

ABSTRACT

This study examines how quickly British attitudes have changed on devolution following the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum. In studying both the Welsh and the Ulster Scots in Northern Ireland, I predict that attitudes and hopes for the UK's political future will be largely influenced by national identity. I hypothesize that because of this, the Welsh will be willing to pursue greater devolution whereas the Ulster Scots would not. Each nation's unique relationship to the UK as a whole makes it reasonable to assume that hopes for the UK's future are not uniform.

Identity Politics or “Minority Nationalism?”
The Scottish Referendum Through Welsh and Ulster Scots Eyes

Abigail Wise

“I love my native land, no doubt,
Attach’d to her thro’ thick and thin;
Yet tho’ I’m Irish all without,
I’m every item Scotch within.”

~Samuel Thomson

One day after a historic vote, Alex Salmond made a drastic decision. After becoming the losing face of the Scottish Independence Referendum the day before, he quickly decided to stand down from his role as Scotland's First Minister and leader of the Scottish National Party. As *Holyrood* magazine put it, the Scottish Referendum was Salmond's "raison d'être,"—noting his political personality to be "single-minded"—and it had not turned out how he had hoped.¹

The results of the Scottish Referendum were disappointing for the Scottish National Party (SNP) as a whole, but the outcome did not come from Salmond and company's lack of commitment. As the face of the effort, Salmond shook so many hands on the independence campaign trail that toward the end, he began to feel severe pain shooting from his wrist to his elbow.² In true Scottish fashion, treatment from members of the Ryder Cup's physiotherapists was deemed to be the best remedy.³ Given a foam cast to set his wrist and elbow, Salmond ignored medical advice and returned quickly to shaking hands, for what is a politician without a solid handshake?⁴ This unfortunately led to a further strain, requiring more time than originally prescribed for Salmond to heal.

With the Referendum behind him now, Salmond is on to bigger and better things—he hopes. He plans to run as an SNP candidate for his home constituency in Aberdeenshire in the 2015 UK General Election.⁵ He hopes that a return to the campaign trail so soon will not damage his wrist any further.

¹ Mandy Rhodes. Salmond's Leap: Interview with the FM. *Holyrood*, 12 November, 2014.

² Kieran Andrews. "Revealed--Why the First Minister Alex Salmond has Lost His Grip." *The Courier*, 5 November, 2014, sec. Politics.

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Kevin McKenna. "Alex Salmond to Run for Seat in 2015 General Election." *The Guardian*, 6 December, 2014, sec. The Observer.

INTRODUCTION

On 18 September 2014, Scotland held an internal Referendum asking the question, “Should Scotland be an independent country?” In an election strategy likely familiar to many Americans, the campaigning for the Yes and No sides started in earnest about a year before the vote took place. For those deeply invested in the idea of Scottish independence, the vote may have seemed as though it was a long time coming. Originally, the SNP had promised and projected a Referendum vote by 2010.⁶ Behind the scenes, the plans for a Referendum extend back even further than that.

In 2007, the Scottish National Party won a majority in the Scottish parliamentary elections, ending Labour’s 8-year reign in Scotland.⁷ In the SNP’s campaign platform was a major point calling for and orchestrating an independence Referendum with approval from the *Westminster* (italics, see Appendix A) government in London.⁸ Significantly, this plan and the SNP’s rise to becoming the largest party in Scotland coincided with the 10-year anniversary of Scotland’s vote in 1997 to establish its own parliament, and in a sense, a vote on independence was a logical next step for some in the SNP leadership.⁹ A White Paper, entitled “Your Scotland, Your Voice,” issued in 2009 intended to further the “national conversation” surrounding the possibility of an

⁶ The Scottish National Party. *Manifesto 2007*. Edinburgh, United Kingdom: The Scottish Government, 2006.

⁷ British Broadcasting Corporation. "Timeline: Scotland's Road to Independence Referendum." British Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-20546497> (accessed 23 April 2015, 2015).

⁸ The Scottish National Party. *Manifesto 2007*. Edinburgh, United Kingdom: The Scottish Government, 2006.

⁹ The Scottish Government : Riaghaltas na h-Alba. *Your Scotland, Your Voice: A National Conversation*. Edinburgh, UK: The Scottish Government, 2009.

independence vote.¹⁰ The paper introduced four options the SNP envisaged for Scotland's future: keeping things as they currently were, continuing with the *devolution* of powers from Westminster to *Holyrood*, establishing full devolution (or *devo-max*) in which Scotland would have the ability to control almost all aspects of its politics, social policy, and economy, or finally, independence.¹¹ In 2010, the SNP published a draft of their proposed Referendum bill, which considered three of the options: *devo-max*, increased reform of Scotland's economic policy, and independence.¹² Unfortunately, with no support from opposition parties, the SNP could not move forward with the referendum idea at that time.¹³

The following year, the SNP won a majority in the Scottish parliamentary elections. With 69 seats to the Labour Party's 34, they were able to move ahead with a new approach to the independence referendum plan.¹⁴ Until early 2012, the SNP leadership negotiated with members of the Westminster government as well as UK Prime Minister David Cameron over the proposal for a Scottish independence referendum. Finally, in October 2012, Cameron and SNP leadership signed the Edinburgh Agreement, which promised a referendum vote "before the end of 2014".¹⁵

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² The Scottish Government : Riaghaltas na h-Alba. *Scotland's Future: Draft Referendum (Scotland) Bill Consultation Paper*. Edinburgh, UK: The Scottish Government, 2010.

¹³ British Broadcasting Corporation. "Timeline: Scotland's Road to Independence Referendum." British Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-20546497> (accessed 23 April 2015, 2015).

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ *Agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the Scottish Government on a Referendum on Independence for Scotland*, (2012): <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0040/00404789.pdf> (accessed 23 April 2015).

The SNP put forth many reasons for wanting a chance to vote on whether or not Scotland became independent. In the official Referendum White Paper issued in 2013, the SNP leadership argued that too often Westminster governments had made decisions about Scotland, which did not adequately serve the Scottish people. First Minister Alex Salmond wrote that the best way for Scotland was to separate from the rest of the UK.¹⁶ The Scottish people had repeatedly held differing opinions on the future of the National Health Service (NHS) as a public service, on the affordability of university education in the United Kingdom, welfare plans and taxes, as well as the UK's status as a nuclear state, among other issues.¹⁷

The UK Government countered with an analysis of the Scottish independence plan, which claimed that an independent Scotland would be legally defined as a separate country despite its plans for maintaining close ties with the UK in such an instance.¹⁸ These papers seemed to also imply that an independent Scotland would incur a loss of political legitimacy, ruining the respected reputation its devolved government had worked hard to build up.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron admitted that the Scottish people had expressed their desire in holding a Referendum when voting in an SNP majority in 2008, and this desire must be respected by Westminster.²⁰

¹⁶ The Scottish Government : Riaghaltas na h-Alba. *Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland*. Edinburgh, United Kingdom: APS Group Scotland, 2013.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ British Broadcasting Corporation. "Timeline: Scotland's Road to Independence Referendum."

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ British Broadcasting Corporation. "Scottish Independence: David Cameron "Delighted" with Outcome." British Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-29272162>(accessed April 23, 2015).

However, on 18 September 2014 Scotland voted against independence in a showing of 55% No and 45% Yes with a turnout of almost 85%.²¹ This presented a series of new questions for the Scottish and UK parliaments to consider. A “No” vote to Scottish independence still affects all parts of the UK—just in a different way. What does it mean for the future of the UK, when a sizeable minority votes to separate? Will other parts of the UK try to follow suit? Will Scotland attempt another referendum in the future? Will Northern England—so different economically than the south of the country—ever try something similar? Additionally, what are the consequences for the UK’s regional and global partnerships? The very vocal separatist movement of Catalonia in Spain watched the Scottish Referendum very closely to see what they could learn for their own future. What precedent has the Scottish Referendum set for secessionist movements around the world?

While this vote was a clear rejection of the SNP’s hopes for the future of Scotland, the party did not lose completely. Within four days of the vote, the SNP saw its membership almost double fully, reaching 50,000 members by September 22. It is now the third-largest political party in the entirety of the United Kingdom.²² The Scottish Referendum in 2014 originated out of continued distaste for the level of control the Westminster government had over Scotland, even though Scotland has its own parliament. Although the Scottish people voted against independence, there is no doubt that reforms must be made to the UK government and greater powers must be delegated

²¹ Christine Jeavans. "In Maps: How Close was the Scottish Referendum Vote?" British Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-29255449> (accessed 23 April 2015, 2015).

²² Robbie Dinwoodie and Michael Settle. "SNP Becomes UK's Third Biggest Party in Wake of Indyref Defeat." *The Herald Scotland*, 23 September, 2014, sec. Politics.

to the local parliaments. In voting “No” in the Referendum, the Scots revived the debate over further devolution not only in Scotland but in Wales and Northern Ireland as well.

As one might assume, if Scotland had voted for independence and chose to break away from the rest of the United Kingdom, the consequences of such a choice would affect more than just Scotland. While the entirety of the United Kingdom took a personal investment in this issue, I will focus here specifically on Wales and the *Ulster Scots* of Northern Ireland, as both Wales and Northern Ireland are self-identified *Celtic* countries, and thus share some cultural, linguistic, and religious similarities with Scotland that none share with England. Wales and Northern Ireland have also both faced questions over their status as members of the UK and whether or not continued membership was what the people in each country truly wanted.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

A major theme that arose during the run-up to and in the aftermath of the Scottish Referendum is highlighting the spectrum of nationalist sentiment found across the United Kingdom. What is almost even more astounding than Scotland wanting independence is the fact that there are divisions within a country, such as in England, where people in the north lead a life more similar to those in Scotland than they do to those living in the south. Additionally, another major theme is the idea that the Scottish Referendum was not of interest only to Scots. Tensions flared when it became public that only Scots in Scotland could vote in the Referendum, along with university students from EU member states. Some in England demanded that they get a say in the Referendum, as did the Ulster Scots themselves, which will be addressed in greater depth later in this paper.

Making such a decision regarding the future of Scotland would of course have consequences not only around the UK, but around the world. Other separatist groups as in Catalonia were looking to Scotland as a resource. The fact that Scotland voted on such a divisive issue with little to no voter intimidation or violence in the aftermath is a testament to the procedure itself. There is an interesting symbolism in watching Scotland diplomatically address the Nationalist/Unionist debate while across the Irish Sea, Northern Ireland is still healing from a three-decade armed struggle to solve the same question for itself.

As mentioned above, there are a number of major questions that surrounded the prospect of Scottish independence throughout the independence campaign. Those listed are just a small selection. It would be impossible to effectively answer all of them in one paper while still giving them the attention they deserve, so two major questions have

been chosen and explored in great depth. It is not to say however that there is any sort of hierarchy of Referendum-related questions, or that these are the two most important issues that have arisen in the aftermath of the Scottish Referendum. All are very relevant, however not all are completely answerable at this time.

This paper will focus heavily on the role the Scottish Referendum has played at home, particularly for the Welsh and the Ulster Scots people of Northern Ireland. These two groups were chosen for their cultural similarities to Scotland as Celtic nations, but also for their very different and definite ideas about the UK and their place within it. Thus, the hypotheses for this research are variations on the same theme. Keeping in mind theories and characteristics of nationalism and identity, I hypothesize that Wales would have been supportive of the Scottish Referendum and, in its aftermath, exploring further *devolution*. Conversely, I hypothesize that the Ulster Scots will take the stance of other Northern Irish Protestants and reject both the Referendum and devolution as perceived threats to Unionism. These hypotheses are based on the histories of each community and the current discussion around devolution and nationalism in both Wales and Northern Ireland.

I will begin with a general overview of the concepts of nationalism and national identity as argued by a handful of academic experts. I will then outline Wales and the Ulster Scots of Northern Ireland as separate case studies, highlighting relevant background that has allowed me to make my arguments regarding the attitudes of each country's major players in the Scottish Referendum and further devolution discussion. Finally, I will conclude with takeaway claims I am able to make based on the information

I have presented here, including a discussion on how I reached my results and what these results say about the future.

OVERVIEW: THE CONCEPTS OF NATION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

In examining the people of Wales in conjunction with the Ulster Scots people of Northern Ireland, it is first important to note the difference between nation and state. In the most literal terms, every state is a nation (or even many nations), but not every nation is a state. It is important to begin the discussion of nationalism and national identity by saying that there is no real consensus among scholars about what either subject really means. To this day, academic writing focuses on such seemingly obvious questions such as “what is a nation?” Or, “does the nation make nationalism or does nationalism make the nation?” When discussing nations, Dahbour promotes a “strict definition” of the nation and argues that such a definition is most practical. Strict consideration of the nation requires a determination of “felt kinship ties” among the members of the group in question. Without any sort of ancestral link between members, one cannot call it a nation. In politics, the concept of the nation is the core of any explanation of existence, as Pettman claims that without nationalism, one has no identity, as nationalism is the vehicle with which such similarities and ties can be realized (Pettman, 1998).

With a personal identity established, people associate (or not) with those around them based on how they relate culturally, religiously, and linguistically among many other categories. Dahbour refers to Walker Connor’s idea that a group must recognize itself as distinctly different from those around it in order to be a nation. The conditions for this recognition are most easily met by acknowledging shared ethnicity. The group is defining itself in relation to the “other”, i.e. Scots claiming they are Scottish because they descend from a much more feudal and agricultural background than their English

neighbors. Nations have to be defined by members themselves (Dahbour, 2002).

Benedict Anderson's definition of a nation is similar, and the cause of much debate in scholarship surrounding the idea of nationalism. A nation, he argues, is an "imagined [community]...because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 1982).

The characteristics that allow people to recognize and imagine a shared ethnicity with others are many, and a crucial aspect of any study on nationalism and national identity. While there is no consensus on what characteristics may be most important to national identity, there are a few that stand out. Religion and language are crucial for a number of reasons. In classifying national groups, they can be applied to almost every example we see today. Even when the majority of a nation is irreligious, that is still a belief system in itself. We can learn much about a nation from its faith preferences, as often members strive to incorporate faith values into every day life. As for language, we can see many instances of linguistic preservation or revival when it comes to claiming national identity. Harold Isaacs writes that one of the most crucial factors of mere physical development is the mastery of the "mother tongue". Isaacs writes that our first language is what we use to learn about the world and our place in it. Linguistic tensions raise debate in countries today such as Belgium and India due to the connotations a certain language—or lack thereof—implies (Isaacs, 1989). People will feel marginalized if they are forced to use a language that is not their own. While establishing official languages for such a linguistically diverse country as India, for example, may be much

more practical, a hierarchy forms between those who speak the official language as a first language versus those who do not (Isaacs, 1989).

It is important to remember here of course that neither language nor religion binds a nation to any specific geography. For example, Christian populations exist on almost every continent due to the steadfast work of missionaries from almost all denominations. Colonialism and its legacy means that English is one of the world's most widely-spoken languages. Thus, a nation may or may not have a defined geographic area, and it is possible that the boundaries of a nation do not align precisely with geographical borders. Nations can span more than one state, which often heightens political tensions, as can be seen most notably today with the Kurds of the Middle East. Lack of defined territory hardly disqualifies a group from being a nation, however. Hastings writes that a nation exists even if not all inhabitants acknowledge it as such, or even want it to be so. In the same vein, Pettman notes that often, the idea of the nation is seen as an "unproblematic birth identity" which is not always one's personal preference (Pettman, 1998).

This can be seen in Northern Ireland even today, as there is a massive split among the population over whether their nation is Irish or British. There is no easy answer, however, because as Hastings notes, as long as people within the nation from a variety of economic backgrounds, occupations, and lifestyles can agree that they share characteristics with others across these strata, the nation formally exists, even if it has no defined territory (Hastings, 1997). Hastings also argues that nations are not static with respect to inhabitants. If the same nation today had a drastically different ethnic makeup a century ago, it does not mean that within that time it ever ceased to be a nation (Hastings, 1997). While there is much debate over how formal a definition of "nation" should or

shouldn't be, there is greater consensus that nations are a constructed idea. Since a nation may or may not have territory of its own, it must rely on the bonds forged by its people if it wants to survive (Pettman, 1998).

A state, on the other hand, "claims authority over all citizens and groups within its boundaries..." (Dogan, 1992). Unlike a nation, a singular government implies that a state has definite geography. Giddens has written that the formation of a nation-state brought along with it a new form of political rule, citing again the idea of definite boundaries but adding that the law of a nation-state includes "direct control of the means of internal and external violence" (Giddens in Billig, 1995). Duara has argued that the creation of the nation-state is what has allowed for such state-sponsored nationalism as we see today because it has placed the state above all else in the minds of the people. States are understood in the most basic terms as the primary entity to which people should be loyal, which is why there is now in many areas of the world, a schism between loyalty to the state, or loyalty to a nation (Duara in Pettman, 1998). A state can be made up of more than one nation, and a nation can span more than one state, making boundaries and loyalties quite unclear or contradictory. In the instance of a multi-ethnic state, the goal is to unite the many nations within and forge a new nation—using the same ideas about shared characteristics and identity that many nations use to identify themselves. The added feature in this case however, is the idea that all nations within the state are living on the same land. Perhaps the most major binding thread is that the people of a state are all living within that state, and thus answer to the same laws (Hastings, 1997).

WALES AND THE REFERENDUM

The *New York Times* reported on 30 August 2014 that many in Wales were “watching [the Referendum] with a mix of envy, excitement, and trepidation.”²³ Wales is depicted here as truly being an afterthought when it comes to considering UK nationalism, as author Katrin Bennhold notes that the stakes are much clearer for Northern Ireland, Cornwall (which has recently secured ethnic minority status for its own Celtic residents) and even Northern England. The North of England is much more like Scotland in terms of socioeconomic status, and has made pushes for greater control following Scotland’s call to have a vote on its own future. Plaid Cymru—the Welsh nationalist party—saw some of its members and other big names in Wales, like Hollywood actors, join a solidarity campaign with Scottish Yes voters.²⁴

Wales did not willingly join the United Kingdom, but rather was conquered by Edward I who wiped out the royal Welsh bloodline and installed his own son as the Prince of Wales.²⁵ This would perhaps lead one to infer that Wales might even have more nationalist fervor than Scotland, due to the very nature by which it joined (if it would even use that word) the United Kingdom. Wales actively resisted English rule until the early 15th century when Owain Glyndwr staged the last organized attempt to overthrow the English administration in Wales. Although Glyndwr was able to successfully establish a parliament at Machynlleth, he quickly lost support from France and Scotland

²³ Katrin Bennhold. "As Scots Weigh Independence, Wales Takes Note." *The New York Times*, 2014.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid

and thus could not withstand the fallout from a betrayal by some Welsh nobility.²⁶ Under Henry VIII, Wales was fully integrated with England, legally. The 1536 Act of Union went as far as to imply that Wales had always been a part of England, and created a partnership that was much more like an absorption of Wales by the English government.²⁷

Formal nationalist movements in Wales did not really begin to take hold until the 19th century.²⁸ In their earliest days, these movements did not demand separation, but rather greater equality within the union. Welsh nationalists wanted respect for the long-standing tradition of nonconformity in Wales, and outlined plans to create national universities in Wales.²⁹ At Westminster, Wales successfully met nationalist goals through representatives of the Liberal party. Disestablishment bills outlining a desired separation from the Church of England were introduced in parliament in 1894, 1895, 1909, 1912, and 1913 before finally succeeding in 1914.³⁰ Devolution proposals also began at this time, with Welshman (and future UK Prime Minister) David Lloyd George urging the creation of a Welsh devolution plan as early as 1891.³¹

As in Northern Ireland, where paramilitaries such as the IRA had a strong political presence, Wales also saw bouts of violent nationalist activity arise in small fringe circles. The Sons of Glyndwr emerged in the mid-20th century and staged many fire-bomb attacks against what they saw as the “English settler” community in Wales,

²⁶ British Broadcasting Corporation. "A Brief History of the Union of Wales and England." British Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/devolution/wales/briefing/history.shtml> (accessed 23 April, 2015).

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Ibid

targeting the holiday homes of many English in North Wales.³² About a decade earlier, an official Welsh Republican movement began as an offshoot of the nationalist front, Plaid Cymru.³³ It should be noted as well that Wales did not even have its own capital city until 1955, when Cardiff was finally granted this privilege.³⁴ Like Scotland, Wales suffered mightily under the policies of Margaret Thatcher, which perhaps has led to the uptick in Welsh nationalist sentiment.³⁵

Today in Wales, the definition of the Welsh identity is much more straightforward than that of the Ulster Scots in Northern Ireland. Administering a census in 2011, Statistics for Wales recorded 57.5% of the country choosing to self-identify as Welsh only, with only 7.1% claiming to be both Welsh and British. The remaining 34.1% claimed no Welsh identity, indicating instead that they were either English, Scottish, Northern Irish, or other.³⁶ Unlike the deeply sectarian nature of national identity in Northern Ireland, Welsh census figures draw no official connection between religion and identity. It is interesting to note however, that almost the same number of Welsh residents reporting a Welsh-only identity—57.6%—reported that they were Christians.³⁷ There is no denominational breakdown of this figure as there was in the Northern Irish census, likely because of Wales's tradition of having no state church.

³² Ibid

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Katrin Bennhold. "As Scots Weigh Independence, Wales Takes Note." *The New York Times*, 2014.

³⁶ Statistics for Wales, Ystadegau ar Gyfer Cymru. . *2011 Census: First Results for Ethnicity, National Identity, and Religion for Wales*. Cardiff, United Kingdom: Llwodraeth Cymru: Welsh Government, 17 December 2012.

³⁷ Ibid.

NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE REFERENDUM

In Northern Ireland, this situation is much more complex. Prior to the Referendum, much of the media focus on the outcome of the Referendum outside Scotland itself was on Northern Ireland, due to the fragile peace currently holding it together. There was much speculation on what a “Yes” vote in the Referendum would mean for a country that has already seen itself resort to brutal violence when trying to resolve the same problem Scotland was hoping to address through democratic vote.

For all the articles to be found in periodicals such as the *Belfast Telegraph*, the *Derry Journal*, and even the *Irish Times* in the *Republic of Ireland* about Northern Ireland’s stance on the Scottish Referendum and whether or not it favored a certain outcome, in actuality, most people and politicians in Northern Ireland took an interest in the Referendum very late in the game.³⁸ Of those who did take interest, the majority were Unionists. Although the questions of identity and politics surrounding the Scottish Referendum seem to be perfectly aligned with Irish Republican (and Nationalist) ideology, Irish Nationalists/Republicans were reluctant to take a public position on the vote, with many fearing that coming out in support of an independent Scotland would lead others to assume that the IRA was trying to forge a relationship with SNP and further its own goals that way.³⁹

For Unionists, there was much more at stake in the run-up to the Referendum. The basis for Unionist opposition to an independent Scotland lies in the claim that Northern

³⁸ Gerry Braiden. 'If Vote is Yes there would be an Accute Sense of Loss'." *The Herald Scotland*, 9 September 2014, 2014, sec. Politics. <http://www.heraldsotland.com/politics/viewpoint/if-vote-is-yes-there-would-be-an-acute-sense-of-loss.25287086>

³⁹ Ibid

Irish Unionists have no identity of their own without Scotland.⁴⁰ Northern Ireland is never reluctant to praise the influence Scotland has had in the country and the tight bond its formed due primarily to Scotland's proximity to Northern Ireland. Articles about Unionist opinions on the Referendum never failed to mention the Scottish contributions to the Unionist identity, pointing out, for instance, that in the heavily Unionist Sandy Row area of South Belfast—a neighborhood famous for the *Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)* murals still adorning fences and the sides of houses—Scottish Saltires and the Union Jack are flown next to each other regularly.⁴¹ Unionists predicted some severe soul-searching in the event of a “Yes” vote in Scotland, as Scotland was instrumental in aiding Unionists in their crusade against home rule a century ago in the signing of the 1912 Ulster Covenant.⁴²

The mere labeling of a political agreement as a covenant is steeped in Ulster's commitment to faith as a keystone of national identity. Originating out of the tumultuous General Elections held in both January and December 1910, the Ulster Covenant was a response to what became known as the Third Home Rule Crisis for Irish loyalists.⁴³ Seeking desperately to resolve a budget impasse, Liberal Party leader H.H. Asquith reached out to Irish Nationalist MPs, promising the introduction of a Home Rule bill in return for their support of him and the Liberal Party in the January election.⁴⁴ The proposed bill would outline the establishment of a devolved parliament in Dublin. In

⁴⁰ Philip Bell. How would a Scottish Yes Vote Affect Northern Ireland's Unionist Politics? *The New Statesman*, 11 September, 2014.

⁴¹ Vanessa Barford. "Scottish Independence: How would 'Yes' Vote Affect Northern Ireland?" BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28743834> (2014).

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Ulster-Scots Community Network. *Understanding the Ulster Covenant*. Belfast, UK: Ulster-Scots Community Network.

⁴⁴ Ibid

response, Ulster Unionists took it upon themselves to prove their ongoing commitment to the Westminster government, in hopes of thwarting any progress made on the Home Rule bill in Parliament.

In a movement that reached out to all Unionists within Ulster as well as those of Ulster birth living in places such as Liverpool, London, Bristol, Manchester, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, those resisting the idea of home rule for Ireland drafted a manifesto professing their “uncompromising opposition to the Home Rule now before parliament.”⁴⁵ Arguing that home rule for the whole of Ireland would be too Catholic, and that industrial Ulster would flounder under the same administration as the largely agrarian provinces of Connacht and Munster in particular, 28 September 1912 became Ulster Day.⁴⁶ With over 500,000 signatures, the Ulster Covenant was meant to echo the political covenants written in Scotland in the 16th and 17th centuries, professing the Scottish commitment to the Presbyterian Church, even after a union with England, where the state church was a political force in itself.⁴⁷ The Ulster Scots would likely take this symbolism very seriously, as the prior connection Scotland had to Northern Ireland at the time of the Covenant surely had an effect on Scotland’s response to the wishes of Unionists at the time.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Ibid

WHO ARE THE ULSTER SCOTS?

There is perhaps no better illustration of the close ties between Scotland and Northern Ireland than the existence of the Ulster Scots communities of the present day. A major way the Ulster Scots were able to make their voices heard regarding the Referendum was via the Orange Order, a leading Unionist organization tracing its roots back to the County Armagh in 1798.⁴⁸ The Order is currently headed by an Ulster Scot, David Hume, who very vocally made the Order's opposition to Scottish independence known by organizing a rally in Edinburgh five days before the vote.⁴⁹ Earlier in the planning stages of orchestrating the Scottish Referendum, Hume called for the Scottish Government to grant the Ulster Scots a vote due to the shared history of Northern Ireland and Scotland, and again, the support Scotland showed Northern Ireland regarding the Ulster Covenant.⁵⁰ Unionists expressed strong concern over the idea that a "Yes" vote in Scotland would prompt new calls in Northern Ireland for a reunion with the Republic of Ireland, perhaps citing Scotland's vote as evidence that such an important decision can indeed be made peacefully and democratically.⁵¹

As of now, the only way Ulster Scots are acknowledged in census data is through questions about how many Northern Irish residents can speak, read, or write the Ulster Scots language. Figures are kept for those who report having knowledge in any combination (or all) of the three skills. Nevertheless, there are many Northern Irish who

⁴⁸ "Welcome to the Grand Orange Lodge." The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. <http://www.grandorangelodge.co.uk/what-is-the-orange-order#.VIdKBff9d0> (2014).

⁴⁹ Vanessa Barford. "Scottish Independence: How would 'Yes' Vote Affect Northern Ireland?" BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28743834> (2014).

⁵⁰ Steven Alexander. "Senior Orangeman Calls for Ulster Scots Vote in Scottish Independence Referendum." *The Belfast Telegraph*, 25 September, 2012, sec. Local and National. <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/uk/senior-orangeman-calls-for-Ulster-Scots-vote-in-scottish-independence-Referendum-28866788.html>

⁵¹ Mark Devenport. "Northern Ireland People Keep Close Eye on Scottish Independence Poll." BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-29235867> (2014).

can trace their family heritage to Scotland, and groups like the Ulster Scots Agency work to educate the public about the Ulster Scots culture and their role in shaping Northern Ireland to what it is today. The goal is to be able to acquire more specific information about the greater cultural ties uniting those with knowledge of the Ulster Scots language. However, the current classification as solely a linguistic group has made it more difficult to determine.

In the 2011 Census, there are 15 different combinations of skills (reading, writing, speaking, and understanding) people could report regarding their knowledge of Ulster Scots. The figures take into account all Northern Irish residents three years old and older. For the sake of this study, it seemed most reasonable to consider anyone reporting any ability in the language as part of the Ulster Scots community. Although this provides a large spectrum from which to gather information, it aligns well with the historical assumptions that Ulster Scots are Presbyterians by faith and that the majority live in the northern parts of Counties Antrim, Down, and *Derry/Londonderry*. Illustrated graphics from the 2011 Census report show that the areas with the largest numbers of people reporting understanding of Ulster Scots—that is, the regions where greater than 30% of the population claim they can speak, read, write, and/or understand the language—coincides almost exactly with the areas of the country that report a Protestant population of 60% or greater (see Appendix B). This also matches the Northern Irish Census statistic that of the predominant Protestant denominations present in Northern Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has the most members of any Protestant division.⁵² One can then infer that as of the most recent census, Ulster Scots self-identify as British rather

⁵² Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. *National Identity by Religion*. Belfast, United Kingdom: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2011.

than Irish, as the 2011 census reports the majority of residents claiming a British identity were members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.⁵³

To further support this albeit loose definition of the Ulster Scots people, we can rule out the fact that any of those claiming to speak, write, read, or understand the Ulster Scots language have developed these skills via formal education, as it was not until the 2006 St. Andrews Agreement that Ulster Scots was officially recognized as its own language.⁵⁴ The relative newness of the linguistic status of the Ulster Scots language shows that it has not been prioritized in Northern Ireland as a marker of identity. These figures regarding spectrum and spread of the Ulster Scots language allow us to conclude that the Ulster Scots language is being used among the Ulster Scots themselves, rather than as a formal educational tool for all, as is Irish Gaelic, which is taught to pupils of 36 primary schools and six secondary schools in the six counties of Northern Ireland.

As it stands, these statistics show that there is a much smaller emphasis placed on learning the Irish language—even just for cultural education—in Northern Ireland, as there are 163 Irish-medium primary and secondary schools in the provinces squarely within the Republic of Ireland, as well as an additional 13 primary and secondary schools within the counties of Ulster which lie within the Republic's borders.⁵⁵ The lack of focus on the Irish language in Northern Ireland can be seen as a formal rejection of the Irish Gaelic culture the Republic of Ireland worked to revive in its quest for its own independence. This discrepancy is just one of many that can be traced back to the seemingly ongoing debate on whether or not Northern Ireland is (and should be) culturally Irish or British.

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ *Northern Ireland (St. Andrews Agreement) Act 2006*, (2006): Chapter 53 (accessed 9 December 2014).

⁵⁵ Gaelscoileanna Teo. *Irish-Medium Education Outside the Gaeltacht 2012-2013*: Gaelscoileanna Teo, 2013.

Returning to the status of the Ulster Scots language, we can infer that those using the language are doing so because they consider themselves as a part of the Ulster Scots community in Northern Ireland and are working to preserve their separate cultural heritage. The state's heavy emphasis on the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland has allowed people to communicate exclusively in Irish Gaelic if they so choose, even if their family does not prioritize the use of Irish Gaelic. There is no such counterpart in Northern Ireland, and as the Ulster Scots are a small subset of Northern Ireland's population, we know that it is even less likely that Ulster Scots communicate exclusively in the Ulster Scots language outside of the home. Thus, those who can speak, read, and write the language are clearly learning these skills within the community of Ulster Scots in Northern Ireland as a way to ensure that the language does not die out.

METHODOLOGY

Due to the very current nature of this topic, all available sources for this study were of a unique nature. In order to perform a full analysis of this topic I had to rely on newspapers and blogs as my major references, with books and academic journal articles providing mostly background information. I would frequently check the websites of the British Broadcasting Corporation as well as those of regional UK newspapers to see if opinions on the Referendum were growing stronger or changing based on any of the independent polling data that was released almost monthly in the lead-up to the vote in Scotland. I used these materials to gain insight into the official political stances of each country about the Scottish Independence Referendum, as many newspaper articles and blog posts on the subject were about what each devolved parliament was doing or should be doing to promote either its support or opposition to the Referendum depending on the party in power. I was also able to judge how invested Wales and Northern Ireland were in seeing the outcome of the Scottish Referendum, as the articles about how the vote would affect the two countries respectively highlighted different problems, concerns, and consequences they saw as being the most important. I could easily tell how Wales and Northern Ireland saw themselves fitting into the independence and/or devolution discussion in the UK by what their newspapers and bloggers chose to elaborate upon most in their work. For Wales, the concerns were of a much more practical nature, with worries of what the economy of a Scotland-less UK would look like in a time when the kingdom is still recovering from the Great Recession most prevalent. For Northern Ireland, fears that centuries of cultural ties and historical connections might be severed with an independent Scotland were the priority.

Throughout the run-up to the Scottish independence Referendum on 18 September 2014, news sources across the United Kingdom addressed the topic not only in terms of consequences for the Scottish people but for the rest of the UK as well. The British Broadcasting Corporation's country bureaux each examined the effect of the Referendum on their immediate locale, as did a number of UK newspapers. *The Scotsman*, based in Edinburgh, provided extensive coverage of the Referendum debates taking place across Scotland for more than a year before the vote. In Wales, the *Western Mail* continued to cover what the Referendum and future of the UK mean for Wales, considering that like Scotland, Wales also has a formally organized and very vocal nationalist political front. In Northern Ireland, the *Belfast Telegraph* tracked the opinions of Belfast residents on a potential vote on the reunification of Ireland, which has come to light in the wake of the Referendum. Collaborating with some local polling agencies, it has polled at least once on the idea of whether or not readers want there to now be a chance to vote on the controversial issue of Irish reunification, or would they prefer to keep the current borders between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland.

Of course, internet sources must always be consulted with caution and it needs to be clear that they are coming from credible individuals before being used in academic work. In order to ensure that the opinions expressed in blogs used in this study were supported by accurate facts, I made sure to consult only those connected to a credible news source. The newspapers mentioned above each support opinion blogs on their websites, with many posts written by their publication's respective staff members. In a debate such as this however, it can also be very telling to read the opinions of every day citizens as well as those coming from reputable news sources. Although they are not

necessarily cited here, I did also look at more private blog posts and social media accounts to get an idea of what private citizens' views of the Scottish Referendum and the future of the UK were. Although they may not have been steeped in fact, consulting these sources was a great way to see what the actual discussion was in Wales or in Northern Ireland about the direction the UK seemed to be going, and showed how well (if at all) the respective governments were truly representing the wants of their people on this matter.

We are fortunate as well that both Northern Ireland and Wales administered a census in 2011. As such, I was able to get very recent and credible figures on exactly how people in Wales and Northern Ireland identify, and whether or not faith was connected at all to how people choose to label themselves. In both reports, the respective governments asked a series of questions on how the residents of each country identify. Acknowledging this sort of internal struggle between being British or being Irish/Welsh, there is an in-depth analysis of each category and what connections these identities have with the predominant religion in each country as well as language, gender, social class, and other factors.

WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND AFTER THE VOTE

In the aftermath of the Scottish Independence Referendum, the “national conversation” the SNP had hoped to foster on the question of independence shifted toward the future of devolution. The joint agreement on holding the Referendum was such that if Scotland did not become an independent country as a result of the vote, it would be allowed to pursue greater devolution within the framework of the United Kingdom.⁵⁶ Prime Minister David Cameron admitted in his official reaction to the Referendum’s results, that in order to move forward after such a vote, there needed to be a greater discussion of devolution for all people in the UK.⁵⁷ He took the time to highlight his desire for Wales to play a more central role in discussing the UK’s future, and that in Northern Ireland, he was committed to ensuring that devolution was constructed in a way that would work for the country still healing from three decades of sectarian conflict.⁵⁸ This concept of devolution has also been taken up by Wales and Northern Ireland themselves, with each country likely recognizing that the Referendum was a game-changer in the UK-wide debate on representation and devolution.

⁵⁶ *Agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the Scottish Government on a Referendum on Independence for Scotland*, (2012); <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0040/00404789.pdf> (accessed 23 April 2015).

⁵⁷ British Broadcasting Corporation. "Scottish Independence: David Cameron "Delighted" with Outcome." British Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-29272162> (accessed April 23, 2015).

⁵⁸ Ibid

Wales leads the way for greater devolution

Although there was a lot less anxiety in Wales about the potential of a “Yes” vote in Scotland, the country’s investment in the aftermath of the Referendum and the promised new plan for UK-wide devolution is remarkable. As the *Western Mail* has reported, a growing political sentiment in Wales appears to reflect the idea that people in the country are fed up with always being an afterthought of major political debates within the UK. Welsh politicians see this time of re-evaluation of the UK government as crucial for itself as well as for the future of the union.⁵⁹ Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones, a member of the Labour party, called for greater devolution across the UK in November 2014, proposing a constitutional convention of sorts, as well as the adoption of a more federal political system. The idea would be to reconstruct the legal framework of the UK such that it becomes much like the United States. Each devolved parliament will have certain powers and privileges that relate specifically to needs and wants of the people, while the Westminster government will take care of other separate issues that serve the kingdom as a whole, such as defense and foreign policy.⁶⁰ This is fully in-line with the current sentiment of the Welsh public, but not what Jones’s Labour colleagues are calling for in other parts of the UK.⁶¹ In fact, Jones would not publicly take a stance defending the union of the United Kingdom if Westminster did not promise greater devolution of finances to Wales.⁶² He appears to have had some successes in this endeavor, with a number of UK Government ministers promised further Welsh devolution to come in

⁵⁹ David Williamson. "Wales may Tire of Playing Second-Fiddle to Scotland in the Constitutional Quartet, but there is a Revolution Brewing Right on our Nation's Doorstep." *The Western Mail*, 2014, sec. Opinion.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Paul Gillespie. "How does Wales Fit in to Shifting United Kingdom?" *The Irish Times*, 2014, sec. Opinion.

⁶² British Broadcasting Corporation. "Carwyn Jones Argues Case Against Scottish Independence." British Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-25003045> (accessed 23 April, 2015).

March 2015.⁶³ This promise is outlined in the current Wales Bill, which is making its way through the UK Parliament.⁶⁴

Although First Minister Jones has called for a Welsh Referendum on the bill's provision to raise Welsh income tax, others are not so sure it is enough of a controversial issue to warrant that type of reaction. The devolution plan outlined in the Wales Bill establishes a reserved powers framework for Wales, and the country hopes that it will now be possible to raise a fraction of funds for Wales-only expenses through raising income tax in the country—at least somewhat.⁶⁵ This would allow Wales to establish certain policies that may not be in the interest of the rest of the UK or which may not succeed in Westminster votes, as this increased control over finances allows Wales to finance more Wales-specific initiatives. This historic plan includes its own Welsh nationalist symbolism, as lawmakers planned it such that implementation would begin on 1 March 2015, which is also St. David's Day—the Welsh national holiday.⁶⁶ In the aftermath of the Referendum—a vote which saw the Scottish National Party overtake the Liberal Democrats to become the third-largest political party UK-wide—Welsh nationalist front Plaid Cymru has also seen a rise in membership, leading one to believe that the Welsh people have been inspired by their northern neighbors and are willing to take more of a risk regarding their political future.^{67,68}

⁶³ "'Ambitious' further Welsh Devolution Pledge by UK Government." BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-30004665> (2014).

⁶⁴ David Cornock. "Peers Promised More Devolution as Wales Bill Nears End." BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-30013721> (2014).

⁶⁵ "Referendum Still Needed on Income Tax Powers, Says Jones." BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-30330013> (2014).

⁶⁶ David Cornock. "Peers Promised More Devolution as Wales Bill Nears End." BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-30013721> (2014).

⁶⁷ Richard Osley. "Alex Salmond Set to Stand for Seat in Westminster." *The Independent*, 2014, sec. UK News. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/former-snp-leader-alex-salmond-set-to-stand-for-seat-in-westminster-9908428.html>

⁶⁸ Paul Gillespie. "How does Wales Fit in to Shifting United Kingdom?" *The Irish Times*, 2014, sec. Opinion.

The United Kingdom or the Republic? Northern Ireland weighs its options

In Northern Ireland, other remarkable political shifts seem to be taking place. A little more than a week after the Referendum, the *Belfast Telegraph* polled its readers and found that 56.2% of readers wanted the chance to vote in a Referendum about the prospect of reunion with the Republic of Ireland. In a theoretical vote on the question however, 59.8% would choose to stay within the UK rather than join the Irish Republic. Protestants were the majority of the opposition to a proposed reunion, with Catholics mostly supporting a plan to join the Republic two decades from now.⁶⁹ While it may appear counter productive, Northern Irish voters wanting its own border Referendum just so they can vote against it proves that there is still a sectarian divide over the issue of Northern Ireland's future. There has been much discussion and debate on if and when a real border poll will take place, but so far there is no evidence that one will actually take place any time soon.

Rather than focus too heavily on an issue that is still a very touchy subject for many, Northern Ireland has been trying to make its way through the new devolution talks. Wales appears to so heavily support. 2 December 2014 marked 15 years of devolution as it currently stands within Northern Ireland, although the road from 1999 to today has never been a smooth one.⁷⁰ Now, Northern Ireland is working on sorting out its own devolution plan for collecting taxes, although this is going much less smoothly than it is in Wales. The UK Government has said it will allow *Stormont* to take control of

⁶⁹ Liam Clarke. "Northern Ireland Says 'Yes' to a Border Poll...but a Firm 'no' to United Ireland." *The Belfast Telegraph*, 29 September, 2014, sec. Local and National. <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-says-yes-to-a-border-poll-but-a-firm-no-to-united-ireland-30622987.html>

⁷⁰ Ruth Dudley Edwards. "Northern Ireland's 15 Years of Devolution have Left it Frozen in Loathing and Distrust." *The Telegraph*, 2 December, 2014, sec. UK News. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/northernireland/11268289/Northern-Irelands-15-years-of-devolution-have-left-it-frozen-in-loathing-and-distrust.html>

corporate taxes for Northern Ireland, but only after (and if) it cuts £2 billion in overall spending.⁷¹ Unlike in Wales, where it appears that their plan for devolved tax collection will be implemented very soon, the UK Government has given no time frame for Northern Ireland's tax plan. The proposed tax plan deals mostly with the way Northern Ireland would be able to collect revenue for itself by taxing corporations in the country.⁷² Stormont must first show that it is capable of handling such power first, which has never been guaranteed.⁷³ In these first 15 years of self-rule, the UK Government—and likely the Northern Irish people themselves—have feared that their local government was on the verge of collapse.⁷⁴ The federal system Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones has proposed for the future of the entire United Kingdom does not currently seem a viable option for Northern Ireland, which is perhaps why it appears to be lagging behind others in the debate.

⁷¹ Mark Hennessy. "UK Government to Devolve Corporation Tax to NI." *The Irish Times*, 4 December, 2014. <http://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/uk-government-to-devolve-corporation-tax-to-ni-1.2024682>

⁷² Ibid

⁷³ Ibid

⁷⁴ Ruth Dudley Edwards. "Northern Ireland's 15 Years of Devolution have Left it Frozen in Loathing and Distrust." *The Telegraph*, 2 December, 2014, sec. UK News. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/northernireland/11268289/Northern-Irelands-15-years-of-devolution-have-left-it-frozen-in-loathing-and-distrust.html>

THE ROAD TO FURTHER DEVOLUTION

Unlike Wales, which appears to be taking full advantage of the post-Referendum discussions on the future of the UK in order to improve its own situation, the Northern Irish Assembly seems much less interested. While Carywn Jones and the Welsh people have devised a new plan for Wales that would allow it greater control over its finances with the Wales Bill mentioned above, Northern Ireland has yet to produce anything except its corporate tax plan. The Northern Irish Assembly has produced a report about the effect of the Scottish Referendum on the future of devolution in the UK in partnership with Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University, and the Open University, examining where Northern Ireland now fits in the devolution debate.⁷⁵ The report claims that currently, Northern Ireland is very happy to keep the status quo, citing reluctance to resurrect the identity and religious politics of *The Troubles* and the current, relatively stable economic status of the UK as the main reasoning both Protestant Unionists and Catholic Nationalists are content to keep things as they are—at least for the time being.⁷⁶ Authors of the report acknowledge that Northern Ireland is currently in a unique limbo that contains a number of layers. Paramilitaries are no longer seen as more legitimate than the government, but the government does not have a very good success rate at proving that sectarianism has completely left Northern Irish politics. Unionists are still the majority of the population in Northern Ireland, but Nationalists are poised to become the population's majority very soon.⁷⁷ Right now, there are too many fragile aspects of Northern Irish life that are being held together in a very delicate balance. Doing too much

⁷⁵ Gerry Mooney and Philip O'Sullivan. *Paper 2: After the no Vote: Devolution and Governance in the UK: Consequences and Questions for Northern Ireland*: The Open University, 2014.

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ Ibid

to disrupt this balance could drag the country back into civil conflict, which is still fresh in the minds of many.

CURRENT UK DEVOLUTION POLICIES

As it stands, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland all have different capabilities and powers due to Westminster's devolvement of power on a country-specific basis. It is important to highlight these differences as they illustrate why some countries could argue validly for greater control while others do not have a successful enough history to support any claims for further devolution. Each country's policy capabilities and devolved powers are outlined in the following subsections.

Scotland

The original referendum on Scottish devolution was held on 11 September 1997, with an overwhelming majority of voters supporting the idea of a devolved parliament to be based in Edinburgh. A major power awarded the Scottish Parliament from its outset was the ability to modify the basic rate of income tax within Scotland as opposed to the rates of the rest of the UK.⁷⁸ The following year, the Scotland Act of 1998 created the blueprint for Scotland's new legislative infrastructure. Instead, however, of listing the powers now delegated by Westminster to Edinburgh, the Act listed only the powers still under Westminster's control.⁷⁹ Americans may be familiar with this idea, as the same thinking is outlined in the Tenth Amendment of the Constitution, which states that any powers not specifically granted to the federal government as outlined by the Constitution were delegated to the states or to the people.⁸⁰ In Scotland, these powers reserved for Westminster include the following broad categories of policy-making⁸¹:

⁷⁸ UK Government. "Devolution Settlement: Scotland." UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/devolution-settlement-scotland> (accessed Jan. 11, 2015).

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ *Tenth Amendment: Reserved Powers, Constitution of the United States* (1787); , <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/GPO-CONAN-1992/pdf/GPO-CONAN-1992-10-11.pdf> (accessed 12 January 2015).

⁸¹ UK Government. "Devolution Settlement: Scotland." UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/devolution-settlement-scotland> (accessed Jan. 11, 2015).

- Broader Healthcare policy such as the rules and legality of abortion procedures as well as the legal status of pharmaceuticals
- Defense
- International Affairs and Policy
- International Trade and Economic Policy

Devolved powers in Scotland include:

- Health and social work
- Education
- Housing
- Justice and policing
- Agriculture and the environment
- Tourism
- Economic development and internal transport

Scotland's devolved parliament has 129 members, known as MSPs (Members of the Scottish Parliament). The head of the devolved Scottish government is the First Minister for Scotland, a position currently held by Nicola Sturgeon.⁸²

Wales

The National Assembly for Wales was established via the Government of Wales Act 1998. This Act was the result of a Welsh referendum on devolution, which like Scotland, was held in September 1997.⁸³ Under the Government of Wales Act, all powers of the Westminster Secretary of State for Wales were to be transferred to the new

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ UK Government. "Devolution Settlement: Wales." UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/devolution-settlement-wales> (accessed 10 January, 2015).

assembly.⁸⁴ Unlike Scotland's plan, where the focus was more on what Westminster can do rather than what Edinburgh can do, there are 20 "subjects"—or specific policy areas—that have been devolved to the Welsh Government, with anything not listed reserved for Westminster to handle.⁸⁵

In 2006, a second Government of Wales Act outlined a plan to establish the National Assembly for Wales as the new legislative body in Wales, but also created the Government of Wales as a separate, executive branch for the country.⁸⁶ Like Scotland's provision of reserved powers, this idea should also be familiar to Americans, as a major facet of the U.S. Constitution is the separation of powers.⁸⁷ This system has granted Wales control over more areas of society than the Scotland Act has for Scotland, but they are perhaps not as lucrative as Scotland's influence over its own income tax rates. The Government of Wales Act 2006 specifically outlined what policy subjects Wales can control itself. They are as follows (broadly)⁸⁸:

- Agriculture and Food Production
- Economic development
- Education
- Tourism and Recreation
- Environmental Conservation
- Emergency Services
- Healthcare
- History and Culture

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ *Articles I-III, Constitution of the United States* (1787): (accessed 12 January 2015).

⁸⁸ Ibid

- Welsh Language
- Natural Disaster Defense
- Social Welfare
- Transportation
- Zoning and Development

Wales also has a First Minister, a position currently occupied by the Rt. Hon Carwyn Jones, AM.⁸⁹ Jones is the Minister responsible for the Welsh Government, the country's executive branch of its devolved parliament. For the most crucial aspects of society, it appears as Wales and Scotland are on equal footing. Both have the ability to oversee education, healthcare, and social welfare for their respective populations. Wales and Scotland also both have certain economic powers separate from those of Westminster. The difference arises in if and how each country acquires revenue—a crucial issue for any country hoping to take more control over its own affairs.

Northern Ireland

Of the three devolved parliaments of the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland's is the most complex. Provision of the Northern Ireland Assembly came from the Good Friday (or Belfast) Agreement of 1998.⁹⁰ A Referendum held about a month after the signing of the *Good Friday Agreement* asked the Northern Irish public if they supported the agreement's plans for moving forward in the aftermath of the Troubles. With 71% of the country saying they were in favor of the agreement, the new assembly was officially

⁸⁹ Welsh Government, First Minister of Wales. Welsh Government. <http://wales.gov.uk/about/firstminister/?lang=en> (accessed 10 January, 2015).

⁹⁰ UK Government. "Devolution Settlement: Northern Ireland." UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/devolution-settlement-northern-ireland> (accessed 10 January, 2015).

established.⁹¹ This was not, however, Northern Ireland's first experiment with devolution. The Parliament of Northern Ireland was established in Belfast in 1921, with the creation of the Home Rule Act and the Partition of Ireland by the Westminster Government.⁹² In 1972, the Unionist-dominated Parliament, colloquially known as Stormont, after the Belfast building in which it is housed, was suspended after the events of Bloody Sunday in the Derry Bogside proved that there would be no quick and peaceful resolution to the civil rights debate in Northern Ireland. Following Bloody Sunday, Northern Ireland was again placed under direct rule⁹³ The following year, the Parliament of Northern Ireland was officially abolished by the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973.⁹⁴

In its most recent attempt, Northern Ireland has had very little success managing its own affairs, falling back on Westminster in particularly difficult times, even having the Assembly suspended for temporary bouts of direct rule. The new Northern Irish Assembly has also dealt with suspension, seeing the country put under control of the Northern Ireland Office from 14 October 2002 until 8 May 2007 due to intense gridlock over power sharing between members of the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Féin.⁹⁵

Today, the Northern Irish Assembly has control over certain "transferred matters". These include (broadly)⁹⁶:

- Healthcare

⁹¹ International Foundation for Electoral Systems. "Election Guide: Northern Ireland Referendum." International Foundation for Electoral Systems. <http://www.electionguide.org/elections/id/103/> (accessed 10 January, 2015).

⁹² Graham Walker. "Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Devolution, 1945-1979." *Journal of British Studies* 49, no. 1 (2010): 117.

⁹³ UK Parliament. "Direct Rule." UK Parliament. <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/parliamentandireland/overview/direct-rule/> (accessed 10 January, 2015).

⁹⁴ *Northern Ireland Constitution Act*, (1973): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1973/36/contents> (accessed 12 January 2015).

⁹⁵ British Broadcasting Corporation. "Timeline: Northern Ireland Assembly." British Broadcasting Corporation. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/2952997.stm (accessed 10 January, 2015).

⁹⁶ UK Government. "Devolution Settlement: Northern Ireland." UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/devolution-settlement-northern-ireland> (accessed 10 January, 2015).

- Social Security
- Housing
- Pensions and Child Support
- Economic Development
- Policing
- Transportation
- Environment
- Culture
- Education
- Agriculture

That Northern Ireland has not prioritized reforms that would end its greater dependence on Westminster is particularly interesting juxtaposed against the Scottish Referendum's main argument that Scottish people don't get enough say in Scottish affairs via the policies of Westminster. As little voice as Scotland may feel it has at Westminster, Northern Ireland gets even less. The Labour Party—one of the three major political parties at Westminster—does not formally organize in Northern Ireland.⁹⁷ Additionally, elected members of Sinn Féin, the well-known nationalist party and the second-largest party in the Northern Irish Assembly, as well as the sixth-largest UK-wide, refuse to take their seats at Westminster.⁹⁸

This leaves just the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), currently the fourth-largest party at Westminster and the largest in Northern Ireland.⁹⁹ As things currently stand, this

⁹⁷ Philip Bell. How would a Scottish Yes Vote Affect Northern Ireland's Unionist Politics? *The New Statesman*, 11 September, 2014.

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Ibid

means that in a country whose politics are defined by parties taking polar opposite positions on many issues, only one side has its voice heard. The Northern Irish Assembly has appeared to hit a brick wall from the moment it first got off the ground. Even now, the wounds of the Troubles are still healing. It is possible that the people of Northern Ireland can exist more peacefully knowing that it is not their own political parties that are actually in control of the country's policies, because that leaves out the Nationalist/Unionist debate to some degree.

The Northern Irish Assembly has 108 members, known as MLAs (Members of the Legislative Assembly).¹⁰⁰ Northern Ireland also has a First Minister, a position currently held by Peter Robinson, MLA.¹⁰¹ Like Scotland, Northern Ireland also has a Deputy First Minister. The interesting case in Northern Ireland is that First Minister Robinson represents the mainstream, loyalist Democratic Unionist Party, while Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness represents the nationalist Sinn Féin.¹⁰² Having the top two political leaders in the devolved parliament of Northern Ireland be from opposite sides of the political spectrum might be a clue into why Northern Ireland has not been as successful as Wales or Scotland have been at managing their own affairs. Trying to make compromises between people who cannot even agree on the status of the country within the UK is exceptionally difficult. Another important factor to consider is the perceived legitimacy of the Northern Irish Assembly today. In the early days of the Troubles, there was a Northern Irish parliament, but people still turned to their chosen paramilitaries to resolve the issues surrounding Northern Ireland's future as a member of the UK. Today, a

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Northern Ireland Assembly. "Your MLAs." Northern Ireland Assembly. <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/your-mlas/> (accessed 10 January, 2015).

¹⁰² Ibid

number of the most prominent political leaders in the Northern Irish Assembly are former members of opposing paramilitaries. Asking these leaders to collaborate on policy making is asking them to cooperate at times with many people their paramilitaries were hoping to kill.

On the surface, then, each member of the UK has theoretically taken its own stance on what it wants to see for the UK's future. Scotland made the intentions of its political majority clear with its bid for independence in the 2014 Referendum. In Wales, gaining greater control within the existing devolution framework is the goal. For Northern Ireland, keeping as close a tie to Westminster as possible is how the Assembly has operated since the Good Friday Agreement, as Westminster provides a political safety net for the times when sectarianism and political gridlock take over. However, it is important to consider the issue in greater detail. A large part of Northern Ireland's population can trace its ancestry back to Scotland. The Ulster Scots speak a dialect of Scots and are credited with bringing Presbyterianism to Ireland, which remains the largest Protestant denomination in Northern Ireland today, even above Anglicanism.¹⁰³ Considering the major role in identity the characteristics of language and religion play as well as Northern Ireland's recent past, it is interesting that very little has been written about the Ulster Scots' opinions on the Scottish Referendum and the future of the UK.

Similarly, little has been written about Welsh opinions on the Referendum and the need for change within the UK government. Although Scotland and Wales do not share a close religious and cultural connection the way Scotland and Northern Ireland do, the linguistic connection as well as past English exploitation for natural resources are something Scotland and Wales both share. Wales's unique legal link with England

¹⁰³ (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2011 Census).

highlighted earlier in this paper in the discussion of Welsh nationalism also puts Wales in a unique position in this debate. Often, Wales is not considered as a separate entity with separate ideas from those of England. For this reason, Welsh thoughts on the Referendum are also crucial for making sense of the United Kingdom's future.

Perhaps the idea that the Scottish Referendum was only a matter of concern for those living in Scotland—as illustrated by the eligibility of voters in the Referendum—has prevented greater consideration of the effects of such a vote on the rest of the United Kingdom. Given these shared cultural characteristics and political relationships with England—the same ones many Scots cited as reason for the country to break away from the Westminster government—it is crucial to consider the bigger picture.

RESULTS

In summary, the major takeaways from this paper can be outlined as follows. First off, national identity is not a uniform concept for the people of the United Kingdom. There is a spectrum and limits to the idea of “Britishness,” and people’s language background, religion, and cultural history play a major role in determining how British they feel and how connected they feel to the other members of UK’s population. Next, the Ulster Scots should not be grouped in with other Northern Irish Unionists on debates of national identity. Although the two groups overlap, the liminal position the Ulster Scots occupy between Scotland and Northern Ireland gives the Ulster Scots a unique and crucial perspective on the Scottish Referendum debate and the calls for greater autonomy that have come in its aftermath. In that same vein, it is important to consider Wales as well in such an important debate, as often Wales is overlooked, or has its stances on political and social issues lumped together with England. While it may not see the same level of controversy as Northern Ireland does when discussing questions of national identity, it still has a lot to bring to the table.

It is particularly telling as well that the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) keeps track of how people throughout the UK identify. The blanket justification the ONS provides for why they record such statistics is that “[t]here has been an increasing interest in ‘national’ consciousness and many people wanting acknowledgement of their national identity.”¹⁰⁴ While this statement does not highlight any one particular group or any historical event(s) that may have led to the increase of national consciousness among the peoples of the UK, this framing alludes to the idea that the national identity conversation

¹⁰⁴ Office for National Statistics. "National Identity." Office for National Statistics. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/measuring-equality/equality/ethnic-nat-identity-religion/national-identity/index.html#9> (accessed December 8, 2014).

is ongoing in the UK, but thus, also seems to support the concept that national identity is not a fixed, uniform category for its residents. It also shows that the ONS has recognized that the idea that everyone in the UK is on the same page about issues of nationality and identity is misguided, and that making policy based on such a notion is problematic and possibly threatening to the UK's political stability. This underscores the need to consider everyone—not just the most vocal members of UK society—on issues that affect the whole kingdom. There is no one political policy that can be made to please everyone on a topic as major as devolution, but including all voices and opinions would likely allow both the devolved parliaments themselves as well as Westminster to make decisions that people are willing to at least come to a compromise on.

Perhaps the most important claim I will make is that the Ulster Scots in Northern Ireland should not be lumped together with other Northern Irish Unionists when considering how national identity might be affecting opinions of the Scottish Referendum as well as goals and desires for the future of the United Kingdom. The Ulster Scots straddle a unique divide culturally, which likely makes it harder to fully align with one side or the other on the debate of Unionism versus Irish Separatist Nationalism. “The people of Ulster have always tended to look eastward to their Scottish neighbours more readily than southward,” writes Laura M. Hagan.¹⁰⁵ This relationship pre-dates the Plantation of Ulster established in the mid-1600s because of the proximity of western Scotland to eastern Ireland, making immigration even in much earlier times fairly easy.¹⁰⁶ It was not until the signing of the Good Friday Agreement however that the Ulster Scots

¹⁰⁵ Linda M. Hagan. "The Ulster Scots and the 'Greening' of Ireland: A Precarious Belonging?" In *Affecting Irishness: Negotiating Cultural Identity within and Beyond the Nation*, edited by James P. Byrne, Padraig Kirwan and Michael O'Sullivan. Vol. 2, 71. Bern, Switzerland: International Academic Publishers, 2009.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

language was officially recognized, finally giving some priority to the culture of an ethnic group that has been living in Northern Ireland for centuries. In the aftermath of the historic agreement, critics began to claim that using such a platform to celebrate Ulster Scots culture was just a way for Unionists (who were seen as the victorious side in the Troubles with Northern Ireland remaining part of the UK at their close) to fabricate claims of discrimination in their homeland much like many Catholics and Nationalists experienced throughout the conflict.¹⁰⁷

The fact that the Ulster Scots were not able to gain full recognition as an ethnic group within Northern Ireland likely forced many Ulster Scots to assimilate within Northern Irish culture and likely adopt political and religious views that made the national identity and allegiance questions murky. Perhaps, during the Troubles it was easier to fully align with mainstream Northern Irish Unionist values—if Northern Ireland remained in the union that also included Scotland then the Ulster Scots people could continue to live in Northern Ireland while continuing to celebrate their Scottish roots more privately. In the context of the Scottish Referendum, however, at a time when the Ulster Scots have very publicly chosen to preserve and educate others about their culture, it is important to see if they feel as though they must finally choose one side.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

DISCUSSION

Evaluating the host of qualitative data listed above, there appears to be at least some support for my claims regarding the nature of national identity within the United Kingdom, as well as about what UK residents want to see in the new post-Scottish Referendum world. Perhaps most major would be the claim that identity in the United Kingdom is not homogenous. Census data from both Northern Ireland and Wales shows major differences about the strength of the “British” identity and that as a label, it clearly appeals more to some people than others. The focus on the importance of religion in shaping national identity in this report’s review of literature allows one to claim with support that religion does indeed affect how people choose to define their identity.

In order to fully support the claim that language affects how people define their national identity in the same way as religion, both Wales and the Ulster Scots would have to affirm that their language is a major factor in setting them apart from “other” UK identities. While this holds true in the Ulster Scots community in Northern Ireland (considering the current definition of the Ulster Scots people which has been discussed at length in the Who Are the Ulster Scots? section of this paper), the story is different in Wales. Statistically, the largest numbers of Welsh speakers are found in the Northern and Western parts of the country, where many speak Welsh as their primary language.¹⁰⁸ This shows a divide within the Welsh population over whether or not the Welsh language should be prioritized above English. The devolved Welsh Assembly has the ability to make formal policy about the Welsh language and its preservation in 21st Century Wales,

¹⁰⁸ Statistics for Wales, Ystadegau ar Gyfer Cymru. *2011 Census: First Results on the Welsh Language*. Cardiff, United Kingdom: Statistics for Wales, Ystadegau ar Gyfer Cymru, 2011.

but clearly not every Welsh citizen is worried enough about the language dying out to use it as their primary method of communication.

Acknowledging that there are many theories of nationalism regarding the importance of language in shaping identity, I expected that citizens who speak Welsh as their first language would be much more likely to label themselves as Welsh and not British when it came to declaring their national identity. While this holds true in the 2011 Census, the largest number of Welsh citizens claiming a Welsh-only identity was actually found in the extreme south of the country, with close to 70% of people in the South Wales Valleys choosing to label themselves as such.¹⁰⁹ At the same time, the borough of Neath Port Talbot in southern Wales actually saw a 2% decrease in its Welsh-speaking population from 2001 to 2011 (now down to a mere 15.3%), yet it still recorded 71.8% of residents claiming that they identified as “Welsh only”.^{110, 111} This implies that at least in Wales, competence and use of the country’s original language has less of a bearing on national identity than expected.

Yet the claim that the Welsh opinion should also be considered as a separate group when examining the array of opinions regarding the Scottish Referendum was one that was fully supported. The evidence portrays a new Wales that now seems dedicated to greater self-advocacy and securing control over Wales-specific matters in the ongoing conversation about the UK’s future in the aftermath of the Referendum. This change of attitude could possibly be part of a natural progression in Welsh politics which saw its first Referendum on devolution heavily defeated in 1979 before a second Referendum on

¹⁰⁹ Statistics for Wales, Ystadegau ar Gyfer Cymru. *2011 Census: First Results for Ethnicity, National Identity, and Religion for Wales*. Cardiff, United Kingdom: Llwodraeth Cymru: Welsh Government, 17 December 2012.

¹¹⁰ Statistics for Wales, Ystadegau ar Gyfer Cymru. *2011 Census: First Results on the Welsh Language*. Cardiff, United Kingdom: Statistics for Wales, Ystadegau ar Gyfer Cymru, 2011.

¹¹¹ Statistics for Wales, Ystadegau ar Gyfer Cymru. *2011 Census: First Results for Ethnicity, National Identity, and Religion for Wales*. Cardiff, United Kingdom: Llwodraeth Cymru: Welsh Government, 17 December 2012

the issue barely scraped by with a 50.3% “Yes” vote for establishing a devolved parliament in 1997. Although the 1997 election was remarkably close, it actually still saw Welsh pro-devolution votes climb by a full 30% from the 20% the yes vote garnered in 1979.¹¹² It has taken some time, but Wales now finally appears comfortable managing itself where it can rather than deferring to the UK parliament and lumping itself in with England.

Qualitative data regarding the Ulster Scots also supports the hypothesis that they should be considered separately from other Northern Irish Unionists, but perhaps not for the reasons originally assumed. Overall, the data confirm the idea that the Ulster Scots would be against the Scottish Referendum. Considering what we know about the Ulster Scots people regarding where they live in Northern Ireland and their cultural values and priorities, it would now be appropriate to suggest that they opposed the idea of an independent Scotland primarily for selfish reasons. Although many Ulster Scots families have lived in Northern Ireland for generations, they still clearly cling to their separate Scottish identity, now legally protected by procedures first outlined in the landmark Good Friday Agreement. If Scotland became independent and thus officially a “foreign” country, they might feel as if they must finally define themselves as either Irish or Scottish. For now, it is easy to claim the Scottish and Northern Irish identities equally if they choose because the fact that both countries are within the same, united, kingdom implies that there is no major clash between the two. If Scotland were to leave the union—an idea so opposite to what Northern Irish Unionists of all backgrounds say they want in their own country, the two identities become much less compatible ideologically.

¹¹² Matthew Leake. *UK Election Statistics: 1945-2003*. London, United Kingdom: House of Commons Library, 2003.

It would be difficult to reconcile wanting to stay within the United Kingdom as an Ulster Scot but also claim that Scotland has a huge influence on your personal culture and identity if Scotland succeeded in becoming independent. With both countries in the United Kingdom, they can continue to claim a middle ground without too many consequences.

It is here that things become much more interesting. The original hypotheses for this paper were that the Welsh would support the Scottish Referendum and the Ulster Scots would oppose it, with the same opinions respectively about further devolution in the future. The idea was that each group would base their opinions of the matter on how they viewed Scotland and their relationships with Scotland, as this vote was about Scotland only. Instead, it appears that each group chose the stance it did with its own interests in mind. Wales viewed the Referendum more favorably than the Ulster Scots, but not because they felt like they fully understood the same struggles that led Scotland to call for such a vote. Many Welsh political leaders recognized that if Scotland got to vote on such an important issue it would open up the discussion on whether or not the UK government is actually doing enough as it currently stands to serve the people of the three Celtic countries. The thinking appears to be that Welsh nationalists wanted to see Scotland vote, but it did not want to see Scotland leave because Scotland has more influence and has more success in having its demands granted by the UK Parliament. The strategy for Wales is now to piggyback off of Scotland and forge its own path that best suits the needs of the Welsh people socially and economically in the new discussion surrounding further devolution for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

It is quite clear that the cases of Wales and Northern Ireland exhibit some key elements that support the concept that UK nationalist sentiment is a spectrum, with no one clear “British” identity. This makes complete sense, however, as national identity is an extremely subjective issue. While there are a number of exceptions to almost every rule, some aspects of identity are quite practical to consider when defining a nation. Billig refers to these as “universal features”, as they are traits and ideas that almost anyone would use to define their own identity and/or how they relate to a larger group (Billig, 1995). Perhaps the most crucial “blanket characteristics” of national identity include language and religion (Renan, 1882).

It is important to take these factors into account, because such groups might gain their nationalist sentiment from being grouped into a country that has a state religion or is intolerant of those who do not believe or speak as they do. It is crucial to mention that in describing national identity, the concept itself is oversimplified. Giroux reminds us that we frequently hold an idea of nationalism that “too neatly links nation, culture, and citizenship, as a seamless and unproblematic unity” (Giroux, 1995). The real life complexities of national identity are no better illustrated than within the context of the United Kingdom, a union of four countries with historically different religions, languages, economies, and ways of life.

When considering shared religion and language as cornerstones of national identity, it is unique to consider the history of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom encompasses the four countries of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, all of which are represented in one government in London (UK Parliament). Of the four, all but England are historically Celtic in origin. Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland

traditionally spoke different dialects of Gaelic before coming in contact with their English neighbors (Khleif, 1980).

Also, one cannot discount the binding force of religion across societies. Hutchinson argues that it is common for people to turn to religion in times of crises and they have been used throughout history as a way to strengthen one's sense of identity in uncertain or unstable times (Hutchinson, 1994). Before encounters with the English, Ireland was predominantly Catholic (Buckley & Kenney, 1995). Wales, on the other hand, celebrated a strong tradition of nonconformity (Khleif, 1980). Both of these traditions vary greatly from the state-sponsored Anglican faith found in England, and one goal of English conquest in Wales and Ireland was to spread Anglicanism to new places.

Another crucial idea to consider is the role of shared history in shaping national identity. This is particularly interesting when examining nationalism within the United Kingdom, because the aforementioned cultural characteristics allude to separate histories for each country, but the union itself creates a separate, shared history as well for its members. The Laws in Wales Act of 1535 bound Wales legally to England, and the Act of Union of 1707 united England and Scotland "for ever after" (Laws in Wales Act, 1535 & Act of Union, 1707). The entire island of Ireland united with England, Scotland, and Wales following the Acts of Union of 1800, passed democratically by both the Parliament of Great Britain and the Parliament of Ireland (An Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, 1800). While each of the four UK members have histories that date back thousands of years, it is hard to overlook the significance of the many years they have existed (in whole or in part in the case of Ireland) under one government.

However, despite the cultural similarities of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, each country has a very different attitude toward its place within the United Kingdom. In fact, some scholars argue that it would be incorrect to ever label the kingdom as a nation-state. The idea of a united British identity is a fabrication of the 20th century, with centuries of separate Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and English identities preceding it (McCrone & Kiely, 2000). This perhaps explains the lack of success of nationalist political fronts such as the British National Party, as opposed to its counterparts found around Continental Europe (Heath et. al., 1999). Attempts to permanently replace the individual identities of the United Kingdom with the more inclusive “British” identity have never been successful, mostly because they have never been pursued with as much fervor as have the attempts to retain and preserve the Scottish, Welsh, and Irish identities (Gamble, 2006).

These much more separate identities still inform the different countries’ attitudes to union and the future, and in a variety of ways. In Northern Ireland, The Troubles lasted almost three decades and saw brutal bouts of sectarian violence, as Unionists proclaimed their strong desire to remain united with the countries of Great Britain, while southern Ireland declared complete independence from the kingdom (Buckley & Kenney, 1995). In Wales, the radical nationalist political party, Plaid Cymru (literally Party of Wales) has existed since 1925, advocating for Welsh separation from the United Kingdom (Khleif, 1980). Plaid Cymru, as well as the Scottish National Party are among the most popular political parties in their respective countries, even among the presence of the predominant three parties of Westminster—Conservative, Labour, and Liberal Democrat (Lazer,

1977). This implies that while their demands may be extreme, these parties are legitimate political actors in the UK, at least for some members of the population.

Some may wonder why it is as important to examine the attitudes and hopes of countries and populations other than Scotland for the future of the UK in the wake of the Scottish Referendum. We must consider these populations because although they may not have been the central focus of the Scottish Referendum debate, they still shared in the experience, watching as another member of the UK determined whether or not it would continue to even be a member of the UK. Lewis has written about the importance of shared history and community, particularly in terms of origin myths (Lewis, 1975). He describes stories of actual events that explain the creation of certain communities, but delves more deeply into embellished, glorified histories of a people and assesses their success as a tool of unification. Lewis argues that feasts, festivals, and other celebrations are used to preserve shared history, due to their cyclical nature (Lewis, 1975). Duara suggests that “history produces the nation” (Duara in Pettman, 1998). Perhaps due to the fact that the UK added and lost members over a period of time rather than formed all at once, the members of the union seem to prefer their separate country’s origin myths rather than any origin myth about the formation of the UK and how it came to be what it is today.

For the United Kingdom, there are events and stories that are shared only by the people of one of the countries within the kingdom, but also a different foundation myth and celebrations encompassing the entire kingdom as a whole. By Lewis’s definition, the English, Northern Irish, Scottish, and Welsh each have two sets of collective history, that which Scots share only with other Scots for example, and what the Northern Irish share

only with other Northern Irish, but also that which all Britons share and celebrate together as well. According to Renan, this means that the best thing for the countries of the United Kingdom to do would be to “forget” the history of their specific people in favor of internalizing the history they all share (Renan, 1882). In the UK, however, it seems as though these two histories are incongruent, and the collective British historical narrative is undesired, because its people appear to prioritize their more local identities over a national one.

One reason for this could be the fact that some of the most ardent nationalists in the Celtic countries claim that in the past, their countries have been exploited economically by England, the seat of the overarching British government. Centuries ago, many highland Scots lost their homes when the monarchy decided that the land the Highlanders owned would be best used as grazing land for sheep.¹¹³ Only 50 years ago, the village of Capel Celyn, located in the Tryweryn Valley in northwest Wales was intentionally flooded and destroyed when the English city of Liverpool needed a new water reservoir.¹¹⁴ To this day, many people whose families were originally from Capel Celyn remember the strife England created in their community. A road sign along the highway near the Welsh city of Aberystwyth says “Cofiwch Dryweryn” or “Remember Tryweryn” in Welsh. Painted very soon after the disaster, it has been repainted every time the lettering has begun to fade, lest people forget what happened there.¹¹⁵ Using this idea of shared history, it could be hard for some people to reconcile identifying as a member of the same national community as those in a country that may have put their lifestyle in

¹¹³ Alexis Corn, Kelsey Lawlor, Merita Salihu, and Abigail Wise. “Scottish Nationalism.” Powerpoint, South Hadley, MA. November 2014

¹¹⁴ Victoria Richards. “The Village Drowned to Give another Nation Water.” *The Independent*, 17 October, 2010.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*

such jeopardy. It is likely that in the Welsh case in particular, Welsh people recognize that they need the union to support them in so many ways, but they do not do so enthusiastically. If the choices were for Wales to leave the United Kingdom and flounder on its own, or to remain in the United Kingdom and hang on, even if people are not happy about it, Wales would choose the latter. This is where increased devolution comes in. It gives countries like Wales and Scotland greater say over their own affairs, while they are still able to depend on the UK for structural and economic support on specific matters such as welfare or defense.

Considering this possibility of two shared histories for every Briton helps us further understand the predicament the Ulster Scots may find themselves in when it comes to the questions of national identity and nationalist sentiment. They could even be considered to have three shared histories, that of Scotland, that of Ulster, and that of the United Kingdom as a whole. The fact that they have worked to preserve a Scottish cultural identity in Ulster seems to prove the proposed theory that history shapes identity, but also explains the wariness they might feel about a potential breakup of the United Kingdom. What would it mean for them culturally if Scotland left the United Kingdom? They would now be invested in the cultural history of a “foreign” country.

According to the data examined and the theories employed to analyze it, the most important conclusion presented by these results is the idea of national identity as something defined by groups in relation to something they’re not. The Welsh people overwhelmingly appear to believe that they are Welsh, not British based on their responses to questions of national identity in the 2011 Census. The Ulster Scots are content to label themselves for the most part as British, not Irish and not Scottish, even

though they live in Northern Ireland and enthusiastically embrace their Scottish culture. The difference between the Ulster Scots and the Welsh is that the Welsh are the majority ethnicity in Wales, whereas the Ulster Scots are a minority group, which currently does not even have the option to legally label themselves as such on the Northern Irish Census. We must consider what it means to identify with the ethnic majority versus the ethnic minority.

In Scotland itself, people may collectively feel as though their cultural identity is vulnerable to the political policies made by the Westminster government in which they have little say, considering many SNP politicians' claims that Westminster does not represent Scotland or Scotland's best interests. However, there is no need to re-assert cultural practices and values in daily life because Scots are the majority ethnic group in Scotland. The same likely goes for Wales. The Welsh in Wales don't need to cling to their language as a crucial marker for identity because they don't see their identity being compromised by other non-Welsh people living in Wales. In Northern Ireland, the Ulster Scots assert their Scottish background as a defense mechanism. While they share some major ideological characteristics with other Unionists, without taking extra care to embrace their Scottish heritage, they are in danger of becoming lost in the mix, as non-Ulster Scot Unionists are the country's majority. On the whole—if one were to be quite precise—Northern Ireland's preference for a British identity over Irish is remarkable, considering that Northern Ireland is not a geographical part of Great Britain. Conversely, the fact that many in both Wales and Scotland do not prioritize a British identity is also important.

FUTURE RESEARCH

While the Ulster Scots and the Welsh provide great insight into the current status of UK stability and the options it is considering for the future, there is more that could be learned about this issue if other groups were consulted. Knowing that Scotland had tried to breakaway has changed the political climate of the UK, even if Scotland did not succeed in becoming independent. The greater devolution discussion going on now shows a dramatic shift in UK policy, but it will be interesting to see if it is really enough to make every one happy, or if future secessionist campaigns arise. Examining the potential national identity divide between industrial Northern England and Southern England could be very telling because it would provide insight into the national identity debate within a country that has not seen the same sort of sectarian divide over identity that Northern Ireland has seen. Examining the role national identity plays for Northern Irish Nationalists regarding the Scottish Referendum and further devolution would also be crucial, since major Nationalist political parties such as Sinn Fein still promote the idea of a united Ireland as a major goal. The thinking of many Unionists was that a “Yes” vote in Scotland would prompt Sinn Fein to begin calling for an official vote on the potential reunification of Ireland. It would be interesting to see if Nationalists still think that this is something worth exploring even though Scotland voted “No” to independence.

Another important area to explore would be re-visiting the issue during a potential future Referendum. Since the vote, Scottish lawmakers have pushed for such a Referendum to occur “once in a generation”. Considering the drastic changes regarding Welsh support of devolution highlighted in this report, it would be interesting to see if trends such as these continue on the same track, or if they change in the future. This

would be noteworthy as well because it is very possible that any future Referendum would occur at a time when the Ulster Scots have officially been recognized in census data, making it much easier for researchers to track their specific opinions on independence and devolution.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this report does seem to offer insight into at least some of the ways that national identity is dictating the future of the United Kingdom. Although the original hypotheses for this paper were supported, it's important to note that there is much more to the story. The Welsh do seem to prefer their Welsh identity to their British one. The Ulster Scots do choose to call themselves British, perhaps to avoid any identity crisis that would arise if they were faced with choosing either Irish or Scottish. These are just two points on what appears to be a spectrum of national identity within the United Kingdom. Religion does clearly seem to affect one's choice of national identity, with language and collective memory affecting it less than was hypothesized. Instead, what seems to be a major factor is whether or not the group in question is the ethnic majority or ethnic minority of a country.

Finally, this report begins to illustrate the idea that further devolution might be the only way that the United Kingdom will continue to survive intact. Considering the very recent nature of the Scottish Referendum and the discussion surrounding the next steps, it is likely that this report contributes to some of the earliest findings on this topic. As this is a very time-sensitive issue with time-sensitive cases as its basis, it is important to recognize that while this paper has some significance now, that things could change drastically in the future. Returning to this question in future referenda or examining the idea of national identity and politics with other groups within the United Kingdom as suggested for future research would help to ensure that this report is indeed on the right track.

APPENDIX A: KEY TERMS USED WITHIN THIS REPORT

Devolution—also known as Home Rule, it is a decentralization of government. In the case of the United Kingdom, this means the delegation of powers from the Westminster government to the Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Irish parliaments.

Devo-Max—short for “devolution max”, a plan that would give Scotland control over all governmental affairs except for defense and foreign relations. It has become a popular idea for Scottish nationalists in the wake of the 2014 independence referendum.

Celtic—term used to describe the six nations of western Europe that speak any of the six living Celtic languages. Within the United Kingdom this refers to each country except for England. Northern Ireland and Scotland each traditionally have spoken dialects of Gaelic, and Wales sees many inhabitants use Welsh as their first language, even today.

Ulster Scots—name for Northern Irish Protestants who can trace their heritage in Ireland to Scottish settlers in the colonial Plantation of Ulster. Many of these settlers who left Ulster for the United States became known as the “Scots-Irish” or “Scotch-Irish”. As of now, Ulster Scots are only classified as a linguistic group, although many do work to preserve other facets of their Scottish heritage. The Northern Irish Census is working to develop census questions that will make it easier to learn how many Ulster Scots live in Northern Ireland in future reports.

Westminster—informal term for the UK government, based in the UK capital of London in southeast England.

Holyrood—informal term for the Scottish government, based in the country's capital city of Edinburgh.

Stormont—informal term for the Northern Irish Assembly, located in the Stormont buildings of the capital city of Belfast.

Senedd—Welsh for “senate” or “parliament”. The Senedd is the Welsh National Assembly building, located in the capital city of Cardiff.

Republic of Ireland —also Éire in Irish or the Irish Republic in English. Capital at Dublin, it was a part of the United Kingdom until 1922 when the UK government agreed to the creation of the Irish Free State. Opinions over whether or not Ireland should be independent were divided, leading to six counties in the Irish province of Ulster (Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone) to declare loyalty to the British crown. Three Ulster counties (Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan) lie within the Irish Republic. The debate on this issue is ongoing, highlighted most notably by The Troubles and continued violence along sectarian lines over which country Northern Ireland should be part of.

Derry/Londonderry—second-largest city in Northern Ireland. Officially Londonderry, it is still called Derry by many Catholics and/or Irish nationalists, who reject the current union between Northern Ireland and Great Britain. Most loyalists refer to the city as Londonderry. While these connotations do not make the names completely interchangeable, the city of Derry and the city of Londonderry are officially the same place. This is true as well for the county of the same name.

The Troubles—conflict in Northern Ireland that lasted from 1968 to 1998. Nationalists and Loyalists fought against each other mostly along sectarian lines over the future of Northern Ireland. Paramilitaries such as the *Irish Republican Army*, the Ulster Volunteer Force, and their respective affiliates fought across Northern Ireland using bombs, fires and targeted killings to make demands known. Origins of the conflict stem from the wide use of television broadcasting the civil rights campaigns taking place in the 1960s in the United States, but quickly spiraled out of control and became violent.

Good Friday Agreement/Belfast Agreement—major accord brokered by leaders of the major Northern Irish political parties (Ulster Unionist Party and Sinn Féin) along with minor parties in Belfast on Good Friday in 1998. It called an official end to the violence of *The Troubles* and created an outline for the devolved Northern Irish Assembly. Provisions of the agreement were seen as final acknowledgement of the differing opinions on Northern Irish unionism, and worked toward a greater representation of all opinions and protection of civil rights for all. The Northern Irish Assembly was officially established via referendum as outlined in the agreement. Like the city of Derry, the name

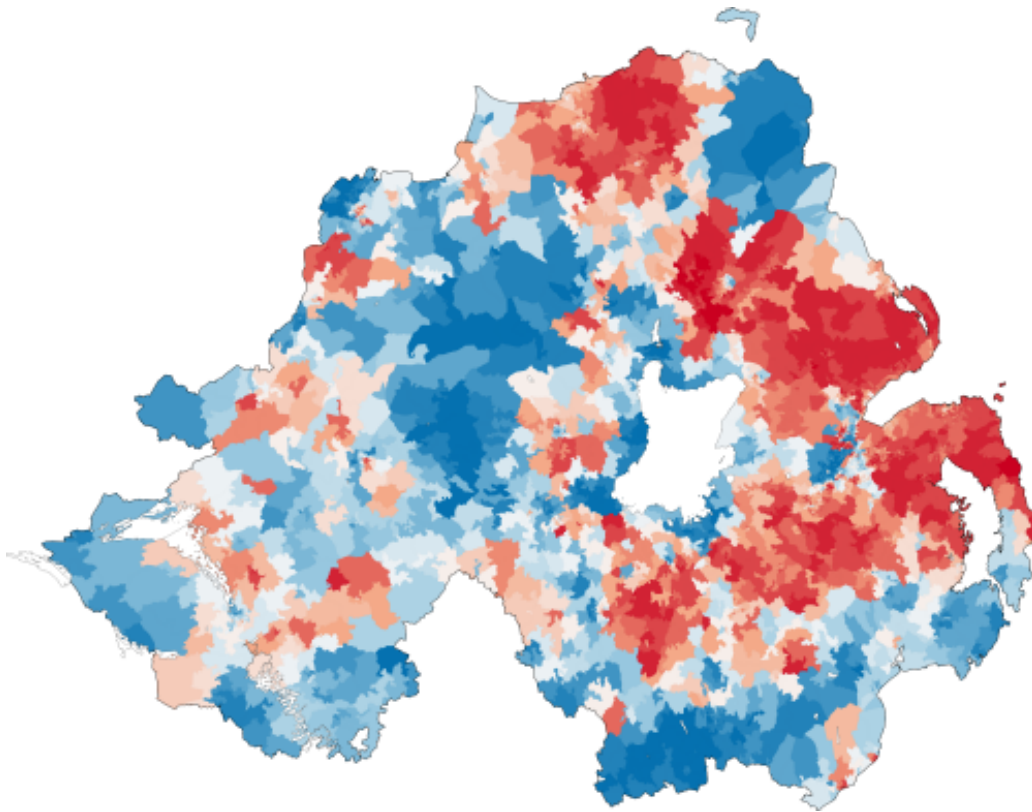
for the agreement differs for Catholics and/or Nationalists versus Unionists and/or Protestants. Catholics refer to the agreement as the Good Friday Agreement, Protestants call it the Belfast Agreement. They each refer to the same document.

Irish Republican Army—abbreviated as the IRA, a paramilitary group of Irish Nationalists/Catholics. Associated allies of the IRA included the Provisional IRA (PIRA) and the Real IRA (RIRA) some of which remained active even after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

Ulster Volunteer Force—abbreviated as the UVF, the Protestant/Loyalist counterpart to the IRA. The UVF had a number of associated paramilitaries such as the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), the Ulster Young Militants (UYM) and the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF).

APPENDIX B: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF ULSTER SCOTS

As mentioned in this report, there is no legal definition of Ulster Scots as of now. To determine the population distribution of Ulster Scots in Northern Ireland, I referred to this reports working definition of the Ulster Scots people based off of their use of the Ulster Scots language and their Protestant faith. These charts show that doing so was an appropriate choice, as the highest number of Ulster Scots speakers corresponds almost directly with the highest concentration of Protestants in Northern Ireland. Remembering that the largest Protestant denomination in Northern Ireland is Presbyterianism, which is the denomination of most Ulster Scots as well, this appears to be an accurate depiction of where the Ulster Scots live in Northern Ireland.



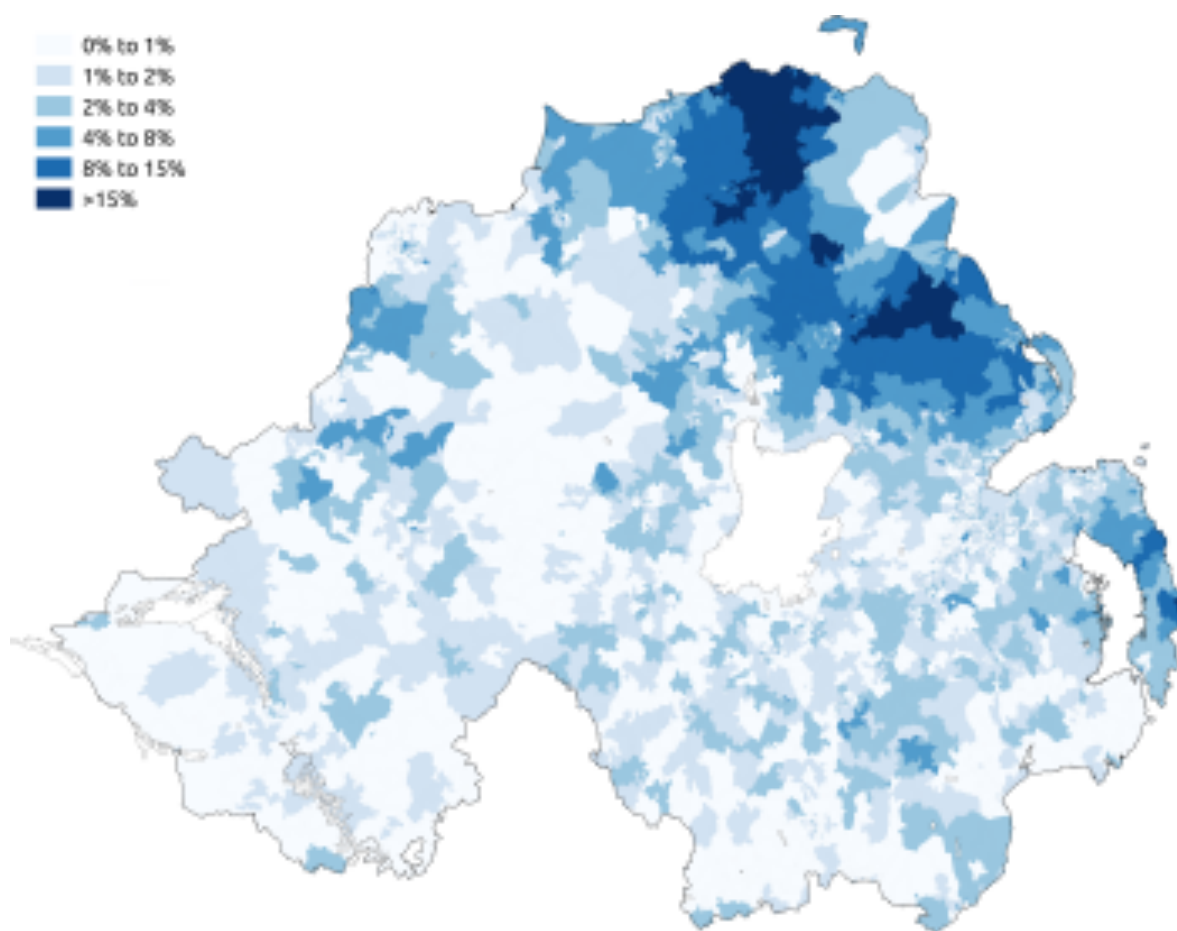
Religion in Northern Ireland, Census 2011

Key:

Red-Protestant

Blue-Catholic

Darker color implies higher concentration of Protestants/Catholics, depending on the color



Knowledge of Ulster Scots language, Census 2011

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