

## Stuart Hall

Stuart Hall was born on February 3, 1932 in Kingston, Jamaica, to middle-class parents. He attended Jamaica College, received an Anglocentric education, and went to Oxford University, reading English. Although having lived in both places, Hall did not identify as either Jamaican or British, but instead diasporic, and rejected the idea that identity was fixed. Hall became a research fellow at the new Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University in 1964 per Richard Hoggart's invitation, where his work made him a prominent figure in the field. One of his key ideas was the encoding-decoding model—the meaning of a message is never fixed, but instead dependent upon the personal background and circumstances of the recipient. Politically, his work *Policing the Crisis* in 1978 supported the idea that Britishness equaled whiteness and that it was race, not poverty, that caused the deprivation of socially excluded groups. Additionally, he successfully predicted the new political trend in Britain for decades to come—“Thatcherism”—which appealed to the major themes of “the efficacy of the market, the inadequacy of the state, law and order, a growing reaction against the unions, [and] the appeal of individualism as opposed to collectivism.” Hall became a professor of sociology in 1979 at the Open University and retired in 1998.

## Works Cited

Jacques, Martin. "Hall, Stuart McPhail." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 15 Feb. 2018, doi-org.proxy.library.nd.edu/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.013.107673.