

Conclusion and lessons

Mike Childs, Friends of the Earth

We can draw many lessons on strategy and tactics from the historical case studies in this volume. But, as Andrew Purkis of Action Aid has said, perhaps most importantly these campaigns are ‘a source of inspiration, encouragement and legitimacy for today’s campaigners. It’s a long slog, but with the right conviction, evidence, and determination even the most unlikely citadels can be brought down and the world can be changed for the better’. This inspiration is welcome at a time when campaigning itself is under attack in the UK through restrictions on campaigning during election periods, political pressure on the Charity Commission to silence charities’ ability to speak out on contentious political matters, and media attacks on charity fundraising.

But in reading these case studies it is also important to remember

that Britain today is very different from 19th or, indeed, much of 20th century Britain. There are enormous differences between the way people live, work, and spend their social time today and how they did during the time of most of the historical case studies considered. Drawing lessons is not straightforward.

The most obvious difference is in communications. I write these words on a computer, saved on the cloud and they will be shared via social media. Most people in the UK would be able to read them unmediated, if they choose, because today literacy is almost 100%, 90% of people have access to the internet, and of these 60% use social media every day or almost every day. These words will also be accessible to billions of people around the world.

In the early 19th century, while fast improving, literacy levels were still low (around 50% in 1800 climbing to around 90% by 1900). Most news was garnered by word of mouth, from the pulpit, shared newspapers and leafleting. Even during the miners' strike in the 1980s, the internet and social media simply did not exist, and this gave media outlets enormous power in shaping the narrative (since television was by then in 80% of households, although with just four channels).

The influence of religion has also changed. Attendance at weekly Church of England services has fallen to less than 1 million. Although according to polling data (notoriously unreliable) much higher proportions of people affiliated to other religions regularly attend religious services (28% of Roman Catholic, 29% other Christian and 40% non-Christian). Yet in the 19th century regular church going was the norm for around half the population, and much higher in some areas.

There are also obvious differences when it comes to levels of hunger and poverty, consumption, education, working hours, women's status and rights, voting, family size, housing, heating, transport, life expectancy, and social norms.

The 19th century was a period of enormous change. Duncan Green of Oxfam suggested, at the seminar where these historical case studies were discussed, that the dynamism in social activism

in 19th century Britain was in part a result of huge demographic changes the country was undergoing. In the UK right now, with improved living conditions and relatively stable demographics, it could be argued that the appetite for campaigning may have waned. It could also be argued that people are also so saturated with 24-hour communications that modern campaigns have little chance of being noticed and replicating the landmark struggles of the past.

People's sense of identity has also changed through time. Social identity in the 21st century is now as much or more connected to possessions – car, house, consumer fashions – as it is to where people live and their occupation. While middle-class consumerism, and the power of material goods, existed in the 19th century, occupation and religion were more important to identity than they are today to most people. Indeed religion during these periods provided not only an organising structure to campaigns but an underpinning moral code (as it still does today for some groups such as Muslim Climate Action and Christian Aid).

In other words, the world is very different now. Given this, can 21st-century campaigners really learn anything from the campaigns of the past? In November 2015 we set about exploring these case studies with campaigners across civil society and with the historian authors at a seminar held in Friends of the Earth's office. We have grouped the lessons we drew into four areas.

Four areas of learning

1. Big game-plan and proxy campaigns

Alexandra Runswick from Unlock Democracy observed that often modern campaigners feel as though 'they are not only required to identify the problem and call for change but also specify exactly what that would look like'. Benedict Southworth, from the Ramblers, argues that this leads to 'managerial campaigns' focused on long lists of detailed policy recommendations each of which would make incremental changes to the world we live in but not lead to great transformations in the way some of these historical

campaigns did. The charge is that many modern-day campaigns simply do not have a bigger game plan, as the campaigns of the past seemingly had (abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, etc). In other words there seems to be a contemporary lack of ambition around changing values, norms and social contexts; and instead there is contentment with short-term tweaks to policy, behaviours, regulation and so on.

It was Liz Hutchins from Friends of the Earth who identified that many if not all of our case studies were in fact proxy campaigns. The issues were 'presented as one thing but they were fundamentally about something else'. In other words while the campaigns themselves were focused on a single clear objective they were also vehicles for moving towards more profound social, economic or political change. The Anti-Corn Law League had the objective of scrapping protectionist trade policy. Trade barriers harmed working class consumers – particularly through the price of bread, which was a staple part of the diet – and favoured wealthy land- and farm-owning elites above the interests of the newly wealthy. But scrapping the Corn Laws was really a campaign about the power of the newly wealthy and their ability to influence institutions such as Westminster. Certainly, many of the leaders of that campaign did not struggle to afford higher-priced bread and their empathy for the working class was limited. Appealing to the material interests of the many was a tactic which brought the campaign to life and gave a rationale for their economic preferences, but ultimately the campaign was much bigger.

Similarly the miners' strike, although clearly concerned with jobs and pit communities, was also about the broader influence of trade unions and the working class in politics and society. The miners unsuccessfully resisted the transfer of resources from the public to the private sector, the marked widening of inequality, and the erosion of trade union and working-class voice. And the campaigns around women's votes and against the Contagious Diseases Act were as much about women's equality more broadly in society as they were about achieving victories for the individual campaigns.

Strong support from non-conformist religious communities for many of the campaigns in the 19th-century was also important. Unitarians and Quakers, for example, were heavily involved in the Anti-Corn Law League and the campaign to abolish the Contagious Diseases Act. Religious communities, with a broader distaste for a social order which they saw as corrupt and self-serving, joined individual campaigns to correct particular wrongs as part of their wider concerns. In other words, many of the leaders of these campaigns and probably many of the participants, had a bigger game plan in hand and the campaigns they ran were those that gave the greatest opportunity for advancement.

Of course the reality of day-to-day campaigning may have been more ad hoc than historical hindsight suggests. Certainly, it would be good to understand, as Benedict Southworth from the Ramblers said, the hidden context for the focus and timing of the campaign (Why then? Why that demand? Why that scale?). Although historical inquisition can help us to see campaigns in larger perspective – not as ends in themselves but as proxies for bigger changes in political, economic or social thinking – history also poses challenges to today's campaigners; for example, will our campaigns be remembered as game-changers in future historical texts or will they be, at best, footnotes?

Win once

If some campaigns can be seen as proxies for greater change it is also easier to understand the benefit of campaigns that are 'win once' campaigns as they make progress towards further desired change easier or indeed inevitable.

Some campaigns were definitively looking to win once. For example, the fight to abolish slavery, or the unsuccessful campaign for home rule for the whole of Ireland were widely perceived as changes that once made would be permanent. This helps explain the fierce opposition to them; for example the escalation of unionist tactics to include violence. Similarly, the striking miners knew that conceding the right to management to close collieries on economic grounds would permanently weaken

the National Union of Mineworkers, which also perhaps explains the Government's willingness to absorb huge economic losses in pursuit of this political goal. In other words, win-once campaigns are fiercely opposed.

The campaigns for the vote appear to be win-once campaigns; once a group is enfranchised, it is hard to withdraw that right, although further equalities for marginalised groups might remain. Legislative changes in the mid-1800s did disenfranchise the small number of women who were entitled to vote at that time, and today changes to voter registration are resulting in the disenfranchising of many people.

Modern day win-once campaigns do exist. The UK's Climate Change Act, which requires the UK to make continual reductions in territorial greenhouse gas emissions, has institutionalised independent advice and reporting to Parliament on progress. But perhaps more importantly the Act itself has resulted in successive governments of different political stripes using it as a badge of honour in international circles. The ability (or desire) to annul it is therefore limited. The same is true of the legislative commitment to donate 0.7% of GDP to international aid, despite continued fierce opposition from some quarters.

But the reality is that not many campaigns today are win-once campaigns. Instead, they need to change conditions enough for progress to be cemented. As Craig Bennett from Friends of the Earth has said, campaigning is like waves on a beach: you go forwards and then you go back, but the real challenge is to ensure that next wave is larger and goes further. Win-once campaigns reduce the possibility of retreat, and therefore lead to greater forward momentum. Likewise Andrew Simms of the New Weather Institute, whilst noting that campaigns can 'luck out at the right historical moment', identified the importance of recognising that campaigning was not a linear progression.

A good example of a historical and current campaign that has made progress but has suffered numerous set-backs is the campaign for equality for gay and lesbian men and women. Good progress has been made over the last century, but set-backs occurred

during the war years when people opposed to homosexuality tried to link it to treason, and in 1988 when the Government introduced legislation forbidding schools and libraries to promote 'the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship' (Clause 28). Despite these set-backs, sporadic progress has been made, including a win-once cultural breakthrough with the first lesbian kiss on television before the 9pm watershed on Channel 4's *Brookside* in 1994. The lesbian and gay movement was adept at using set-backs as opportunities to re-galvanise the movement and innovate with new tactics (such as outing politicians following the introduction of Clause 28).

Examples of current campaigns that had hard fought victories but which continually need defending are the campaigns for freedom of information and human rights. Legislation secured in these areas over recent decades represent huge victories, but from day one they have both been under attack and have needed vigorous defending. So while remembering the importance of win-once campaigns, we need to bear in mind that setbacks will materialise and these need to be used as opportunities to innovate and galvanise.

Lessons:

- Look for the campaign which is the best vehicle for greater change in the future rather than deciding which campaign to run on its own merits alone. Campaigning is a multi-decadal journey. Viewing campaigning in this light may result in smarter strategies.
- Avoid managerial campaigns with numerous detailed policy asks and instead focus on campaigns with a clear objective which contributes to a bigger game-plan of changing values, norms and social contexts.
- Seek win-once campaigns or campaigns that are resilient to backsliding, but also be prepared for campaigning in waves, with forward momentum following by set-backs. Be prepared to use set-backs to build strength and re-invent tactics and approaches.

2. Approaches

Friends of the Earth has a working theory that, particularly for entrenched positions held by powerful people, meaningful change will not happen unless the status quo becomes untenable. Essential preconditions are a broad movement demanding change and viable solutions. The historical case studies collected here add weight to this thinking.

Certainly, the scale of support described in some of the historical case studies cases seemingly made the status quo difficult if not impossible to manage, particularly in the context of a ruling elite nervously watching revolutions in mainland Europe. The mass petitioning of the 19th century by the anti-slavery movement, anti-corn law campaign and the Chartists left those in power with a clear sense that the masses were unhappy. While the immediate response may have been to attempt to suppress protest, they were nonetheless deeply sensitive to indicators of widespread disquiet. The campaign against Irish Home Rule raised the fear of militias emerging causing significant concerns among the ruling elite.

In more modern times, the status quo becomes untenable for incumbent politicians once they see that opposition to it might cost them political power. A tactic widely used by the suffragettes, Anti-Corn Law League, and Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts campaign was to stand for or support candidates in key seats; the recently-formed Women's Equality Party has stated that it is using the same approach. Although the tactic creates interest, it is only probably only a credible threat if situated within a much larger campaign and if seen to indicate strength of feeling across the country.

Moral arguments

The use of moral arguments and powerful images and symbols that provoke empathy and speak to deep values about right and wrong also helped make some of the campaigns studied here effective. Examples include the image 'Am I not a man?' used in the anti-slavery campaign. The moral and empathy-based approach reached across society, and was particularly appealing to those with religious faith.

Economic arguments were, of course, part of these campaigns. The economic case against ending slavery was made by opponents to the anti-slavery movement, and in the end many of these voices had to be bought off through eye-wateringly high compensation to slave owners, not the enslaved. The Anti-Corn Law League was in large part motivated by economic interests, although the moral case for ‘peace through trade’ was also powerfully deployed. The combination of moral suasion and the material impact on food prices and fear of hunger made for a powerful impact. It was important for the campaigns of the time to be able to address economic arguments, but many of the successful campaigns (anti-slavery, Anti-Corn Law League, Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts, and homosexual equality) chose to fight on the moral battlefield, enabling them to build large broad-based campaigns.

Arguably, today’s campaigners have too often vacated the moral territory and chosen to fight on the economic battle-field occupied by their opponents. By doing so, they are likely to become involved in often technical debates that might be a barrier to wider support. Furthermore, important moral and empathetic arguments which touch on people’s values are left unsaid. Abandoning moral arguments reduces the opportunity to build a broad movement. Embracing the economic battlefield may be a symptom of Thatcherism’s lasting influence: economic criteria are so dominant that even campaigners leading intrinsically moral or cultural campaigns now feel they must frame the campaigns in economic terms if they are to be taken seriously by the media and politicians. But we suggest the evidence from these case studies shows this is a mistake. Sarah Wooten from Dignity in Dying pointed out that what is morally right is often contested. A key role of campaigners must surely be to engage in these debates, alongside those they claim to represent, in order to shape the world views and values of others and the context within which decision-making occurs.

Some campaigners may argue that moral and values based campaigns will be constrained by only reaching a smaller set of ethically-driven people because they do not touch on material

interests and are not aspirational. Yet such campaigns can also reach out to aspirational and material interests. For example, women's suffrage campaigns enjoyed celebrity endorsement – including the cultivation of celebrity by Emmeline Pankhurst and the use by the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) of society ladies, to great advantage. This brought aspirational elements to the campaigns. Richard Huzzey explained that the successful anti-slavery campaigns deliberately deployed moral arguments to trump material ones, saying that the system of slavery prevented the attainment of human happiness as it was based on a system of tyranny. Andrew Simms pointed to the success of Republican campaigners in the United States in mobilising poorer communities against Democrat-led Health Care Reform using a values based argument of freedom from 'big government', even though the reforms themselves would materially benefit the poorer communities.

The role of elites

History suggests that locating campaigns on moral territories enables larger and more powerful coalitions to be built. But the role of elites is also important even in mass campaigning. From the case studies offered here, those that refused to reach out to elites to create a broader movement of change struggled (eg Chartists, miners). The miners' strike had a powerful class-based focus of 'us and them'. This inhibited the capacity of the strikers to articulate goals that might have been supported by some elite groups (and indeed a large aspirational middle-class). The 'us and them' approach more easily enabled the BBC's false construction of the Orgreave disturbances, although it is important to recognise that was not an isolated incident in the media, which was itself in conflict with its unionised employees.

Campaigns that also encompassed elites were more successful (eg homosexuality, suffragists, and opponents of slavery). The campaign for homosexual equality, although it suffered backlashes, was probably in part protected because it had powerful friends in the elite (even if all were not openly supportive). As

Tom Baker from Bond suggested at our workshop, a good relationship with the elite can also usefully provide insider knowledge to inform strategy and tactics.

The use of language so as not to alienate potential allies in the elite, while at the same time strongly motivating the base of support, is important. Christian moral campaigner Mary Whitehouse created the National Viewers and Listeners Association (NVALA) in 1965 to oppose a supposedly liberal governing elite. The NVALA balanced an outsider style of campaigning with the need to accommodate sympathetic conservative elites. Yet, as Black's chapter points out, its aggressive language led many Conservatives to shun the NVALA.

Meanwhile, the reframing of homosexuality away from sex and towards a positive and optimistic narrative of love broadened this campaign's appeal and supporter base, as well as making it more difficult for attacks based on fear.

Coalitions

Building broad-based movements for change creates challenges other than around language, particularly when working with unusual or fractious bed-fellows. From the historical case studies, we can see that many campaigns were not unified with a single strategy but were more like a flotilla of ships all heading toward the same destination. Strong differences of opinion on campaigning approach and tactics, as well as even the ultimate goal, can be discerned. The alliance of feminists and social purists against the Contagious Diseases Acts must have been an uncomfortable coalition. Women's suffrage campaigners did not make up one campaign, as they are commonly remembered. Instead, they worked through a number of different groups with different views on goals and tactics (the use of violence against property was particularly contentious). The outing of homosexual MPs was not an approach shared by all the campaign groups involved in gay rights campaigning, although as Lucy Delap from Cambridge University pointed out, the different factions had a symbiotic relationship even if they would not admit this publically.

In the fight against slavery many campaigners focused on the damage colonial oppression did to Britons' values and reputation. Despite maintaining a broad coalition, abolitionists differed in their radicalism and especially the extent to which they welcomed revolutionary change. In 1824 Elizabeth Heyrick successfully argued for the movement to adopt demands for immediate emancipation, criticising anti-slavery MPs for seeking simply to ameliorate the worst abuses of slavery.

These coalitions of the willing are therefore themselves open to contest, campaigning and disagreement. But, as the case studies illustrate, they probably are necessary. It would probably weaken a campaign to seek to get all elements of a campaign fully on message, and in many cases would anyway be impossible.

Lessons:

- The use of moral and empathy-based approaches which reaches people emotionally and touches on values may be critical in building large and broad-based coalitions; and these will be better able to create profound change, and more powerful than rational or economic arguments alone.
- Support from within the political or economic elite facilitates effective campaigning and/or hinders the ability of an elite driven backlash, as does broader-based support from wider society. For this the use of language is critical. It is not enough to use language which motivates only existing support; it is necessary to find language that facilitates participation by the elite and wider society as well.
- It is necessary to be open to a plethora of campaigns and coalitions that use widely different tactics and approaches. Homogenisation is unlikely to be successful, and certainly uncomfortable for those involved. Nonetheless a shared moral position can provide common impetus and aid cooperation and trust.
- To make the status quo untenable, and in current contexts where truly mass participation activism on the scale seen in the 19th-century does not exist, the deployment of moral

arguments coupled with the use of tactical approaches such as targeting key political constituencies may be of added importance.

3. Tactics

Petitioning was a popular tactic deployed in many of the case studies, but what is most striking is the sheer scale. Many of today's petitions are deemed a success if they garner tens of thousands of signatures. The aggregate figure of all the Anti-Corn Law League was more than six million signatures within the context of a much smaller population (although this needs treating with caution as many people would have signed more than once over the seven-year period the League was active). In 1842 the Chartists' second national petition had more than 3 million signatures: as delivered to Parliament petition it was six miles long. Remarkably, despite the size of these petitions, the campaigners of the time did not see that the petitions themselves would necessarily lead to change.

Petitioning was a tactic that allowed people to have a voice in a time when the majority of the population did not have a vote. Perhaps even more important, signing a petition contributed to participants' sense of identity, was a means for people to express that identity within their community, and to be part of something bigger. Mary Whitehouse's 1.35 million NVALA petition is an example of a mass petition in recent times, at a time when universal adult suffrage existed. People signing the petition probably did think change would result, but it was a means to assert their own moral position and reinforce their own sense of identity.

Recognising the need for people to express and act on the basis of a strong identity can help build connections for future campaigning, and resilience when setbacks occur. As Craig Bennett argued, the telephone helplines provided by campaigners for homosexual equality not only represented important services but also deepened the relationship between the individual and the movement, increasing the individual sense of identity with the movement. This deeper relationship is very different from an

approach adopted by campaigns that use individual supporters instrumentally rather than building relationships with them.

Petitioning today, however, can have a political impact, for example in the constituency-based voting system in the UK when individual MPs are directly targeted or when a petition goes viral (eg the 38 Degrees petition against forest sell-off proposals in 2010 rapidly achieved more than 500,000 signatures – testament to the place of forests in what is personally meaningful to Britons). But many petitions will have little or no political impact, despite the claims of the originators. Their real role may be to help crystallise identities and loyalties through public expressions of support – as well as harvesting names for further campaign work.

Beyond petitioning, the role of grassroots campaigning and loyalties to place were important historical dimensions of campaigning. The miners' strike was rooted in communities and places threatened by pit closures. The importance of community and place was not well understood by all politicians at the time. Famously, in another context, the Conservative Norman Tebbit had championed a 'get on your bike' approach to look for work if local work was not available. Conversely, many campaigns in the past tapped into the connection people feel with community; many huge national campaigns were in reality amalgamations of hundreds or thousands of local ones.

Today it is possible that the connection to localities have weakened and virtual communities are increasing in importance; even if this is true, campaigners would be wise to understand and tap into the loyalties people have to place, and how these places can shape views.

Of the many tactics of the past deployed widely today, one area particularly worth consideration is the use of direct action, both non-violent and violent. For example, in the campaign against the Anti-Contagious Diseases Act campaigners occupied the Ladies' Gallery in the House of Commons; some suffragettes broke windows, attacked houses, took part in hunger strikes when imprisoned, and most famously Emily Davison martyred

herself (deliberately or accidentally) by stepping in front of the King's horse. The threat of violence was writ large in the campaign against Irish home rule.

There was and is debate about whether direct action has hindered or helped individual campaigns. It certainly caused lively debate within the media of the time, as well as within the movements themselves, sometimes resulting in splits. Interestingly in the suffragettes' case, membership of the moderate groups quadrupled as a result of the actions of the more militant suffragettes (although direct action can also act as a recruitment tool for the opposition). It can also be argued that such tactics particularly worried the establishment, especially if so-called respectable people carried them out, and if they seemed to illustrate a depth of feeling that might extend across a larger and wider movement.

It is not for this publication to argue for or against direct action, but it is clear that direct action in the past has contributed to positive outcomes in some cases when certain conditions were met. Direct action needed to be perceived as a last resort, and to involve 'respectable figures' who could morally legitimise breaking the law. To be effective, it also requires a tipping point of numbers willing to be involved. But for each and every example of success in this area it would also be possible to identify a much larger number of failures. The reality is the state does not easily bend to such direct threats.

Of course, impact can be achieved through means other than direct action, particularly economic damage. The anti-slavery movement for example, used sugar boycotts. Boycotts have been widely used in campaigning since that date, perhaps most effectively in the anti-apartheid campaigns. The anti-slavery sugar boycott was particularly interesting in that it was initiated by women to assert their views through the domestic setting, which was one of the limited spheres where they were allowed to make decision. As Sarah Richardson's article in Friends of the Earth's book *Why Women Will Save the Planet* (2015) illustrates, women have been historically adept at exploiting and extending their socially-identified sphere of influence.

Lessons

- Campaigns will benefit from greater and deeper engagement if they recognise the importance of strong individual and group identities through enabling people to strengthen and display their involvement, and build relationships with others who have done likewise.
- People have relationships with the place they live in and the people who live there, even if this may be weakening in the age of social media. Grassroots place-based campaigning has been and will continue to be an essential element of much campaigning.
- Direct action has contributed to successful campaigns in the past. Conditions such as it being a last resort, the involvement of respectable figures, and that it points to a deeper and widespread discontent are probably necessary for it to succeed.
- Women have through the ages exploited and extended their sphere of influence and this has led to novel and successful tactics. For today's campaigns looking beyond formal power relationships may also offer new approaches and tactics.

4. The backlash

Since campaigns are designed to change the status quo it is not surprising that they create a reaction, particularly when the campaigns have the potential to be win-once campaigns. Understanding the likely backlash, whose ferocity may or may not correlate with the potential scale of losses for the opposition, is a critical part of developing a smart campaign strategy. Losses are not solely financial, if financial at all, but also relate to real or imagined impacts on status, world-view, and rights.

The backlash has often included trying to convince others and build opposition to change through the use of fear. For example, in the campaign against Irish Home Rule it was argued that the Irish should not get the vote because they were too ill-educated to participate in politics (a slur also used against working class

people in the Chartists campaign) and that losing Ireland would end in the UK losing the Empire. Opponents of homosexual rights and equality suggested that homosexuality was linked to treason, would corrupt young minds and would contribute to what were thought to be worryingly low birth rates. The fear of economic harm was deployed in trying to maintain the slavery trade. Likewise, as Donna Hume from Friends of the Earth identified, fear can also be used as an opportunity, saying that ‘the tragic events in Paris in 2015 will be used to advance the snoopers’ charter agenda and the Government’s project of dismantling people’s means to oppose them’.

Broadly speaking opponents of change in these case studies were not overly concerned about the facts and, as today, the media that supported their position were similarly unconcerned (clearly illustrated in coverage of case of the miners’ strike). The press in the 19th century was largely controlled by the wealthy and was a powerful force. The advent of the BBC in the 20th century changed this dynamic to a limited degree, although the press barons still had a significant influence on public opinion. Today the internet makes it more difficult for the state and wealthy to control the narrative – hence an increasing number of states attempting to control the digital commons. But the influence of traditional media is still large. Fear based on fantasy rather than fact continues to be widely deployed to oppose change. For example, George Osborne argues against the UK taking a lead on climate change because, he says, it will negatively affect on our economy, whereas the reverse is likely to be true. *The Sun* newspaper argues against multiculturalism and welcoming of Muslim refugees with unfounded scare stories that ‘1 in 5 Muslims sympathise with jihadis’ (brilliantly ridiculed in social media).

The battle to control the narrative has been a long-standing one but despite their resources the state and the wealthy face an uphill struggle when maintaining the status quo runs counter to deeper values and moral positioning. As Alexandra Runswick from Unlock Democracy said, a campaign based on vision and values rather than a technocratic campaign ‘will counteract the

fear narrative'. For example, in slavery the phrase and image 'Am I not a man and brother?' powerfully overcame the economic scare-mongering by opponents, and in campaigns for the legalisation of homosexuality a narrative of love worked powerfully (including against the socially conservative NVALA).

Andrew Purkis suggested that too often campaigns are designed 'not to frighten the horses' and become too 'reformist and emollient' because of unnecessary and/or unfounded fear of backlash. In fact Joanna Watson from Friends of the Earth suggested that, at times, deliberately provoking a backlash may be a valid tactic to regain attention and re-galvanise a movement.

Lessons

- Prepare for and understand what backlashes may emerge and from where, and prepare how to use them for the benefit of the campaign.
- Recognise that the powerful cannot always control the narrative. Set out to control or change the narrative through reaching deeper values through the use of vision, frames and images.

Final thoughts

We have suggested 13 lessons from these case studies. But just as historians will continue to argue about the interpretations of the different case studies, so campaigners will continue to argue about the veracity of these lessons. The success of this exercise in exploring history is not about whether the lessons are agreed on or not; it is whether readers have engaged in exploring history and drawn their own conclusions. As Andrew Simms said, quoting 19th-century Russian historian Vasily Klyuchevsky 'History teaches us nothing, but only punishes [us] for not learning its lessons.'