

# Ian McIntosh, Duncan Sim and Douglas Robertson (2004) 'It's as if you're some alien...' Exploring Anti-English Attitudes in Scotland. '

*Sociological Research Online*, Volume 9, Issue 2,  
< <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/9/2/mcintosh.html> >  
doi: 10.5153/sro.922

Received: 8 Jul 2003 Accepted: 27 May 2004 Published: 31 May 2004

---

## Abstract

English people are the largest national or ethnic minority within Scotland but remain under-researched. This is despite a view taken by many writers, and by the popular press, that anti-English attitudes within Scotland are a major social problem. Via 30 in-depth interviews, this paper explores the experiences of a group of English people living in Scotland and the extent and nature of any anti-Englishness they have encountered. The paper also focuses on the ways in which notions of race, ethnicity and essential differences between Scots and English people are regularly encountered by English people living in Scotland. The 'racialisation' of the English minority in Scotland is also discussed in this context.

---

**Keywords:** *Anti- Englishness; Belonging; Englishness; Essentialism.; Ethnicity; Racialisation; Scottishness*

---

## Introduction

1.1 There has been considerable debate, inquiry and concern in Scotland as to whether there has been a rise, or indeed a consolidation, of anti-English attitudes and activities. Some degree of anti-Englishness has been a constant part of the background of Scottish social, cultural and political life for generations (Scott, 1998). However in recent years the intensity and frequency of 'moral panics' (Cohen, 1972; Thompson, 1998) about anti-Englishness and the associated level of media coverage has reached unprecedented levels. This has occurred to such an extent that anti-Englishness is seen to be a key social problem within contemporary Scottish society (Brown et al., 1996). The interest in such issues has been heightened with the establishment in 1999 of the first Scottish Parliament since 1707. The impact of devolution on the attachment people have to a Scottish national identity and the consequences for any anti-Englishness is an important issue within Scotland. It is against such a backdrop that this paper explores the nature and experience of anti-Englishness and proffers some explanations for its existence and continuance.

## Studying the English within Scotland

2.1 The English-born are by-far Scotland's largest minority grouping. At the 2001 Census, there were 408,948 English-born people in Scotland. The proportion has risen steadily over the years, from 4.4% of the total population in Scotland in 1951 to 7.1% in 1991 to the current figure of 8.1%. The locations with the largest proportions of English-born people living in them fall into four loosely defined areas; those immediately adjacent to the Scottish/English border; around military establishments and, thirdly, in parts of the Highlands and Islands where many have moved to on retirement (Damer, 2000; Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996). The fourth 'grouping' is geographically spread around the 'central belt' of Scotland, and shares a somewhat middle-class profile, with concentrations in Edinburgh City, the West End of Glasgow and smaller commuter towns and villages in central Scotland. It is this latter grouping with which this paper is mainly concerned.

2.2 A sample of 30 individuals (15 women and 15 men) was identified during the late Spring and early Summer of 2001. In-depth qualitative interviews were chosen as the most appropriate methodological tool to investigate any experiences of anti-Englishness. To this end the interviews obtained basic household information and ascertained reasons for moving to Scotland. Issues relating to national identity(ies) were explored via questions about the importance of, and attachment to, Englishness and/or Britishness within the context of living in post-devolution Scotland. Centrally, for this paper, interviewees were asked if they had experienced any hostility since moving to Scotland which could be attributed to them being English and to detail the ways in which this manifested. The research for this paper was thus exploratory in nature and qualitative in design.

2.3 In order to generate a sample six individuals known to the authors were contacted and their willingness to be interviewed ascertained.<sup>[1]</sup> Thereafter a system of 'snowballing' was used, a technique successfully employed by one of the authors in other qualitative research with minority groups, for example Bowes et al. (1997). The interviews were conducted, partly in central Scotland and partly in the Greater Glasgow area. This provided us with a range of interviews in city, small town and rural locations. The average age of respondents was 46 and most were in their 40s or early 50s. The youngest person interviewed was 19, the oldest 77. The average age at which they had moved to Scotland was 28. Most people were in 'white collar' jobs, many in the professions, mostly in the public sector. Eight people, for example, worked in social work or care work of some sort, with a further three in the arts and three more in teaching and five were retired. Each interview lasted between 40 and 55 minutes and was recorded and later transcribed.

2.4 As a method of creating a sample, 'snowballing' can be self selecting and has its limitations. For example none of our interviewees were from black minority ethnic groups. This was partly a consequence of the small numbers of English people who move to Scotland who are part of such groups. Primarily, however, we wanted to avoid a conflation of anti- black racism with anti-Englishness and it was thought this could be best achieved via an all white sample. Overall, given that the average length of residence of the interviewees was 18 years and that individuals from differing socio-economic backgrounds were included in the sample we are confident that we accessed experiences that were not unrepresentative of many English people living in Scotland.

### **'An English whose lives here': Being 'English' in Contemporary Scotland**

3.1 Some authors have commented on the peripheral and trivial nature of anti-English sentiments. For example Lindsay notes that, 'They [English people] are generally fairly integrated' into Scottish society, although she does add the caveat that such a conclusion has to be 'qualified by the fact that this has not been tested by research' (1997:146). Keating concludes that any 'English-Scottish tensions ... are relatively minor in scope' (2001: 212).

3.2 However, a number of high-profile 'events' (Birkland, 1997; Manning, 1989) have served to highlight, and focus attention upon, anti-English attitudes in Scotland. For example, the issue was debated in the Scottish Parliament in a session on equality in December 1999, when Roseanna Cunningham, the Scottish National Party's Deputy Leader, called for the urgent consideration of anti- English discrimination. In another incident that received UK wide coverage, Digby Jones (the head of the Confederation of British Industry) when suggesting that anti-English hostility was damaging the ability of Scottish companies to recruit in England, was described as an 'English prat' by Ross Finnie, the Scottish Environment Minister (*The Herald* 9.2.02). A month previously, in a widely publicised interview, the Scottish composer James MacMillan suggested that his home country was xenophobic, with a widely felt antagonism towards England and English people (*Sunday Herald* 8.11.02).

3.3 More prosaic, yet still widely reported, events serve to give an impression of a generalised backcloth of anti-Englishness. Typical of these are the following: a family who had the words 'English scum' daubed on their garden fence (*Daily Record* 1.15.99); an older couple who were subject to an arson attack due to them being English (*Daily Record* 5.3.00); an English couple who claimed they were victims of 'racism' and 'racial' abuse in a small village when they had been banned from using the local pub (*The Herald* 8.13.99); the furore caused over the comments of Sir Ian Noble, a landowner and resident on the Isle of Skye, when he claimed that the local Gaelic culture was being swamped due to English migration onto the island (*The Herald* 4.17.03 and 4.22.03) and the story of bus driver beaten-up in Crieff for wearing an English rugby top (*Sunday Mail* 22.2.04). Numerous media stories such as these can be culled from the newspapers over the past five years. Such occurrences have added resonance in Scotland, given the widely held cultural stereotype of the 'welcoming' and 'friendly' Scot (Armstrong, 1989; Lindsay, 1997).

3.4 Every interviewee who took part in our study was able to give their own examples of anti-Englishness with which they had been confronted. This ranged from relatively 'good-natured' banter through to incidents involving verbal abuse (the almost ubiquitous 'English-bastard' being the most common insult) and/or physical violence. Examples from the interviews include the following:

"You sometimes get it at work, cos I'm involved in an emergency social work service and the words English and bastard are often put together on the telephone." (male 47). <sup>[2]</sup>

"Well, one of the most severe examples was my friend Jill and she was just in a pub when she came up here, she's from the north of England. She was talking to a friend of hers and someone just dumped a pint of beer over her head and made some derogatory comment about her being English." (female 38).

"I knew a girl in my year at school that got beat up because she was English ... I think she was about

fifteen or sixteen. She'd just moved into the area and she was walking down to the garage for - I don't know - some sweets or something and a big group of Linwood girls said 'Where are you from? You English tart' and whatever it was, they called her names and just beat her up." (female 19).

3.5 Anti-English graffiti, which a number of respondents had commented on seeing frequently, could often have a powerful effect as it was a constant reminder of their 'difference' and in some way being resident in a 'foreign', even hostile country.<sup>[3]</sup> This could be aimed at the English-in-general such as 'English go home', or was directed specifically at one particular person:

"A friend of mine who's living in a fairly rough area in Livingston for a while. And she had written on the side of her house, you know sprayed on in graffiti 'an English whore lives here'. So, but I mean that is really extreme." (female 53).

3.6 What came over strongly from the data was the manner in which disparaging comments about the 'English' were routine within many social contexts and interactions almost to the extent that it was seen to be part of a collective Scottish 'mentality'; as one interviewee put it, 'It's just part of the culture really isn't it' (female, 38). The following comments are also illustrative of this:

"My girlfriend's dad [went] to Habitat for something and was complaining about something and, at the end of the story, he sort of came out with 'of course the shop assistant was English as well.'" (male 38).

"If you ever get in an argument in the pub 'English' will get brought into it. If you're standing arguing with someone maybe it would kinda end up "Well go back to England" or whatever, I suppose." (female 19).

" Sometimes I've spoken to people and it's almost like a mundane event ... one of the first things that's said is "Oh you know them they're English". It's almost like if you were Scottish it wouldn't be too bad but because your English ... you know a minor event can become a major catastrophe." (male 46).

3.7 The almost mundane and habitual nature of such comments, barbs and put-downs had a powerful effect in relation to undermining any sense of 'belonging' to Scotland that English people had, or wished to have. As the following interviewee put it:

"I always stand out. If we're all somewhere and I speak you can kinda see "Is she English?" or people kinda looking. So I don't know, you just kinda feel that you don't fit in a hundred percent, maybe ninety-five percent or something but not completely." (female 19).

3.8 Elsewhere (McIntosh et al., 2004) we discuss the forlorn hope, as they saw it, of English people living in Scotland being 'able' or 'allowed' to describe themselves as 'Scottish'. As one woman suggests when referring to her children: They always get people asking where they come from. They always get people asking where they come from because of their accents and they come to me quite often and say "Mum where are we from?" (female 43).

3.9 The respondents in our sample were relatively powerful and privileged in relation to other minority groups in the UK (Modood et al., 1997) and compared to the bulk of the Scottish population more generally. However, what did come over clearly in the interviews was that this relative power did not prevent their sense of 'belonging' to Scotland, being undermined or cast in some doubt in regular and routine interactions with Scots (Bauman, 1992; Cohen, 1982; Ignatieff, 1994; Mason, 2000).

### **'they hope to see England lose': On Sport and 'Tribalism'**

4.1 Several interviewees observed that 'Scottishness' explicitly involved asserting difference from 'Englishness' and that being Scottish often seemed to be defined in negative terms; that is, being Scottish at times equates to being precisely not English. We argue elsewhere (McIntosh et al., 2004) that Kiely et al. (2001) perhaps underplay the 'tribalism' involved in Scots' relations to the English when they argue, along with Smout (1994), that nationality in Scotland is related more to place than to a 'sense of tribe'. Our research would tend to confirm Cohen's comments that there are 'innumerable instances in which Scottishness *is* couched in terms either of non-Englishness or anti-Englishness' [emphasis in original] and that 'one would have to be insensitive indeed to be unaware of what sometimes seems an almost palpable dislike for, or resentment of, the English, in even the most civil of settings' (1996:806). Our respondents were regularly reminded that the 'English' were seen in Scotland to be a 'tribe apart';

"I know at work people instantly know it's me on the phone, you know I suppose I've got quite a distinctive voice and it sounds very English, I probably look quite English too you know." (woman 53).

"Differences, well I said previously it's very much a different country, there's a very strong sense of it, almost like a foreign country." (male 38).

4.2 Certainly one of the most obvious examples of Scottish 'tribalism', from the interviewees' perspective, was in relation to sport. Sporting occasions have long been vehicles for proclaiming and displaying collective and national identities (Watson, 2003). The imagery, iconography, and ceremony associated with large sporting events offer great potential for tribal assertions of difference (Edensor, 2002). Within the Scottish context this often involves asserting differences with England and the English - not only in relation to football and rugby but also other sporting events such as the distinctively Scottish 'Highland Games' (Jarvie and Burnett, 2000; Jarvie and Reid, 1999; Jarvie and Reid, 1994). Moorhouse (1989) for example shows how the once biennial 'invasions' by the 'Tartan Army' of Wembley to take on the 'Auld Enemy' were understood and portrayed within a militaristic and nationalistic idiom from as early as the 1930's.

4.3 Most of our respondents found the widespread Scottish tendency to support with fervour teams and individuals of any nationality competing against the English surprising and often unpleasant and intimidating. It was common for interviewees to note that the reverse was rarely the case in England:

"One thing that did surprise me actually was how anti-English the Scots were when it came to sport. When I was in England, if Scotland were playing somebody I would have wished them to win, like I would Northern Ireland or Wales, you know, against a foreign country. Whereas here, they hope to see England lose." (female 43).

"If England is playing, the English supporter will support England. If England is not playing, they may well support one of the other home teams. In Scotland you support Scotland if they're playing and, if Scotland isn't playing, you support whoever is playing against England. And there is a measure of seriousness in it and I think it's the only really unpleasant and unnecessary bit of the Scottish identity which I don't like." (male 56).

4.4 In some cases, individuals had felt threatened as a result of their support for England: The classic example is when England and Scotland play rugby.

"In 1989 ... Carling [the England captain] had been shouting his mouth off about how easy it was going to be over in Edinburgh to beat the Scots. Anyway I was busy and I missed the game but I popped in to a newsagents, I said to her 'Who's won?' and she said 'We have, you English bastard' ." (male 54).

"Yeah. I don't really watch sport but when there's like Scotland, England matches me and my friends we just all go to this one house and watch the football. And if the English scored it would be "English bastards" and "Fuck the English" ... that kind of thing." (Female 19).

4.5 These regular sporting events had a strong impact on English people in Scotland being 'allowed' to consider themselves as 'coming from' or 'belonging to' Scotland. As one woman noted:

"My son said he felt very uncomfortable when the World Cup was on because people were so anti-English ... he'd been here nearly all of his life and he sort of felt really torn as to who he should support - you know he just didn't like the situation." (female 53).

4.6 In effect such events often operated as 'celebrations' or markers of difference between Scots and English, reinforcing English people as a key 'Other' (Bauman, 1992) within Scottish society.

4.7 Similarly, being made to feel very 'English' was a common occurrence for many of our respondents during and in the aftermath of the *Braveheart* film of 1995. Indeed, some interviewees suggested that any hardening and proliferation of anti-English attitudes was in large part attributable to the influence and success of films such as *Braveheart* and, to a much lesser extent, *Rob Roy*. The *Braveheart* 'phenomenon' (Edensor, 2002) was keenly felt by many of those we interviewed: *Braveheart* was showing and as soon as the film was finished there were car horns honking and people were out on the streets and I thought 'wow this is very scary'. And I've heard of people who were living in Falkirk who were English ... driven out of the cinema and stuff by Scots consumed by this sort of crazy nationalistic spirit (male 38). I've seen people with tears in their eyes after they've seen *Braveheart*, Scottish people with tears in the eyes, and the contempt they've had in their voice towards me being English (male 54).

4.8 From this we can argue that sporting and 'cultural' events such as those mentioned above served to highlight and reinforce the tenuous link English people living in Scotland have to all things 'Scottish' at certain times.

### **'With an accent like that, I think you need to keep your mouth shut': Sounding 'Different'**

5.1 Having an English accent was the most fundamental way in which those we interviewed were marked out as 'different'. Issues over geographical origins, belonging, class location and status commonly flow from

assessments of accent (Charlesworth, 2000; Harman, 1988). Thus the result of speaking with an English accent was to be routinely positioned as 'English', with all the connotations that follow from this, within a variety of contexts and interactions. This was often a formidable barrier for those English people in our sample to overcome. Adapting one's accent and vocabulary in particular ways or keeping quiet in certain social settings, was a common strategy amongst those we interviewed. Several interviewees mentioned the need to be careful in public places such as restaurants, pubs and clubs: I followed a friend of mine who was a boxer and we went to Bannockburn - and he's an Englishman who's also been in Scotland a number of years. ... And that was very, very intimidating. Again you're in a sports environment but a gentleman did actually put his hand on my shoulder and said 'With an accent like that, I think you need to keep your mouth shut young man' (male 33). I've gone to [public meetings] recently about how this area can be improved. .... And I mean even if I tried to tone down what I was saying, the English accent would have still caused other people to interpret what I was saying the wrong way so I just never said anything (female 43).

5.2 A number of interviewees reported that their children had developed a strategy of becoming 'bilingual', adopting a distinctively Scottish accent in school and an English accent at home. The experience of 'being English' in Scotland and how accents were viewed seemed to vary, according to where in England individuals were associated with. Based on our evidence, it seems that many Scots made judgements on the basis of 'degrees of Englishness', this equating closely with English 'north' and 'south' regional identities (Tomaney, 1999) and associated understandings of class position and affinities. Some interviewees believed that south east England accents were particularly disliked, as they would be associated in Scottish minds with arrogance and superiority. Regional English accents (generally, from the North of England) were understood to be more acceptable to Scottish ears. However, despite such qualifications there was a general acceptance amongst the interviewees that an 'English' accent would always carry with it stereotypical connotations of being 'arrogant', 'pushy', 'individualistic' and politically right-wing. As the following respondents explain: "Oh you've got an English accent", and they sort of recoil backwards and it's associated maybe with the arrogant English image that they have been used to through the media and other things like that yeah (male 54). Generally they would see English people as being arrogant ... they probably come across the English accent they loathe - that says to them this is a Thatcherite type person, that this is an establishment type person and this is a person who's just damned arrogant and wants to tell us what to do (male 58).

5.3 Lindsay (1997) has explored these stereotypes through surveys carried out across central Scotland. By far the most common characteristic associated with English people was arrogance; they were also thought to be aloof, unfriendly and xenophobic. Lindsay concludes, contrary to much of our evidence, that, despite the negative stereotype of 'The English', this is not usually converted into personal hostility to English individuals in everyday interaction. However, as indicated above, many of our respondents were subject to a complex mix of stereotypical assumptions and perceptions made on the basis of 'typifications' (Schutz, 1972) and characteristics of the 'English'. These drew upon a complex mix of stereotypes, discussed below, involving variously colonial metaphors, assumptions about class, ethnicity, social and political divergence and inherent traits of 'Englishness' (McDonald, 1986).

### **'suffering from people coming in from outside': 'White Settlers' and English Migration**

6.1 In the mid 1990's anti-English invective found its most extreme expression in the activities of two ultra-nationalistic organisations; 'Settler Watch' and 'Scottish Watch' (cf. Dickson, 1994; Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996). Although both were brief-lived groups of minuscule proportions they did capture much media attention, both local and national, and they served as 'focusing events' (Birkland, 1997) for anxieties and issues generated by English migration to Scotland. The label 'white settlers' was used as a shorthand expression for such concerns (cf. Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996). The ostensibly narrow applicability of the label to certain individuals moving to certain geographical locations became lost in general discussions framed by the 'problem' of English migration. Some of our respondents mentioned such 'resentments': I went up to Loch Tay, a lovely place and there is a lovely classic Highland village where there were five pubs and restaurants and a post office and a couple of shops. And all of those with the exception of one were owned and run by English people who'd sold their properties - in London particularly - and got the money and were coming in and buying up these places. ... they were suffering from people coming in from outside, jacking up the prices. I've known people make offers on the phone in London for properties in Glasgow without seeing the property, just jacking up the prices again (male 54). Well yeah there's a lot of it ... particularly when people are pissed, and you know "What are you doing here?" and "Why have you chosen to live here and come here and buy our properties in our village?" and stuff like that (male 47).

6.2 In distinction to other minority groups it was the perceived relative power of English migrants, the notion that they could move into the top jobs and buy up the best property, that was a stimulus to such antipathies. As another respondent put it; I mean there definitely are resentments against English people yeah, and I can remember in the press a while ago there was a lot of talk about English people taking over

the cultural establishment. So I mean it does surface every now and then (female 53).

6.2 This view of English people as arrogant and wealthy connects with notions of class and perceived class alliances. Bechhofer et al. (1999) suggest that 'being English, Scottish and Welsh expresses national identity' (1999:518). However, from a Scottish perspective, an English national identity is one which is very often understood as being quintessentially 'middle class' and is often contrasted with, and provides reinforcement for, Scots sense of themselves as being much more 'proletarian' in nature and outlook (Lindsay, 1997). As these respondents explain: [Scotland has] got a really strong socialist past and that's incredibly attractive to me and even when you're here now, even in these kind of watered down days you still feel a sense of that. But the flip side of that is a very sort of romantic view of old-fashioned working class values a lot of which you know are kind of very negative and redundant (male 30). You know I think Scotland is basically a working class place and England is basically a middle class place so I mean you know there's a political and a cultural difference between the two that are pretty fundamental (male 44).

6.4 In a similar vein a number of those we interviewed picked up in their interactions with Scots a sense of insecurity in relation to England and the English, a constant suspicion that they, an English person, felt themselves or 'their' nation to be superior: There's certainly an inferiority complex towards the English and that seems to be traditionally cultivated over many years as far as I can tell, it's almost inbred. And I mean its palpable it's not just my imagination, it's definitely there, I mean there's no question about it (male 38). And I know what the Scots think of some of the, especially southern English, and their rather loud voices and opinionated talk and so on (male 77).

6.5 The annual arrival of visitors for the hunting and shooting season is always an opportunity for press comment about wealthy families from England treating the Scottish Highlands merely as a playground for their sporting activities (for example Sandison, 1998). The impact of such minor events such as these serve to maintain and proliferate aforementioned stereotypical notions and class related 'typifications' (Schutz, 1972) of the 'English'.

### **The 'Racialising' of the English Minority?**

7.1 There was evidence from the interviews of connotations of class, ethnicity and 'race' in Scot's attitudes towards English people living in Scotland. In this respect perceived class differences between people from the two nations were often articulated in ways that borrow from vocabularies most often associated with 'race' and 'ethnicity'. Thus not only are English people routinely associated with a particular individualistic 'middle classness' but this is seen, in some degree, as an ethnic and 'racial' difference between the English and Scots. As Cohen states 'ethnicity' can refer to 'a decision people make to depict themselves or others symbolically as the bearers of a certain cultural identity' (Cohen, 1994:119). Our interviewees indicated that they regularly had to deal with a particular 'cultural identity' foisted upon them in their interactions with Scots.

7.2 Further, as writers such as Gilroy (1987 and 1991) and Hall (1992 and in Morley and Chen, 1996) suggest, 'cultural' categories, can easily be collapsed into biological categories, metaphors and allusions and a number of those we interviewed stated that their experiences of anti-Englishness often revolved around assumptions of a deep rooted, almost 'natural', difference between them and Scottish people - 'I probably look quite English too you know' (woman 53). In this way there is evidence that the English minority in Scotland has been, and continues to be, 'racialised' to some extent. According to Miles, the process of racialisation; refers to those instances where social relations between people have been structured by the signification of human biological characteristics in such a way as to define and construct differentiated social collectivities. ... The concept therefore refers to a process of categorization, a representational process of defining an Other... (1989:75)

7.3 Such essentialist constructions of 'The English' and allusions to inherent differences between Celts and Anglo-Saxons (McDonald, 1986; McCrone, 1998) thus seemed to provide a context and subtext for many interactions with Scots and such assumptions about these differences became almost routine within relations with Scots. The Gaelic term 'Sasunaich' [Sassenach] is sometimes invoked in this context (Macdonald, 1997) to give an authentic sounding emphasis to such differences (Scots also know that it is a difficult word for English people to pronounce). Such understandings were by no means the sole preserve of Scots, as the following comment indicates; 'we [the English] don't think so much as a nation, I think the English are very much more individual, individualistic thinking' (female 28).

7.4 Banter and joking, for example, were important for serving constant reminders of these 'differences': English jokes ... you hear them every week you. I mean people make remarks about the English but as I say that's a kind of you know generic thing if that's the right word rather than a personal thing. I mean, it's probably like the Irish or something isn't it, you have to put up with people making remarks about English, the English (male 28).

7.5 As a consequence of the kinds of experiences discussed above that English people have in Scotland, some felt it was appropriate to make connections between their own position and that of other minorities, clearly understanding much of the anti-Englishness they experienced as being comparable to, and explicable as, 'racism' and 'racist' abuse. The following illustrates this: I know once she came home and said "Oh I'm so fed up with it, people are always going on about the English. ... if anybody else you know criticises the English again I'm just going to say 'you racist so and so'". Because it is like racism really, it's the equivalent (female 53). I hate the thing when you're in a public place and ... and the minute you haven't spoken with the vernacular accent, everybody stops what they're doing and turns round and stare at you as if you're some alien ... You [get] a sense that maybe black people get a lot, you know, if they walk into a public place and people just do a double take or take a step aside or stare at them or whatever it is, you've been spotted as somebody that's different (female 43).

7.6 Clearly, all minority groups cannot be understood as being equivalent in terms of access to power, experience of discrimination and the extent of any social exclusion (Miles, 1989, 1993). As one interviewee said: It does surface every now and then so there must be sort of underlying resentments I suppose, you know that 'they're coming up here and taking jobs'. It's all those sort of racist sentiments really that people use against black people, it's just the same but it's just at a bit of a lower level. I mean we're not as distinctive I suppose, if there are five or ten percent of us up here we're not really visible (female 53).

7.7 Thus this 'racialisation' of the English in Scotland may not have the deleterious consequences it does for other minority groupings. However, for those we interviewed at least, overcoming such 'racialised boundaries' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992; Miles, 1993) can be a very tiresome, wearing and at times for some a deeply offensive and threatening, feature of daily life in Scotland.

### **Conclusion: Understanding Anti-Englishness**

8.1 The above explored evidence of the wide-spread nature of some form of anti-Englishness in the experiences of those we interviewed. It is important not to overstate this as for the majority it was clearly not an issue all of the time - as one respondent stated; 'I mean I'm not kind of stoned in the street or anything you know' (female 31). However all of our respondents routinely encountered varying degrees of anti-Englishness. How can we explain the continuation of this antipathy?

8.2 Clearly some of the tensions and derogatory allusions discussed above arise from the long-standing political and economic relationships of the two countries. Although they are officially joint partners in a political union established in 1707, historically England has always been dominant (Devine, 1999; Smout, 1994). Writers such as Hechter (1975) and Haseler (1996) have suggested that the relationship can usefully be understood as being essentially a colonial one. Evans (1991) rightly notes that Hechter's, now largely discredited, account always ignored the internal social and economic heterogeneity of regions of England and Scotland. However, a colonial metaphor is one which continues to have a powerful resonance with many Scots' perceptions and understandings of the relations between the two nations and is frequently employed in popular culture, the media and by nationalist groups (cf. *The Herald* 4.17.03 and 4.22.03). It also can provide an appropriate shorthand description of the attitudes of some individuals behaviour and isolated, often relatively petty, incidents.

8.3 The union of the two kingdoms into 'Britain' and the participation by Scots in British imperial exploits has not prevented them retaining a sense of cultural and national identity (Devine, 1999). As McCrone (1997) reminds us, Scotland (and Scots) has long retained an identity of relative autonomy within the Union, largely as a consequence of running its own institutional affairs (e.g. law, education, religion) - or perhaps more accurately, the widespread belief that it did/does so. Hastings (1997) notes that for most English people 'English' and 'British' were almost interchangeable but the Scots and Welsh were able to retain a dual identity, being both Scottish or Welsh and British at the same time. However there is a considerable literature (Brown, et al., 1996; Kiely, et al., 2001; Marr, 2000; Moreno, 1988; Naim, 1981, 2000), which has shown people living in Scotland increasingly consider themselves to be Scottish in terms of their nationality and the Scottish dimension is deemed more significant than the British one. Such developments were picked up on by many of those we interviewed, as the following comments illustrate: I think the English nation still thinks it's the whole of Britain, I don't think that the same kind of identity exists as Scottish. I don't know if [the] Scottish have a sense of being themselves strongly a part of Britain as well (female 42). I think the nation thing is rather confused by the fact that the English tend to think that England and Britain are the same thing ... I think the English rather confuse that (female 43).

8.4 Certainly, the interviews uncovered considerable anti-English feeling, of varying intensity and extent. The position of English people in Scotland in terms of power and the extent of any social exclusion differs from that of other minorities who have experienced discrimination in housing, employment, and public services (Bowes et al., 1990). English people have not apparently been excluded in these ways. In this

case, it would appear to be that Scots themselves at times feel 'excluded' and so anti-Englishness, and moral panics relating to this, can arise from long-held and easily aroused suspicions and resentments that English people are, in some way, 'colonising' and 'Anglicising' Scotland.

8.5 However in their routine interactions with Scots they are often made aware in subtle, or more ham-fisted, ways of their 'difference' and endure, over many years, questions relating to whether they 'belong'. The connotations often attached to 'Englishness' in the Scottish context often result in English people regularly being involved in the management of a 'spoiled' identity (Goffman, 1968) in their interactions with Scots. In this way their national identity(ies) is rarely given the space to become 'banal' in the sense depicted by Billig (1995).

8.6 Those in our sample had to put up with 'racialised' assumptions of difference based on complex interweaves of class, ethnicity and ideas of 'essentially' different ideological and political outlooks. As a result the 'English' are routinely assumed to occupy a different social, political and 'ethnic' landscape. The lack of evidence (cf. Curtice et al., 2002) for such myths and stereotypes is of course less important than the power of the myths themselves. In this way English people in Scotland can simultaneously be seen as a group not without power and influence but still be subjected to forms of harassment and abuse.

8.7 More research would need to be carried to examine the impact of devolution and the establishment of a Scottish Parliament (cf. Paterson et al., 2001) on the experience of being English in Scotland, meanwhile, on the basis of our sample it can be stated that anti-Englishness does seem to be a feature of English people's lives in Scotland and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future.

---

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that the interviewer for all the interviews was herself an English person living in Scotland.

<sup>2</sup> Only the gender and age is given.

<sup>3</sup> At the anecdotal level at least we would argue that anti-Scottish graffiti in England is uncommon. As one of our respondents suggested:

"I was totally oblivious to the fact that any Scottish people might have felt anything about the English until I came to Scotland. And when I came up here the Scots tried to tell me the English felt the same. I was like, well, actually no they don't because they don't even know where it is a lot of them." (female 8).

---

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Louise McCabe for conducting the interviews on which this paper is based and to Samantha Punch for helpful comments on earlier drafts.

---

## References

- ANTHIAS, F., and YUVAL-DAVIS, N. (1992) *Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and the Anti-Racist Struggle*. London: Routledge.
- ARMSTRONG, B. (1989) *A People Without Prejudice? The Experience of Racism in Scotland*. London: Runnymede Trust.
- BAUMAN, Z. (1992) 'Soil, Blood and Identity', *The Sociological Review* 40(4): 675-701.
- BECHHOFFER, F., McCURONE, D., KIELY, R., and STEWART, R. (1999) 'Constructing National Identity: Arts and Landed Elite's in Scotland', *Sociology* 33:515-534.
- BILLIG, M. (1995) *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage.
- BIRKLAND, T. A. (1997) *Agenda Setting, Public Policy and Focusing Events*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- BOWES, A., DAR, N., and SIM, D. (1997) 'Tenure Preference and Housing Strategy: an Exploration of Pakistani Experiences', *Housing Studies* 12 (1): 63-84.
- BOWES, A., McCLUSKEY, J., and SIM, D. (1990) 'Racism and Harassment of Asians in Glasgow', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 13 (1): 71-91.

- BROWN, A., McCRONE, D., and PATERSON, L. (editors) (1996) *Politics and Society in Scotland*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- CHARLESWORTH, S. (2000) *A Phenomenology of Working Class Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- COHEN, A. P. (editor) (1982) *Belonging: Identity and Social Organisation in British Social Cultures*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- COHEN, A.P. (1994) *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity*. London: Routledge.
- COHEN, A. P. (1996) 'Personal Nationalism: A Scottish View of Some Rites, Rights and Wrongs', *American Ethnologist* 23 (4):802-815.
- COHEN, S. (1972) *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*. London: McGibbon and Kee.
- CURTICE, J., McCRONE, D., PARK, A., and PATERSON, L. (editors) (2002) *New Scotland, New Society?* Edinburgh: Polygon.
- DAMER, S. (2000) 'Scotland in Miniature? Second Homes on Arran', *Scottish Affairs* 31: 37-55.
- DEVINE, T. M. (1999) *The Scottish Nation 1700-2000*. London: Allen Lane.
- DICKSON, M. B. (1994) 'Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgotten? A Comparison of the Scots and English in Scotland', *Scottish Affairs* 7:112-134.
- EDENSOR, T. (2002) *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*. Oxford: Berg.
- EVANS, N. (1991) 'Internal Colonialism? Colonisation, Economic Development and Political Mobilisation in Wales, Scotland and Ireland', in G. Day, and G. Rees (editors) *Regions, Nations and European integration: Remaking the Celtic Periphery*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- GILROY, P. (1987) *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- GILROY, P. (1991) 'Cultural Studies and Ethnic Absolutism', in L. Grossberg, P. Treichler and G. Nelson (editors) *Cultural Studies*, New York: Routledge.
- GOFFMAN, E. (1968) *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. London: Penguin.
- HALL, S. (1992) 'New Ethnicities' in J. Donald and A. Rattansi (editors) *'Race', Culture and Difference*, London: Sage.
- HASELER, S. (1996) *The English Tribe: Identity, Nation and Europe*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- HASTINGS, A. (1997) *The Construction of Nationhood. Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- HECHTER, M. (1975) *Internal Colonialism. The Celtic Fringe in British National Development 1536-1966*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- HARMAN, L. D. (1988) *The Modern Stranger: On Language and Membership*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- IGNATIEFF, M. (1994) *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. London: Vintage.
- JARVIE, G., and BURNETT, J. (editors) (2000) *Sport Scotland and the Scots*. Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press.
- JARVIE, G., and REID, I. (editors) (1994) *Scottish Sport in the Making of the Nation*. London: Leicester University Press.
- JARVIE, G., and REID, I. (1999) 'Scottish Sport, Nationalist Politics and Culture', *Culture, Sport and Society* 2(2): 22-43.
- JEDREJ, C., and NUTTALL, M. (1996) *White Settlers. The Impact of Rural Re-Population in Scotland*. Luxembourg: Harwood.
- KEATING, M. (2001) *Nations Against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland*. London: Palgrave.

- KIELY, R., BECHHOFFER, F., STEWART, R., and McCRONE, D. (2001) 'The Markers and Rules of Scottish National Identity', *Sociological Review* 49(1): 33- 55.
- KIELY, R., McCRONE, D., BECHHOFFER, F., and STEWART, R. (2000) 'Debatable Land: National and Local Identity in a Border Town', *Sociological Research Online* 5(2) <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/5/2/kiely.html>.
- LINDSAY, I. (1997) 'The Uses and Abuses of National Stereotypes', *Scottish Affairs* 20: 133-148.
- MACDONALD, S. (1997) *Reimagining Culture: Histories, Identities and the Gaelic Renaissance*. Oxford: Berg.
- MANNING, N. (1989) 'Constructing Social Problems' in Manning, Nick (editor) *Social Problems and Welfare Ideology*. Gower Publishing: Aldershot.
- MARR, A. (2000) *The Day Britain Died*. London: Profile Books.
- MASON, A. (2000) *Community, Solidarity and Belonging: Levels of Community and their Normative Significance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MCCRONE, D. (1997) 'Unmasking Britannia: the rise and fall of British national identity' *Nations and Nationalism*, 3(4):79-596.
- MCCRONE, D. (1998) *The Sociology of Nationalism*. London: Routledge.
- MCDONALD, M. (1986) 'Celtic Ethnic Kinship and the Problem of Being English', *Current Anthropology*, 27(4):333-341.
- MCINTOSH, I., SIM. D., and ROBERTSON, D. (2004) "We Hate the English Except for you, cos you're our Pal': Identification of the 'English' in Scotland'. *Sociology* 38 (1): 43-59.
- MILES, R. (1989) *Racism*. London: Routledge.
- MILES, R. (1993) *Racism after 'Race Relations'*. London: Routledge.
- MODOOD, T., and BERTHOUD, R. (1997) *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
- MOORHOUSE, H (1989) "We're of to Wembley; The History of a Scottish Event and the Sociology of Football Hooliganism' in D. McCrone, S. Kendrick and P. Straw (editors), *The Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture and Social Change*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- MORENO, L. (1988) 'Scotland and Catalonia: the Path to Home Rule' in D. McCrone, and A. Brown (editors), *Scottish Government Yearbook* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- MORLEY, D., and CHEN, K (editors) (1996) *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. London: Routledge.
- NAIRN, T. (1981) *The Break Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo- Nationalism*, London: NLB. NAIRN, T. (2000) *After Britain: New Labour and the Return of Scotland*. London: Granta.
- PATERSON, L., BROWN, A., CURTICE, J., HINDS, K., McCRONE, D., PARK. A., SPROSTON, K. and SURRIDGE, P. (2001) *New Scotland, New Politics?*, Edinburgh: Polygon.
- PAXMAN, J. (1998) *The English. A Portrait of a People*. London: Michael Joseph.
- SANDISON, B. (1998) 'The invasion of Wupert, Dick and Harry', *Herald* 18.7.98, p.17.
- SCHUTZ, A. (1972) *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. London: Heinemann.
- SCOTT, P. H. (1988) *Still in Bed with an Elephant*. Edinburgh: Saltire Society.
- SMOUT, T. C. (1994) 'Perspectives on the Scottish Identity', *Scottish Affairs* 6:101-113.
- THOMPSON, K. (1998) *Moral Panics*, London: Routledge.
- TOMANEY, J. (1999) 'In Search of English Regionalism: The Case of the North East', *Scottish Affairs* 28:62-82.

WATSON, M. (2003) *Being English in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

