***Labour and the youth vote (1997-2010): assessing Tony Blair's legacy***

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**Summary**

Labour's victory in the 1997 General Election is often described as the consequence of principles laid out by Tony Blair when he first became opposition leader: rebranding the Labour party and reinventing it as a natural party of government, but also as the natural party for young voters. The whole image of "New" Labour was thus revamped and adapted to the codes of the youth, from the use of party election broadcasts inspired by popular forms of entertainment to the takeover of the Britpop movement, which created a strong, positive image which was meant to impress young Britons.

However, when Gordon Brown led the party into the 2010 election, building a "young" or "media-friendly" image for Labour seemed to become quite difficult, due to the change in leadership. As figures tend to show that Labour's share of the youth vote was not as high in 2010 as it had been in 1997, it could be tempting to say establish a direct link between Labour's defeat and Brown's image in the media. This paper will compare Labour's campaigning materials (manifestos, party election broadcasts, etc) from 1997 and 2010, focusing on their potential impact on young voters.

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