy, the pill allowed them to feel more comfortable about sex and to achieve their full sexual potential for the first time“ (Marks 2001: 194).

The note above suggests that the pill not only lowered the number of unwanted pregnancies, but mainly changed the sex life of women, who could finally take sex as a pleasure rather than fear of unwanted pregnancy.

5 THE ABORTION ACT 1967

5.1 Historical background of abortion in Britain

In the 19th century and early 20th century, there were several laws that affected the prohibition of abortion until 1967, when The Abortion Act came. They will be summarized in the following text.

The legal background for a prohibition of abortion in England began in 1803 with the Lord Ellenborough's Act. The Act discussed that the abortions after quickening (the first movements of the fetus felt in utero; it occurs from the eighteenth to the twentieth week of pregnancy [IDHS]) would be punished by the death penalty. The punishment in the form of death for an abortion was abolished in 1837 by the Offences Against the Person Act. This Act also abolished the distinction between abortions before and after quickening. Anyone who intended to procure an abortion of any woman was punished, according to a court ruling, by being transported overseas for the duration of his or her natural life or for at least 15 years or was imprisoned (not more than three years) (Keown 1988: 3; 26-27).

In 1861, The Offences Against the Person Act amended the sentence to the maximum of life imprisonment (Keown 1988: 7). In 1929, the Infant Life (Preservation) Act was passed, which prohibited the abortion of a child who would be able to be born alive, except for the permission of abortion to preserve the mother's life (Keown 1988: 50).

In 1967, The Abortion Act which legalized abortions came into force and will be further discussed.

5.1.2 Situation in the 20th century before the change in law

At the beginning of the 20th century, women had their fertility associated with menstruation rather than sexual intercourse. When an otherwise regular period was delayed, it usually signalled to the woman that something was wrong. The emmenagogues were used to deal with delayed menstruation. Abortifacient drugs gave women a degree of control over their fertility when intermittent intercourse was in the hands of a man. The advantages or disadvantages of another mouth which would have to be fed were addressed only when the menstruation was delayed. Thus, the abortion was a kind of survival strategy that saved women from the problems that would another child bring (Brookes 2013: 3).

In addition to drugs, other widespread abortion methods included a dilation of the mouth of the uterus by insertion of slippery elm or massive doses of penny royal syrup. Some women relied on prayers or medicines prescribed by veterinarians for animals, diachylon (or lead plaster), a teaspoonful of gunpowder taken with gin, an infusion made of water in which pennies and nails were dipped or the use of a knitting needle. Among working-class women, the use of abortifacients was a tradition of self-medication and drugs could be purchased anonymously via mail. The women then ended up in hospitals due to the consequences of drastic abortion efforts. Elderton's study showed that abortions were common and especially in working-class areas where women did not have enough work (Brookes 2013: 3-5).

In the 1960s, the Labour Government addressed urban poverty and poor housing. At that time, politicians saw the abortion as a way to deal with the problem women. It was generally assumed that abortion would be a solution for mentally or physically ill women, for those who are young to raise children or for

those whose families are already too big. This would reduce the number of inadequate individuals and, conversely, strengthen socially responsible family structures (Furedi 2016: 17).

5.1.3 Backstreet abortions

Before the significant change in law concerning abortions in the 1960s, women in Britain who did not have access to contraception underwent backstreet abortions (“an illegal and usually dangerous operation to end a pregnancy done by someone who is not medically trained“ stated in Cambridge Dictionary), which were very dangerous and many women were dying from them.

The Parliament's first reaction to the increasing number of backstreet abortions took place in 1939. The Birkett Committee was established and estimated that there were approximately 44 000 - 60 000 illegal abortions a year in Britain and Wales. According to an estimate by obstetrician and professor James Drife before the year 1966, there were about 100,000 backstreet abortions a year, resulting in the deaths of about 25 women a year (Marsden; care.org).

Backstreet abortions were illegal, and pregnant women even threatened other women who performed abortions to their acquaintances that if they did not help them, they would report them to the police (Ganger, 2017).

In 1965, the BBC drama *Up the Junction* about the street abortions was created by Ken Loach. The film depicts the lives of three young working-class women from south London. Loach's drama was later edited by TV producer Tony Garnett, who had a personal connection to the topic, as his mother also died as a result of a street abortion (Brown, 2013). Later, more precisely in 2004, another film called *Vera Drake* (by Mike Leigh) was made on the topic of street abortions.

5.2 Arrival of The Abortion Act 1967

In 1967, the law legalizing abortions was passed in Britain. The Abortion Act of 1967 legalized fetal abortions within 28 weeks of pregnancy. Unlike the previous law, this allowed abortion for all women, not just those who were in danger of death. In the first 11 months, more than 4 000 abortions were performed by 8 doctors (Cohen 2014: 90).

The law stipulates that in order for an abortion to be legal, it must be approved by two doctors and performed by a registered medical practitioner. With this law, it was legal for a pregnancy to be terminated even due to the poor social or financial situation in which the woman found herself (due to which the birth of a child would affect the mother's physical or mental well-being). All things considered, women could not have an abortion on demand, it depended on the decision of the two doctors, who had to consider how the birth of a child would affect a woman (BPAS).

Its promoter was the Liberal MP David Steel. It was a controversial issue opposed by the Catholic Church and by a political counterpart (Donnelly 2004: 120). However, the topic of abortion continues to arouse controversy to this day.

The goal of the Act was to reduce the number of deaths caused by illegal abortion, and this goal was met. Before 1967, when the Act came, 50-60 women a year had died from unsafe abortions and this was eliminated by passing the Act (Savage, 2017).

5.3 Conclusion

It can be seen that the legalization of abortion has had a positive impact. Abortions have been criminalized since the early 19th century. This has led women to undergo drastic measures to deal with unwanted pregnancies, which often resulted in death. In 1967, the situation changed with the advent of The

Abortion Act, which made abortions no longer a criminal offense if performed by a physician and approved by two doctors.

At the same time, it was another step towards the liberalization of women, who now came to the right to choose and did not have to keep a child that would significantly affect their physical or mental condition or life situation, although it was still in the hands of doctors. Even so, the law achieved its goal and reduced the number of women who died as a result of illegal abortions.

6 THE MURDER ACT 1965

6.1 Historical background of the death penalty

From the Anglo-Saxon era until 1965, hanging was the main form of the death penalty in Britain. Between the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 19th century, there was a legal system "Bloody Code", due to which more than 200 crimes (mostly petty) were punished by death. Statutes during this period mainly concerned property crimes (shoplifting, pickpocketing, etc.). At the beginning of the 19th century, Sir Samuel Romilly succeeded in abolishing the death penalty for some less serious crimes. In 1861, the death penalty was abolished, except for crimes, which were: murder, piracy with violence, high treason and arson in the royal dockyards. In addition, in 1868, the Capital Punishment Act abolished public executions (Seal, 2018).

In 1922, the death penalty was abolished for mothers who murdered newborns, and in 1931, the death penalty was abolished for pregnant women because these groups were not executed as much in practice. Two years later, the death penalty for people under the age of 18 was abolished, as no one under the age of 18 had been executed in Britain since 1887. In the 20th century, there were several campaigns for the abolition of the death penalty, as it was considered uncivilized or disproportionately applied to the poor (Seal, 2018).

In 1957, the Homicide Act was passed and created a new crime of capital murder and stipulated that all other murders were non-capital and were to be punished by life imprisonment. The Act led directly to the suspension of the death penalty and its subsequent abolition in 1969 (Knowles QC 2015: 19).

A significant change came with The Murder Act of 1965, which abolished the death penalty even for capital murder and will be discussed in the following chapter.

However, the death penalty remained for cases of high treason, arson in the Royal Dockyards, piracy with violence and capital offences under military law. The death penalty was not completely abolished in Britain until 1998, when the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 were passed (Knowles QC 2015: 56).

6.2 Cases that played a role in the abolition of the death penalty

Even lives of innocent people, such as Derek Bentley, ended because of hanging. Bentley was convicted of a murder he did not commit. His friend Christopher Craig was asked by a police officer to hand over the weapon. Bentley told him the alleged sentence, "Let him have it, Chris," which the court interpreted as inciting murder and not as an incentive for Craig to hand over the weapon and Bentley was sentenced to death. Christopher Craig was a minor and therefore "only" spent 10 years in prison. The commotion over Bentley's death contributed to the abolition of the death penalty. Later, more precisely in 1991, a film about this event was created, with Bentley's fateful sentence "Let him have it" in the name (Martin, 2020).

Another wrongful accusation was the case of Timothy Evans (see appendix IV), who was accused of murdering his own wife and daughter. Evans did not have a very high IQ. He went to the police station and confessed to the murder, even though he did not commit it. Subsequently, however, a real killer was found, and only after Evans' death Roy Jenkins recommended a royal

pardon, which was subsequently accepted. The topic of hanging Evans often appeared in campaigns to abolish the death penalty (Evans, 2020).

The last important case was the case of the last woman to be hanged in Britain. It was Ruth Ellis, who shot her abusive boyfriend David Blakely in April 1955. Her conviction did not take into account the fact that Blakely had physically abused her. Her condemnation provoked a vast response in society, as she was also a mother and a large number of people personally identified with her, and her death had a great impact on people's emotional level. Her execution was also one of the cases that contributed to the abolition of death penalty (Seal, 2019).

6.3 The last people in Britain sentenced to be hanged

The last people hanged in Britain were Peter Anthony Allen and Gwynne Owen Evans. The two men were hanged on August 13, 1964 for stealing John Alan West's property and his subsequent murder. Their execution did not attract much national attention, and in the newspapers, it was only mentioned as less important news than the report on the road toll. The biggest mention about the executions was in the Liverpool Daily Post, as Allen was hanged in Liverpool. Neither the journalists nor the people present at Walton Prison in Liverpool (the prison where Allen was placed before the execution) knew that they were witnessing the last hanging in Britain (Block; Hostettler 1997: 11-17).

6.4 Abolition of the death penalty in 1965

A bill by MP Sydney Silverman led to a change in the law regarding the death penalty. He attempted to abolish the death penalty already in 1948 and then in 1956, but the proposal did not pass through the House of Lords (Rodrigues, 2015). Nevertheless, the bill finally came into effect in 1965 and the death penalty was suspended for a trial period of five years (Knowles QC 2015: 53).

Sandbrook designated the abolition of the death penalty as perhaps the most significant reform of the 1960s. In 1959, Roy Jenkins considered the hanging unnecessary and barbaric and demanded its abolition. He was not the only Home Secretary from that period who had this opinion. When the House of Commons in late 1964 discussed this matter, it was astonished that even the last Conservative Home Secretary, Henry Brooke (who was previously not against the death penalty), became an opponent of the death penalty, and many young Tories joined their Labour counterparts to abolish the death penalty for a five-year trial period. Nevertheless, at the time, Jenkins was not yet Home Secretary, and when the death penalty was permanently abolished in 1969, he was no longer in the Home Office, so the reform had little to do with him (Sandbrook 2015: ch.16).

As for the abolition of the death penalty, MPs from all political parties, who were in favour of its abolition, completely ignored the views of their constituents. The abolition of the death penalty offended every part of society. It did not matter what the gender, age, class or political sympathies were. According to research from 1964, it turned out that only 23% of society was in favour of abolishing the death penalty, and after the five-year probationary period began, in 1966 the percentage dropped to 18%. People wanted the death penalty to be brought back, and they wrote letters to MPs because of it. Public support for the death penalty has never been less than 60% (Sandbrook 2015: ch.16). According to a 1969 Marplan survey, 38% of Britons supported the restoration of the death penalty for all types of murder and 47% supported the restoration of some types

of murder, and only 12% were against the death penalty (Hammel 2010: 112). The abolition of the death penalty was therefore considered 'a victory for the elite over the people' (Sandbrook 2015: ch.16).

According to a Home Office report, in 1966 there was the lowest increase in the crime rate since 1955, but the number of homicides increased. Politician Duncan Sandys mentioned that in the three years since the death penalty had been suspended, there had been twice as many homicides as in the previous three years, and since the death penalty had been abolished, criminals were not afraid to carry weapons. He wanted the death sentence to be restored, but a period of three years was not considered a sufficient evidence (Block; Hostettler 1997: 258-259).

However, most politicians were against the death penalty and so it was permanently abolished in 1969. In particular, Dr Michael Winstanley gave 5 reasons why he was against the death penalty - it was not discouraging for criminals anyway, he believed that the press that presented reports of hangings had a detrimental effect on unstable minds and could increase violent crime, he believed executions were a morbid ritual. He stated that the death penalty was irreversible, and that innocent people were convicted, and that the state should lead by example (Block; Hostettler 1997: 266).

Two well-known murders, which took place shortly after the abolition law passed, contributed to society's desire to reintroduce the death penalty. These are the 1965 Moors murders (Myra Hindley and Ian Brady, who killed several young Brits and buried them in the moors near Manchester, England) and the 1966 Shepherd's Bush killings (a murder of three police officers in London) (Hammel 2010: 111).

6.4.1 The first trial of serial murder after the abolition of the death penalty in Britain

The first killers to escape the death penalty were Ian Brady and Myra Hindley, known as the Moors Murderers. The two were responsible for the serial murder of several children, which took place between 1963-1965. Brady was arrested on October 7, 1965, a month before the death penalty was abolished in Britain. The case was brought to court in April 1966, so only after the death penalty was abolished and the execution by hanging was replaced by life imprisonment (Kettle, 2017).

The murders became the centre of a campaign to restore the hanging even before the case went to trial. Patrick Downey, the uncle of one of the victims, attacked Silverman (the MP who introduced the Homicide Act of 1957) in the general election on March 31, 1966, which led to the repoliticization of the hanging. In the autumn of 1966, a former cabinet minister Duncan Sandys tried to restore the death penalty in the form of hanging for killers of police officers. This was the first in a series of repeated attempts to reinstate the hanging over the next 20 years and the attempts were usually supported by a large majority. Although the Moors Murderers did not kill a police officer, they became a regular centrepiece of press and parliamentary campaigns aimed at resuming hanging. However, the campaigns have lost their gradient over time (Kettle, 2017).

Moors Murders was an event that was in the mid-1960s most associated with the possibility of a link between moral permissiveness and violent crime. However, not many historians believe that there was a direct link between permissiveness and crime, and it is much more likely that it is more the result of the development of prosperity, mobility, etc. (Sandbrook 2015: ch.27).

In addition, this matter of Moors Murders was later depicted in British two-part drama entitled *See No Evil: The Moors Murders* directed by Christopher Menaul.

6.5 Conclusion

The death penalty has been in Britain for many years. As with other reforms, there was no change overnight. A big change took place in 1965, when the death penalty was abolished for murder. It was a contradictory reform, as politicians were in favour of abolishing the death penalty (for example, due to erroneous convictions and moral aspects), but British society mostly wanted to keep the death penalty. The abolition of the death penalty and, above all, the subsequent first trial, which was not punished by hanging, provoked in society the desire to renew the death penalty. According to surveys, British society has mostly been dissatisfied with the abolition of the death penalty. However, despite society's dissatisfaction, the abolition of the death penalty was a significant step towards a more civilized Britain, as the inhumane ritual of hanging was abandoned. There was also an increase in homicides after the abolition of the death penalty, but it cannot be said with certainty that the increase was directly caused by the abolition.

7 THE RACE RELATIONS ACT 1965, 1968

7.1 Historical background

According to Donnelly, two of the most significant questions facing the Wilson government was immigration and race. He sees the building of more multiethnic and multicultural places in Britain as one of the most profound social and cultural changes that transformed Britain in the 1960s (Donnelly 2005: 111).

During the 1950s and 1960s, people from the Commonwealth (mostly from the Caribbean and South Asia) migrated to the United Kingdom (Brown, 2018) The issue was that the members of black and minority ethnic were discriminated against in the field of housing, where tenants refused to rent them an apartment and were denied jobs. They were also prevented from entering pubs, hotels or libraries. In addition, they regularly faced violence on the street

or police brutality. The wider society regarded them as insignificant. The only reason for these acts was a different skin colour (Hussain, 2018).

Nevertheless, the situation of immigrants was not purely negative. They were welcomed by liberal politicians on both sides of the House of Commons, as well as institutions such as the National Council for Civil Liberties and the Institute for Race Relations or publications like *The Guardian* or *The Economist*. However, the reactions of whites were not entirely clear. Some were completely satisfied with having a black or Asian doctor, but once they were out of their office, their opinion and friendliness changed. Some did not mind drinking with someone who was a different skin colour, but on the other hand did not support intermarriage. A 1965 survey found that 1 in 5 people in North London refused to work with black or Asian immigrants, but at the same time 9 out of 10 were against mixed marriages. Many immigrants encountered tolerance and helpfulness during the 1950s and 1960s (Sandbrook 2015: ch.31).

The problem with immigration was not the surplus population, but the perception that the influx of immigrants from the Commonwealth into Britain was undermining the long-held conceptions of the white British nation's identity. A past colonial power that internalized concepts of racial superiority at all levels of society thought it would remain so, and so adapting to post-war migration was an unwelcome change for many (Donnelly 2005:112).

7.2 Arrival of Race Relations Act 1965 and 1968

The first step in changing and prohibiting discrimination of different races was the Race Relations Act 1965, which was the first piece of legislation in the United Kingdom to address racial discrimination. Nevertheless, the Act was not so strong as it prohibited discrimination in "places of public resort", which meant hotels, restaurants, cinemas, theatres, etc (Brown, 2018).

At the same time, in 1966, the Race Relations Board was established, which responded to complaints of racial discrimination and demanded the law

to be extended also to a field of housing, employment and financial facilities (e.g., mortgages and car insurance) (BBC News).

In the 1960s, occasional racism was present at all levels of British society. Racial prejudices ranged from jokes to election campaigns. An example of this is the BBC controversial play *Till Death Us Do Part* (see appendix V). In this play, there was a character Alf Garnett, who embodied the prejudices of British society. He was xenophobic, anti-Semitic, illiberal, but above all racist. The spectators were supposed to be repulsed by the character, but on the contrary, many identified with him (Sandbrook 2015: ch.31).

Working-class whites feared for their livelihoods and housing opportunities as the number of migrants rose and people in Britain feared the collapse of British society caused by immigration, because the immigrants behaved differently and lived differently than the British (Sandbrook 2015: ch.31).

In the late 1960s, anti-migration organizations such as the British Ku Klux Klan, the English Rights Association and the Racial Preservation Society grew. As a result, the government decided to revoke the refugee passports and prevent a mass flight to Britain (on the issue of the arrival of the Kenyan Asians). When Jim Callaghan replaced Roy Jenkins as Home Secretary, the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill became law in 1968. The law discriminated a group of non-white refugees, but at the same time reflected the views and demands of the British. The law was criticized by the press and was considered immoral (Sandbrook 2015: ch.31).

However, as a counterpart to the law, The Race Relations Act 1968 was presented, which aimed to enable more effective integration of immigrants. With this Act, the prohibition of discrimination was extended to housing and employment, and at the same time a Community Relations Committee was established, which had the task of combating discrimination and prejudice through education (The National Archives).

The law was a well-intentioned attempt to establish a racial balance, but in practice it was different. The new law could not be used as a reason to file a complaint with the police, and it was difficult to enforce the law in employment and housing. The Race Relations Board was able to satisfy only 10 percent of the 1 241 complaints received by January 1972 about discrimination from employers (Donnelly 2005: 169).

7.3 Powellism

Enoch Powell was a British Conservative MP. His "Rivers of Blood" speech on immigration, delivered in 1968 in reaction on new legislation concerning racial discrimination, divided the nation. Politicians called the speech thinly veiled racism. With his oration, Powell opposed increasing immigration and an immigration policy. One of the suggestions in the speech was that increasing migration would lead to violence or prejudice against white British citizens and called for voluntary repatriation. Powell claimed that immigrants had made the existing British society foreigners in their own country. He wanted to end almost all migration or offer financial incentives so that a certain percentage of immigrants would voluntarily return to their country. He assumed that by 1988 there would be a bloody conflict, which did not occur in the end. The speech was also an example of the fact that in all societies there are people who do not tolerate rapid change well. One survey found that 74% of Britons agreed with elements of his speech and also the peak of violence against British Asian communities that appeared in the 70s is partly accredited to Powell's speech. He was fired from the shadow cabinet the next day due to his speech but remained a member of parliament (History Extra; Friedersdorf, 2018).

Proponents of Powell's dismissal saw it as an early warning that anti-discrimination laws posed a threat to freedom of expression. They also feared that current increasing immigration could undermine Britain's culture, heritage and traditions. His speech also resulted in walkouts in his support and provoked

some people to express their prejudices (see appendix VI). Violent attacks on immigrants increased, and their property was damaged. They were told that they were not welcome, and they felt threatened as a result (Donnelly 2005: 168).

Who immediately benefited from the more open hostile climate of the race that developed during 1968 was the National Front. It was a party that was formed in the previous year. After Powell's speech, her membership and support continued to increase (Donnelly 2005: 170).

A report from 1972 to 1975 showed that, despite the 1968 law, racial discrimination in employment and housing (where it was reflected to a lesser extent) persisted on a large scale. Thus, racial prejudice did not turn into something exceptional (Donnelly 2005: 169).

However, not everyone was against immigrants. A minority appreciated the cultural impact of immigrants (such as marijuana, clothing, music such as jazz or ska) (Donnelly 2005: 169).

It was clear that the legislation had to be tightened up and so The Race Relations Act was subsequently extended in 1976. Indirect discrimination was also included in the Act. The Race Relations Board was replaced with the Commission for Racial Equality and the commission was also able to enforce the law and conduct investigations, and discrimination issues could be dealt with in court (Brown, 2018).

However, despite all the measures, there was still no law banning racial discrimination by the police, and blacks were at a significant disadvantage compared to whites. That changed in 2000, when the new Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 was passed, and public authorities were given the obligation to actively promote racial equality (BBC).

Nevertheless, the fight against discrimination continues to this day, and many people, organizations and charities are working to eliminate racial discrimination completely from society. Britain has good anti-discrimination laws, but there is a difference between the law and people's attitudes, so it is

necessary to work on changing everyone's behaviour so that discrimination disappears completely (BBC, 2018).

7.4 Conclusion

The history of legislation on racial discrimination could not be discussed, as the first legislation on this topic passed in the 1960s. Many British people were not very friendly to the arriving New Commonwealth migrants. The new legislation led to the well-known controversial speech "Rivers of Blood" by Conservative MP Enoch Powell which provoked even greater prejudices against people of a different skin colour in British society.

Nevertheless, the legislation banning racial discrimination in the 1960s was not very effective, as the discrimination continued to occur in both housing and employment. But from another point of view, this legislation was important on the road to a more civilized Britain. It was a legal issue that showed that racial discrimination was wrong, and it was the Race Relations Act of 1965 that paved the way for a change, leading to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which ended in the prohibition of racial discrimination everywhere and among everyone, including public authorities.

8 THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 1967

8.1 Historical background

The first milestone that should be mentioned in this thesis is The Buggery Act from year 1533 (a period when Henry VIII ruled the country). It was the first legislation against homosexuality passed by government which stated that sexual relations between men (which fell under the term "buggery" at that time) was prohibited (Dryden; British Library).

The death penalty for sexual intercourse between men was in 1861 replaced by life imprisonment. Love or sexual desire for another man cost a considerable amount of men a life in the form of hanging and many others were sentenced to life in prison (Crompton 2003: 366).

In 1957, for the first time since 1533, an attempt was made to liberalize homosexuality, thanks to The Departmental Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution, better known as Wolfenden report, named after John Wolfenden, who chaired the committee. The report was published on 4 September 1957 (Jivani 1997: 113-115).

The report was first formally discussed in December 1957 in the House of Lords and almost a year later in the House of Commons in November 1958 (David 1997: 188). It recommended that private homosexual relations should no longer be a crime (British Library). Although the report did not provide a legal basis for the legalization of gay relations, it was a step that led to the adoption of the Sexual Offences Act 1967, because at least there was a talk of legalizing gay relationships.

In addition, in 1961, the film *Victim* saw the light of the day, in which the word “homosexual” was spoken for the first time in history of British film (Rose, 2017). Some believe that the film helped speed up the change in law by alleviating the attitude towards homosexuals (Bradshaw, 2017).

8.2 1967 – the year of legalization of gay relationships and life after

July 27, 1967 brought the legalization of gay relationships, which were carried out in private and between men aged at least 21 years (David 1997: 221). Nevertheless, the law decriminalized homosexuality only in England and Wales. In Scotland, the legalization took place 13 years later and in Northern Ireland 15 years later. The act changed the lives of homosexual men who lived with their partners and at the same time encouraged them to start fighting for

homosexual partnerships to have the same legal status as heterosexual ones (Bedell, 2007).

However, the issuance of the law was not as rosy as it might seem. It was guaranteed to have its positive side, but also its dark side. It can be certainly considered as the first big step to ensure that homosexuality is no longer considered a crime and that gays no longer had to live in everyday fear, but in different circumstances it was only valid in private and after reaching the age of 21. There is also a negative impact of this legalization. Since 1967, homosexual men have also been convicted for acts they would normally have not been convicted for if they had been in relationship with a woman (Bedell, 2007).

Hugh David states in his book: "... even legislation passed and an Act enacted were still nothing more than palliatives. Neither the Wolfenden Report nor passing into law of the Sexual Offences Act per se actually changed anything" (David 1997: 222).

That seemingly may seem true and for some part it is a valid point yet compared to the past it is not thoroughly true. Despite the decriminalization of gay relationships in private and from a certain age could be on one hand considered a small step, on the other hand small steps are important too, and homosexuals could finally legally love someone of the same gender at least in private, without having to worry about the police raiding their homes and arresting them and after hundreds of years of criminalizing homosexual relations, it was the first legal step towards full legalization, which can certainly be considered a success. The anchoring of the law led to the alleviation of fear, and it can be said that it was the beginning of some social and cultural changes.

However, the legalization of gay relationships in private did not immediately change public opinion (it changed gradually and more slowly). A 1969 survey showed that only 12% of society was tolerant of homosexuals. However, later surveys in 1983 showed that 62% of society thought

homosexuality should be tolerated, and by 2007 that percentage had risen to more than 70% (Hodder education).

8.2.1 Significant changes in the gay community

Firstly, the fact that people were no longer so afraid led to the flourishing of gay rights organizations such as *Gay Liberation Front*, which differed from other organizations mainly in that it had the word *gay* in its name, which meant another big change, because the word was not clinical or offensive in any way as it was before when using words like *pervert*. Until now, the word *gay* was used only among homosexuals, who described themselves as such and especially the word *gay* did not define the sexual category as the word *homosexual*, but a lifestyle (Jivani 1997: 157-162).

The organization not only wanted society not to be homophobic, it was also about not having so much shame in the society about sex as such. The members of the organization considered themselves sexual liberationists and social revolutionaries and their goal was not only the interests of homosexuals, but also to get rid of misogyny, racism and social class differences (Tatchell, 2010).

Secondly, shortly after the Sexual Offences Act was released, the first gay magazines began to be published in Britain. The first British gay magazine was *Gay News* (see appendix VII). The magazine dealt with a discrimination and progress in society and politics, but also pushed for law reform (British Library). Gays also found there stories of others, party invitations and pub ads and they had a reason to be “Glad to be gay“ (a slogan that later became famous) (David 1997: 235). As for television, the British could see a gay kiss for the first time on their screens, in *Edward II* by Christopher Marlowe in 1970 and the first lesbian kiss 4 years later in *Girl* by James Robson (Bourne, 2019).

Thirdly, five years after the law was introduced, the first British Gay Pride (see appendix VIII) parade took place and was in charge of the GLF (Jivani 1997: 170). Based on this, it can be seen that people from gay community became more courageous than before and did not want to be oppressed anymore. Gay Pride parades are held to this day.

In the 70s, gay businesses began to start and there were even gay lawyers or doctors, and the number of gay clubs, pubs and saunas began to grow (David 1997: 245). It is not daring to say that gays in Britain became the most strident minority group (Jivani 1997:180).

However, Section 28 was enacted in 1988, a clause through which the government sought to ban the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities and in schools (David 1997: 264). Section 28 suddenly was a step backwards in terms of tolerance of homosexuality, and some homosexuals withdrew again. The clause was valid in Scotland until 2001 and in the rest of United Kingdom until 2003. David Cameron, back then a Tory leader, called Section 28 a mistake in 2009 and apologized for it (Sommerlad, 2018).

It can be noticed that after the release of Sexual Offences Act, homosexuals began to manifest themselves more in society and the government tried to stop them with Section 28.

8.2.2 Subsequent changes in law

As far as the law is concerned, another significant change came in 1994, when the age of consent for homosexual acts was reduced to 18 years, from the original 21 years. A further reduction occurred in 2001, when the age of consent was reduced to 16 years. A year later, gay couples were allowed to adopt children and since 2004 they have been able to enter into registered partnership (British Library). Since 2014, same-sex weddings have been allowed in England, Wales and Scotland, but in Northern Ireland it has not been allowed until 2020 (Coulter, 2020).

8.3 Conclusion

The road to legalizing gay relationships has been long. The big milestone was The Sexual Offences Act, which came in 1967 and contributed to many social and cultural changes that affected gay life in Britain. It played a significant role in what followed until 2020 when same-sex weddings were legalized in Ireland, and homosexuals finally found themselves in the same position as heterosexual couples.

It can be therefore said that 1967, together with the Sexual Offences Act, was a springboard for creating the current homosexual situation in Britain, which is much further and much freer than it was 60 years ago. As for the law as such, it was a step that gave courage to gay Britons, who began to express themselves more and fight for their rights.

This can be seen in the fact that in the past gays were afraid and kept everything in private, but after the first legal change concerning gays was made after hundreds of years of no progress, it gave the homosexual community the courage to start making various changes, see Gay Pride, where they were not afraid to express their identity publicly.

It can also be seen in the field of culture, when writings related to homosexuality were suppressed and over time, after the change in the law, the British were able to see the first homosexual kisses on television.

9 CONCLUSION

As stated in the introduction, the aim of the bachelor's thesis was to summarize the history preceding the liberal legalization of the 1960s and to find out what has changed with the passage of new liberal laws in Britain. The main aim was to find out whether Britain had become more civilized after the new legislation of the 60s.

Until the new Labour government took office in 1964, the death penalty was used in Britain (mainly in the form of hangings), divorces were only available if one of the spouses was found guilty, abortions were illegal, homosexuality was a crime and racial discrimination was not considered a problem.

Nevertheless, the new liberal laws were not a merit of the Labour government as such, but of private members of parliament who presented the individual bills, which were supported by Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, a politician primarily associated with the permissive society of the 1960s.

Following the adoption of the new rights, the death penalty was abolished in Britain, divorces could take place without one spouse having to prove the other's guilt, women had the possibility of legal medical abortion, homosexuality ceased to be a crime at least in private and racial discrimination at least legally stopped to be considered normal.

The situation of women has changed a great deal. After the new legislation, they did not have to undergo dangerous illegal abortions, which often ended in their deaths. They were given the possibility of a new form of contraception in the form of a pill, thanks to which they could take control of their fertility and which led to the perception of sexual experience as joy, not involving a fear of pregnancy. In addition, in the divorce proceeding, they were equal to men.

In summary, in terms of legislation, Britain certainly became more civilized. Inhumane customs such as the death penalty were abandoned and the often first steps towards greater freedom for people were taken, which led to subsequent normalization of homosexuality, divorce, abortion and to the beginning of the perception of racial discrimination as something unacceptable. On the other hand, as far as British society is concerned, to answer if the society became more civilized is more complicated, as the change in prejudice did not change directly with the advent of new legislation of the 1960s. In fact, it often led to the dissatisfaction of the majority of society. However, that also began to change over time. Therefore, it can be said that even ordinary British people created more civilized Britain, but it took more time, and the change did not happen exactly in the 60s.

These issues relating to the death penalty, homosexuality, abortion or racial discrimination are also reflected in British culture in films, such as the aforementioned *Up the Junction* or the BBC play *Till Death Us Do Part*. The study of these cultural works provides valuable additional insights into the social context in which the transformative legislation of the 1960s took place.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ASBELL, Bernard. *The Pill: A Biography of the Drug That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 1995. ISBN 0-679-43555-7
- BLOCK, Brian P.; HOSTETTLER, John. *Hanging in the Balance*. Hook Hampshire: Waterside Press, 1997. ISBN 978-1-872870-47-2
- BROOKES, Barbara. *Abortion in England 1900-1967* [Kindle version]. vol. 7. Abingdon: Routledge, 2013. ISBN 978-0-203-10423-1
- CHLOROS, A.G. *The Reform of Family Law in Europe*. Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht, 1978. ISBN 978-94-017-4386-0
- COHEN, Susan. *1960s Britain*. Great Britain: Shire Publications, 2014. ISBN 978-0-74781-285-2
- CRETNEY, Stephen. *Family Law in the Twentieth century: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. ISBN 0-19-826899-8
- CROMPTON, Louis. *Homosexuality & Civilization*. The Belknap Press, 2003. ISBN 0-674-01197-X
- DAVID, Hugh. *On Queer Street: A Social History of British Homosexuality 1895-1995*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0-00-255595-6
- DEBENHAM, Clare. *Marie Stopes' Sexual Revolution and the Birth Control Movement* [Kindle version]. Palgrave Pivot, 2018. ISBN 978-3-319-71664-0
- DONNELLY, Mark. *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics*. Great Britain: Person Education Limited, 2005. ISBN 1-405-80110-7
- ELDRIDGE, Laura. *In our control: The Complete Guide to Contraceptive Choices for Women* [Kindle version]. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2010. eISBN 978-1-60980-241-7
- FUREDI, Ann. *The Moral Case for Abortion* [Kindle version]. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. ISBN 978-1-137-41119-8
- HAMMEL, Andrew. *Ending the Death Penalty: The European Experience in Global Perspective*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. ISBN 978-1-349-31235-1

- HEBDIGE, Dick. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. New York: Methuen & Co., 1979. ISBN 0-416-70850-1
- JIVANI, Alkarim. *It's not unusual: A History of Lesbian and Gay Britain in the Twentieth Century*. London: Michael O'Mara Books Limited, 1997. ISBN 1-85479-279-2
- KEOWN, John. *Abortion, doctors and the law: Some aspects of the legal regulation of abortion in England from 1803 to 1982*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. ISBN 0-521-34574
- KNOWLES QC, Julian B. *The Abolition of the Death Penalty in the United Kingdom: How it Happend and Why it Still Matters*. London: The death penalty project, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-9576785-6-9
- MARKS, Lara. *Sexual Chemistry: A History of Contraceptive Pill*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001. ISBN 0-300-08943-0
- MARWICK, Arthur. *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c.1958-c.1974* [Kindle version]. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. ISBN 0-19-210022-X
- SANDBROOK, Dominic. *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties* [Kindle version]. London: Abacus, 2015. ISBN 978-0-349-14128-2
- STONE, Lawrence. *Road to divorce*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. ISBN 0-19-822651-9

Internet sources

- *1965: New UK race law 'not enough tough'*. In: BBC News [online]. [Retrieved 12 April 2021]. Available from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/december/8/newsid_4457000/4457112.stm
- *A brief history of divorce*. In: The Guardian [online]. 19 September 2009 [Retrieved 26 January 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/sep/19/divorce-law-history>

- *A timeline of LGBTQ communities in the UK*. In: The British Library [online]. [Retrieved 28 January 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bl.uk/lgbtq-histories/lgbtq-timeline#First%20gay%20newspaper>
- ADONIS, Andrew. *How Labour can learn from Roy Jenkins*. In: The Guardian [online]. 4 January 2013 [Retrieved 5 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jan/04/how-labour-can-learn-roy-jenkins?fbclid=IwAR1LeBaHd39LCpWYmSKkwMyADBtdVUT0mQrvW0Wf6ZgwPcMgQFX9L6TSk7c>
- *BACKSTREET ABORTION, Meaning from the Cambridge Dictionary*. In: Cambridge Dictionary [online]. [Retrieved 23 March 2021]. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/backstreet-abortion>
- BEDELL, Geraldine. *Coming out of the dark ages*. In: The Guardian [online]. 24 June 2007 [Retrieved 4 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2007/jun/24/communities.gayrights>
- BOURNE, Stephen. *LGBTQ+ Timeline*. In: BBC [online]. 2019 [Retrieved 7 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc/lgbtq/lgbtq-timeline>
- BRADSHAW, Peter. *Victim review – groundbreaking gay thriller given timely rerelease* [online]. 20 July 2017 [Retrieved 24 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/jul/20/victim-review-dirk-bogarde-basil-dearden-gay-drama-rerelease>
- *Britain since 1945*. In: Britannica [online]. [Retrieved 11 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/United-Kingdom/Britain-since-1945>
- *Britain's abortion law*. In: BPAS [online]. [Retrieved 26 January 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bpas.org/get-involved/campaigns/briefings/abortion-law/>

- BROWN, Jennifer. *An early history of British race relations legislation*. In: House of Commons Library [online]. 9 July 2018 [Retrieved 9 April 2021]. Available from: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8360/>
- BROWN, Maggie and DEANS, James. *Up the Junction's Tonny Garnett reveals mother's backstreet abortion death*. In: The Guardian [online]. 28 April 2013 [Retrieved 23 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2013/apr/28/tony-garnett-mother-backstreet-abortion-death>
- BUZWELL, Greg. *Homosexuality, censorship and British drama during the 1950s and 1960s*. In: British Library [online]. 11 June 2019 [Retrieved 10 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/articles/homosexuality-censorship-and-british-drama-during-the-1950s-and-1960s>
- CASTELOW, Ellen. *Schooldays in the 1950s and 1960s*. In: Historic UK [online]. 24 June 2007 [Retrieved 12 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Schooldays-in-the-1950s-1960s/>
- *Contraception: patterns of use factsheet*. In: fpa.org [online]. **Last updated November 2007** [Retrieved 23 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.fpa.org.uk/factsheets/contraception-patterns-use>
- COULTER, Peter. *Same-sex marriage now legal in Northern Ireland*. In: BBC NEWS [online]. 13 January 2020 [Retrieved 8 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-51086276>
- *CROSS DRESSING, meaning in the Cambridge Dictionary*. In: Cambridge Dictionary [online]. [Retrieved 2 February 2021]. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/cross-dressing>
- *Discrimination and race relations policy*. In: The National Archives [online]. [Retrieved 10 April 2021]. Available from:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/cabinetpapers/themes/discrimination-race-relations-policy.htm>

- DRYDEN, Steven. *A short history of LGBT rights in the UK*. In: British Library [online]. [Retrieved 28 January 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bl.uk/lgbtq-histories/articles/a-short-history-of-lgbt-rights-in-the-uk>
- EVANS, Jason. The hanging of an innocent Welshman wrongly accused of killing his wife and child. In: Wales Online [online]. 13 April 2020 [Retrieved 3 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/timothy-evans-rillington-place-murder-18051253>
- FALCON-LANG, Howard. *The secret life of Dr Marie Stopes*. In: BBC [online]. 24 August 2010 [Retrieved 16 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-11040319>
- FRIEDERSDORF, Conor. Learning from 1968's Leading Anti-Immigration Alarmist. In: The Atlantic [online]. 23 April 2018 [Retrieved 13 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/04/learning-from-1968s-leading-anti-immigration-alarmist/558500/>
- GANGER, Kashmira. *What an illegal abortions was like in the 1960s, reveals 86-years-old activist*. In: Independent [online]. 30 March 2017 [Retrieved 22 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/illegal-abortion-1960s-sixties-uk-pro-choice-activist-diane-munday-bpas-a7657726.html>
- HUSSAIN, Riz. Fifty years after the Race Relations Act, racial discrimination is still rife. In: tuc.org [online]. 25 October 2018 [Retrieved 10 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/blogs/fifty-years-after-race-relations-act-racial-discrimination-still-rife>
- KETTLE, Martin. *Ian Brady escaped hanging – and defined attitudes to the death penalty*. In: The Guardian [online]. 16 May 2017 [Retrieved 4 April

2021]. Available from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/may/16/ian-brady-hanging-death-penalty-moors-murderers-capital-punishment>

- MARSDEN, Naomi. *What about backstreet abortions?*. In: Care.org [online]. [Retrieved 23 March 2021]. Available from: <https://care.org.uk/cause/abortion/examining-the-arguments-what-about-backstreet-abortions>
- MARTIN, Edie. 'A victim of British Injustice': Derek Bentley remembered. In: The Justice Gap [online]. 30 January 2020 [Retrieved 3 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.thejusticegap.com/a-victim-of-british-injustice-derek-bentley-remembered/>
- *Migration's effect on Britain government*. In: BBC [online]. [Retrieved 12 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z8sdbk7/revision/5>
- *NEGATIVE EUGENICS, Meaning in Lexico*. In: Lexico [online]. [Retrieved 22 March 2021]. Available from: https://www.lexico.com/definition/negative_eugenics
- *Past Prime Ministers*. In: Gov.uk [online]. [Retrieved 11 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/harold-wilson>
- *Quickening and Fetal Development*. In: IDHS [online]. [Retrieved 8 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=48890>
- RICHARDSON, Hannah. *Traditional British family a myth, academic says*. In: BBC [online]. 29 March 2014 [Retrieved 21 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/education-26784754>
- RILEY, Charlotte Lydia. *What we can all learn from the Open University's radical roots*. In: Prospect [online]. 3 April 2018 [Retrieved 12 March 2021].

Available from: <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/in-2018-we-can-all-learn-from-the-open-universitys-radical-roots>

- RODRIGUES, Jason. *Death penalty in the UK suspended 50 years ago*. In: The Guardian [online]. 9 November 2015 [Retrieved 4 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/from-the-archive-blog/2015/nov/09/death-penalty-uk-fifty-years-1965-capital-punishment>
- ROSE, Steve. *Dirk Bogarde: why 'the idol of the Odeon's risked everything for art*. In: The Guardian [online]. 17 July 2017 [Retrieved 5 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/jul/17/how-dirk-bogarde-film-victim-changed-the-gay-narrative>
- SAVAGE, Wendy. *Fifty years on, the Abortion Act should be celebrated - and updated*. In: The Guardian [online]. 27 October 2017 [Retrieved 10 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/27/50-years-abortion-act-law-women>
- SEAL, Lizzie. *A brief history of capital punishment in Britain*. In: History Extra [online]. March 2018 [Retrieved 29 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.historyextra.com/period/modern/a-brief-history-of-capital-punishment-in-britain/>
- SEAL, Lizzie. *Ruth Ellis and the hanging that rocked a nation*. In: History Extra [online]. 10 July 2019 [Retrieved 3 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.historyextra.com/period/20th-century/ruth-ellis-hanging-capital-punishment-death-penalty/>
- SISTERHOOD AND AFTER RESEARCH TEAM. *Education and the Women's Liberation Movement*. In: British Library [online]. 8 March 2013 [Retrieved 12 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bl.uk/sisterhood/articles/education-and-the-womens-liberation-movement>

- SOMMERLAD, Joe. *Section 28: What was Margaret Thatcher's controversial law and how did it affect the lives of LGBT+ people?*. In: Independent [online]. 25 May 2018 [Retrieved 9 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/section-28-explained-lgbt-education-schools-homosexuality-gay-queer-margaret-thatcher-a8366741.html>
- STOCKLEY, Neil. *Roy Jenkins (Lord Jenkins), 1920-2003*. In: Liberal History [online]. [Retrieved 6 April 2021]. Available from: https://liberalhistory.org.uk/history/jenkins-roy-lord-jenkins/?fbclid=IwAR0LTKAbvTd7umpYAHfMNZo3VMiTIxetb9Y_gkS2H5OHx9_j2knjwft8CEg
- TATCHELL, Peter. *The Gay Liberation Front's social revolution*. In: The Guardian [online]. 12 October 2010 [Retrieved 8 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/oct/12/gay-liberation-front-social-revolution>
- *The Rivers of Blood speech: what was it and how did it divide Britain?*. In: History Extra [online]. [Retrieved 13 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.historyextra.com/period/20th-century/rivers-blood-speech-divides-britain/>
- *Was sex shaken up in the 1960s?*. In: Hodder education [online]. [Retrieved 5 April 2021]. Available from: https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/getattachment/Subjects/History/Series-pages/enquiringhistory/Key-Features/Sample-Chapters/144529_EH_Britain_1945_CH4_SCREEN.pdf.aspx
- WATSON, Kimberly. *The 1960s The Decade that Shook Britain*. In: Historic UK [online]. [Retrieved 5 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/The-1960s-The-Decade-that-Shook-Britain/>

- *What was the Race Relations Act.* In: BBC [online]. 26 November 2018 [Retrieved 12 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/46310188>
- *Wolfenden Report, 1957.* In: British Library [online]. [Retrieved 5 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/wolfenden-report-conclusion>

11 ABSTRACT

The key objective of the thesis is to point out the changes in British society and culture that came up with the liberal legislation of the 1960s and to provide an answer to the question whether Britain became more civilized with the introduction of this legislation. The thesis is divided into seven main chapters. The first chapter outlines the 1960s in Britain in general and especially the political background important for the thesis. Subsequently, there are chapters on the specific laws of the new legislation, more precisely the Divorce Reform Act 1969, the Abortion Act 1967, the Murder Act 1965, Race Relations Act 1965 and the Sexual Offences Act 1967. The history of the specific issues and the changes that came with the law are discussed. The thesis also includes a chapter on the contraceptive pill, which came in the 60s and is related to the situation of women and abortion. In addition, each chapter contains the author's summary.

12 RESUME

Hlavním cílem bakalářské práce je poukázat na změny v britské společnosti a kultuře, které se odehrály s příchodem liberální legislativy 60. let a poskytnout odpověď na otázku, zda se Británie zavedením této legislativy stala civilizovanější. Práce je rozdělena do sedmi hlavních kapitol. První kapitola nastiňuje šedesátá léta v Británii obecně a zejména politické pozadí důležité pro tuto práci. V práci jsou následně kapitoly o konkrétních zákonech nové legislativy, konkrétněji the Divorce Reform Act 1969, the Abortion Act 1967, the Murder Act 1965, Race Relations Act 1965 and the Sexual Offences Act 1967. V každé kapitole je probírána historie daných záležitostí a změny, které zákony přinesly. Součástí práce je také kapitola o antikoncepční pilulce, která přišla na trh v 60. letech a souvisí se situací žen a potraty. Každá kapitola navíc obsahuje autorčino shrnutí.

13 APPENDICES

Appendix I



Roy Jenkins – a former Labour Home Secretary, who is the most associated with the permissive society of 1960s.

Photograph by Jane Bown (Available from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jan/04/how-labour-can-learn-roy-jenkins>)

Appendix II



Women at the Ford car plant in Dagenham on strike to achieve equal pay and rank as men.

(Available from: <https://www.workersliberty.org/story/2008-07-14/real-story-made-dagenham>)

Appendix III



Enovid – the first contraceptive pill.

(Available from: <https://time.com/3929971/enovid-the-pill/>)

Appendix IV



Timothy Evans – wrongfully accused of murder and sentenced to death. His hanging often appeared in campaigns to abolish the death penalty.

(Available from: <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/timothy-evans-rillington-place-murder-18051253>)

Appendix V



Till Death Do Us Apart – a controversial BBC sitcom, in which a character Alf Garnett embodied the prejudices of British society.

(Available from: <https://networkonair.com/features/2019/01/18/gems-rediscovered-till-death-us-do-part/>)

Appendix VI



An anti-Asian demonstration in favour of Enoch Powell's speech.

(Available from: <https://news.sky.com/story/enoch-powells-rivers-of-blood-the-speech-that-divided-a-nation-11339291>)

Appendix VII



Gay News - The first British gay magazine.

(Available from: <https://www.beatchapter.com/gay-news-magzinewspaper-no-170--june-28-july-11-1979-tom-robinson-gay-pride-16724-p.asp>)

