



# Scottish Studies Newsletter

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## Editorial

Dear Readers,

Behind the bluff and bluster, the claims and counter claims of politicians in the recent UK election campaigns, there remained a curious sense of a political scene in a kind of suspended animation. Between the Scottish referendum of last September and the UK general election on May 7, the dominant atmosphere was one of nervous uncertainty and fear of the unpredictable. Whilst animation of the strident, excitable variety – as ever – was not in short supply, it was tempered over the course of the campaign by a debilitating lack of conviction, an inertia caused by the bewildering complexity of party-political demographics complemented by an unprecedented plethora of other imponderables. The wonder was, among all this, that the kind of suspension that would have been represented by a hung parliament, an outcome so widely predicted in the run up, did not in the end come to pass.

With the North-South divide in British politics now apparently more pronounced than ever, it seems that the real period of uncertainty is about to begin. Will the suspended animation continue, or are we set to see substantial changes? As far as Scotland is concerned, it remains to be seen whether the much vaunted reawakening and re-engagement with democracy has any substance. It is certainly true that many people in Scotland have been deeply affected by the referendum and its aftermath, and moved in a way that has often had little to do with the posturing and rhetoric of the politicians. Expression of this has come in ways heartfelt and often deeply emotional. The election result appears to show that the process of change that brought this about has not ended but is still evolving.

Interesting responses to recent political events have also come from Scotland's creative community, with writers and artists choosing not to allow the politicians to have the field to themselves. And it is interesting to speculate on the forms this may take in the future. How, for example, will Scottish writing, celebrated in a truly international inaugural World Congress of Scottish Literatures last summer in Glasgow (<http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/arts/research/scottishstudiesglobal/worldcongressofscottishliteratures/>), respond to new impulses and fresh challenges ahead? Whatever the answer, it is already clear that it will not come from Scotland alone. Both Scottish literature(s) and Scottish Studies are, and long have been, international. The university from which this *Newsletter* is published opened its [Scottish Studies Centre](#) more than thirty years ago as one of the earliest to cast an outside eye on Scotland and Scottish culture.

The changing face of Scottish Studies, its growing international appeal, and the new demands and challenges it faces are things we would like to take up in future editions of the *Newsletter*. What are those who are involved in Scottish Studies currently doing? How do they see this changing in the future? From the theoretical to the political, from matters of identity, language, culture, writing, education, religion, media etc., to purely personal stories of engagement, discovery, learning and development, we would like to know about Scottish Studies today, at home in Scotland and in the rest of the world. We would like to know who is currently involved and what kind of work they are doing.

If you would like to give us **your views on Scottish Studies**, or just tell us about your work, or the work of your department, we would be delighted to hear from you. To have a picture of the interests and activities of departments and individuals in this field right now and how these may evolve in the future is our goal. To set the ball rolling on what we hope will develop into a series, we begin in this issue with Fiona Ross's personal reflections on her work in Scottish Area Studies at the University of Konstanz.

Finally, this issue of the *Newsletter* also contains all our usual features: book reviews, this time by Silke Stroh, Christoph Houswitschka, and Klaus Peter Müller; a new poem by Harry Giles; a full catalogue of the latest Scottish interest publications; award winners, conference announcements and

much more. As an added extra, we also have a review of the recent and very successful [StAnza poetry festival in St Andrews](#).

There is one further last point that needs to be made, starting with the two books Klaus Peter has reviewed and ending with a key topic that the next issue of the *Newsletter* intends to address: the books by Macwhirter and Fraser are excellent in many respects and provide extremely useful information on key events and essential areas in our lives. The devastated Labour Party, now involved in internecine warfare because of the disastrous results in the general election, could learn very much about what is required of politicians today by the general public. Just cf. [http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/scottish-politics/d-day-for-murphy-as-he-faces-no-confidence-vote.126238274?utm\\_source=headlines&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=email%20Balert](http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/scottish-politics/d-day-for-murphy-as-he-faces-no-confidence-vote.126238274?utm_source=headlines&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email%20Balert) on Labour's situation in Scotland, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/17/labours-triple-whammy-defeat-party-triple-vice> on the "triple vice" Labour is in in GB, and what Jon Cruddas, Labour MP for Dagenham, and others have to say about the party at <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/may/16/labour-great-crisis-ever>. Yes, Labour is in its greatest crisis ever, and one important point is to notice that this is an international problem that exists in the same way in Germany with the SPD, in France with their socialists, in Italy, and elsewhere. All parties need to wake up to what the people, and especially the people in Scotland have been expressing themselves in most eloquent and outspoken ways. Which is why it is so good for everybody to listen carefully and heed what they are saying..

Even the Tories and LibDems could profit much from reading the two books reviewed by Klaus Peter in this *Newsletter* with an open mind. But will they bother? There is, unfortunately, no sign of this taking place. Which is why the SNP has been so successful, and even people in England would like to be able to vote for them, too, or actually become part of Scotland (cf. <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/thousands-call-north-england-become-9248178>). These people are, however, in the main media told stories about contemporary Scotland where "the legions of ordinary Scots who were daily joining the SNP", and the many more people desiring a better, fairer society are derided "as 'fanatics' and a 'cult'", or even given worse names (Kevin McKenna, "Hatred of austerity, a rejection of greed... if this is a 'cult', count me in", *The National* on 16-5-15, <http://www.thenational.scot/comment/saturday-essay-a-hatred-of-austerity-a-rejection-of-greed-a-thirst-for-a-fairer-more-just-society-if-this-is-a-cult-count-me-in.3042>).

So, yes, there are intriguing books discussed in this issue, and we all think that the *Newsletter* is full of such useful, enlightening information. But how many people do read this stuff? Apart from some occasional praise, readers' response has been rather poor. We can thus only invite you again to contribute to the next issues with your own texts, essays, comments, and so on. It's great that our students are well represented now, but we'd like to hear from many more of them and from all other kinds of human beings, wherever they come from, and whatever their opinions might be. Andrea Schlotthauer and Sherry Ishak Bakeer Abadeer are rather sceptical about some of the latest developments in Scotland, expressing views some Scots might want to contradict – or support. Melanie Sommer speaks about another US-American portrayal of Scotland, and Katharina Leible addresses a key issue, namely censorship and the media. Many people are convinced that 'another Scotland is possible', and this is a brilliant idea. And it is indeed possible, but it must be fought for. And this is an extremely difficult fight, with the media as a key battle ground.

Klaus Peter Müller will, therefore, write an article on **Scottish media** in the coming **October issue**, and this could easily become its **key topic**, about which many of you certainly have strong opinions. So do send them in and make this another very special issue. Because, as Kevin McKenna, who is not of the looney left, just an *Observer* columnist and a *Scottish Daily Mail* writer, made clear in his Saturday essay on 16-5-15: there has already been "an upscaling of the

propaganda war." (Ibid.) We need to carefully look into this, describe and analyse it, make people aware of it, all of us. **So do take part.**

The Editors

Lothar Görke –Klaus Peter Müller – Ron Walker

Germersheim, May 2015

### UK General Election 2015 – Results

Party	Seats	Gain	Loss	Net	Votes	Vote Share	Change (points)
<b>Conservatives</b>	331	38	10	28	11,334,726	36.9 %	0.5
<b>Labour</b>	232	23	48	-25	9,347,324	30.5 %	1.5
<b>SNP</b>	56	50	0	50	1,454,436	4.7 %	3.1
<b>Liberal Democrats</b>	8	0	49	-49	2,415,862	7.9 %	-15.2
<b>DUP</b>	8	1	1	0	184,260	0.6 %	0.0
<b>Sinn Fein</b>	4	0	1	-1	176,232	0.6 %	-0.0
<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	3	0	0	0	181,704	0.6 %	0.0
<b>SDLP</b>	3	0	0	0	99,809	0.3 %	-0.1
<b>UUP</b>	2	2	0	2	114,935	0.4 %	N/A
<b>UKIP</b>	1	0	1	-1	3,881,099	12.6 %	9.6
<b>Green</b>	1	0	0	0	1,156,149	3.8 %	2.8
<b>Independent</b>	1	0	2	-2	98,711	0.3 %	-0.2

Credits: Matt Osborn, Seán Clarke, Will Franklin and Ralph Straumann

(<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/ng-interactive/2015/may/07/live-uk-election-results-in-full>).

### Castles in the Air

Andrea Schlotthauer (Mainz / Germersheim)

The United Kingdom is on a dangerous journey towards predatory capitalism. The gap between rich and poor is growing and the policies of the Tory government are further accelerating this development. They are cutting welfare and branches of the social security system such as the NHS. In pursuing a course of neo-liberalism, they are also privatizing public services, all of which is resulting in social injustice and human suffering.<sup>1</sup>

Scotland has the image of being more left-wing than England. For more than 50 years, it voted Labour in the UK general elections. During the campaign for independence last year, different yes-supporting groups used this political orientation to promise to transform the country into a just and humane society in the event of independence. One of them is the Radical Independence Campaign (RIC), a grass-roots organization with the slogan "Britain is for the Rich. Scotland can be Ours". At the Radical Independence convention on 23 November 2014, Alan Bissett made a vow on behalf of the RIC, promising to re-nationalise central services, establish green and sustainable energy and abolish the monarchy. The vow also promised action against discrimination and for multiculturalism, and opposition to war and nuclear energy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> More detailed information is available at <http://radicalindependence.org/2014/02/26/new-ric-campaign-britain-is-for-the-rich-scotland-can-be-ours/> and [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/john-wight/2015-election\\_b\\_5937980.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/john-wight/2015-election_b_5937980.html).

<sup>2</sup> Available at <http://alanbissett.com/2014/11/23/the-peoples-vow/>.

Surely many people will agree on these points. I do. But still, I don't think that the RIC will convince many people, nor be successful in bringing about change.

First of all, Bissett's talk was over-the-top sentimental. He swore that "this Vow is eternal" – which it surely isn't: nothing is eternal – and that future generations would live by it – a presumptuous prediction, as the RIC has only been in existence since 2012. And in this style he continued, leaving me with the impression that it was all just empty phrases. His speech addressed emotions but didn't bring up any arguments, or any new and original ideas. The hope that the RIC website might compensate for this lack of substance was not fulfilled. The post referendum statement that can be read there<sup>3</sup> exaggerates the organization's own achievements and ambitions to such an extent that it did not leave me convinced. It amounts to little more than a collection of populist slogans that would crumble if the RIC were ever to get the chance to sit in parliament and take part in the process of decision-making.

Moreover, I don't think that the RIC's programme corresponds to the Scottish mentality. The promise that "our ideas will stay radical"<sup>4</sup> – in my opinion – rather frightens people instead of giving them what they need. The Scottish people are not a nation of 'bravehearts', as the cliché would have it. As their decision on 18 September has shown, they are conservative and cautious and try to avoid insecurity and destabilisation. It is, therefore, unlikely that a group of extremists will become popular.

Next, I doubt that Bissett is right about the "ordinary Scottish citizen" being an enthusiastic leftist, willing to "struggle against [his] masters". Bissett is convinced that the defeat of independence on 18 September was due only to "the British establishment" having intimidated a small minority into voting No. But this idea cannot withstand closer scrutiny. Professor Ailsa Henderson from Edinburgh University affirms that there is a great deal of myth behind the Scottish image and the self-perception of the Scots as distinctively left-wing. In other words, the dream of a society with equal opportunities for all, in which the strong protect and care for the more vulnerable citizens, is not shared by all Scots – namely not by those wealthy Scots on the sunny side of society who would have to pay for it.<sup>5</sup>

To me, it seems there is a lot of projection going on. Bissett, in his role as representative of the RIC, projects the group's Labour dream onto Scotland, the long oppressed underdog on the verge of breaking free. In doing so, he denies reality. The way I see it, Scotland is a country with some potential, but also with serious problems. It is not a better society than any other industrialized nation. How can you "vow" to transform it into Sugarcandy Mountain? What are these high hopes based on?

The problem is not that the RIC is idealistic. It is good to come up with new ideas and offer alternatives to an unsatisfactory status-quo. But the RIC does not present anything new or offer any viable alternatives. Saying you are in favour of justice, equality, peace, and democracy is not new. It's not a concept either. It's merely empty rhetoric; castles in the air without foundation.

A better example for a left-wing organization with an inspiring website is [Common Weal Scotland](#).

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<sup>3</sup> Available at <http://radicalindependence.org/2014/09/28/ric-statement-moving-forward/>.

<sup>4</sup> Available at the RIC's official website at <http://radicalindependence.org/get-involved/>.

<sup>5</sup> More details on the study are available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-29673044>.



### **Fragile Vows**

Sherry Ishak Bakeer Abadeer (Mainz / Germersheim)

I remember the first time I heard about the Radical Independence Campaign. It was after the Radical Independence Conference held on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014. I remember wondering whether it was prudent for a movement, especially one criticised for being nationalistic, to call itself "radical". It is a term that sends a clear message, one that says that this is a campaign led by uncompromising Yes supporters, yet this term does not necessarily prove such reproaches wrong, at least on the surface. However, the campaign states proudly: "The Radical Independence Campaign has played an important role in the referendum. The engagement with communities all over Scotland inspired a democratic revival of historic proportions. We are proud to have been a part of that process. We believe that process continues to broaden. As the austerity agenda intensifies and the march to another war starts, the need for a broad, radical social movement of the left continues" (<http://radicalindependence.org/2014/09/28/ric-statement-moving-forward/>).

Alan Bissett, the author of the text "Vote Britain", which was featured in the last *Newsletter* (see no. 44, October 2014), gave a speech at the end of the conference (<http://alanbissett.com/2014/11/23/the-peoples-vow/>). In this speech, Bissett expresses a clear dissatisfaction with the current political circumstances, highlighting the disappointment of many Scottish citizens because of the lack of change. True, no one knows what the new government (following the general election in May) will accomplish, yet those in power have done little (up till now) to change the circumstances. Even the Smith Commission Report is a mere list of recommendations, which will not be discussed until after the general election. And who knows how that will turn out and whether SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon will be proved right in her claim that "this package of powers falls short of what is needed to create jobs and more equality" (<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/nov/27/nicola-sturgeon-smith-commission-fails-deliver-scotland-powerhouse-parliament>).

Bissett accuses England's politicians of deceiving voters by making promises just to "maintain their right to rule" and with no intention of keeping them or making them a reality – mere gimmicks. At the same time, I find myself asking to what extent his noticeably sentimental speech can be said to reflect an attainable reality. It all sounds very romantic: Bissett describing an independent Scotland as a dream, making a "People's Vow" (as opposed to "The Vow" made by London two days before the referendum to give Scotland new powers) and inviting everyone to join him and imagine, the sentence with which he finishes his speech: "So to everyone in Scotland, and the world, beyond this room: join us, and imagine." But to what extent can the RIC commit itself to such vows even if it, unlike London's politicians, according to Bissett, intends to? The vows Bissett mentions are the same as those specified in the Campaign's statement (see link above): the establishment of a republic, of green energy, and of social justice. But is it possible for a campaign to achieve such goals, especially since it is not officially tied to any political party? A campaign can organise demonstrations, spread its ideas over the internet, gather evidence to support its views and, by such means, possibly convince its members to vote for any political party that has similar goals. But does that guarantee the establishment of the kind of society they imagine, or, more specifically, have vowed to establish? Is there a viable plan for the achievement of these goals? Dissenters might argue that the RIC are deceiving voters by spreading vague ideas, using the powerful weapons of hope and the craving for change, without providing any plans for how to turn them into action. Alan Bissett describes those who believe in England's politics as blind and deceived and implies that they are as passive as the dead by saying that "45% of the people of Scotland are alive, engaged and hungry for ideas on how to transform this country". Of course, the pro-Union campaigners can also argue that they, too, are alive, engaged and working to transform Scotland but within the union with England, and for the good of all.

I am not trying to express any support for either side. What I am trying to do is merely to point out how powerful, yet fragile, words can be, especially when it comes to politics. Criticism is a very tricky business: though the evidence that proves the reproaches right may vary, the terms used to reproach dissenters remain very familiar. So it is really just about believing in the goodness of the side you support or in many cases supporting it just because it is the lesser of the evils on offer. The RIC Vow, like the People's Vow or the Smith Commission Report, remain aspects of a hypothetical future, mere recommendations that someone will look into someday. There will be much discussion of them. The outcome cannot be guaranteed. Vows do not create a better future.

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### **Censorship - Influencing Independence Referendum Results?**

Katharina Leible (Mainz / Germersheim)

The *Outlander* series was first shown in the US in August 2014 starting rumours that the UK-wide broadcasting had been postponed until after the Scottish independence referendum. Diana Gabaldon, the author of the bestselling books the series is based on, pointed out at the Edinburgh International Book Festival that "there is no evidence to suggest that is true." (Miller 2014) This, however, is not the only occasion where British media supposedly tried to manipulate voters' decisions in favour of a 'No' vote. Besides romance, drama and other entertaining aspects, the *Outlander* series deals with 18<sup>th</sup> century Scotland's politics and war, topics which could have woken the sleeping patriotic hearts of some undecided voters. But there is more. In the months leading up to the independence referendum, there were already rumours circulating of censorship being exercised in favour of a 'No' vote on Scottish Independence. Such rumours, however, barely found their way into the press.

Dr. John Robertson (University of the West of Scotland), who published a study on 'bias and fairness' in mainstream news reporting on the independence issue, summarised: "[...] the mainstream TV coverage of the first year of the independence referendum campaigns has not been fair or balanced. Taken together we have evidence of coverage which seems likely to have damaged the Yes campaign." (Robertson 2014)

Criticism of censorship increased when the BBC's political editor Nick Robinson at a press conference at Edinburgh posed a question about how Scottish taxpayers would make up the loss of tax revenue should the RBS move to London. Robinson asked Alex Salmond: "[...] Why should a Scottish voter believe you, a politician, against men who are responsible for billions of pounds of profits?" (21Wire 2014) The original report, however, did not show Salmond's reply, though it has since become available on YouTube (therevstu 2014) where Salmond points out that the RBS moving to London would have no effect on jobs in Scotland. Interestingly, the 'interview' was broadcast after a BBC report, which said that, according to a UK Treasury source, the RBS would move its headquarters to London in the case of a 'Yes' vote. Also interesting is the way the question was posed. It seems to have been chosen to appear provocative, in order to 'heat' the debate that followed. Robertson (2014) noted: "[...] the tough interviewing of 'Yes' supporters and the passive interviewing of 'No' supporters and the demonizing of the First Minister, Alex Salmond, [...]." The BBC, however, responded with reassurances that their "coverage of the referendum story is fair and impartial in line with the editorial guidelines." (BBC 2014)

On 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014, former NI First Minister Lord Trimble said, according to the BBC Northern Ireland website, that "the biggest threat to peace in Northern Ireland would be if Scotland were to vote for independence." (IndyBlog 2014) One day later, on "Good Morning Scotland", Lord Trimble said: "I want to correct what you said [...] reported me as saying that [a 'Yes' vote] would

threaten the peace process. I did not say that, that is not my view." (Ibid.) He went on to explain that a 'Yes' vote would demonstrate a major change through political democracy and provide the argument against violence with new force. Two days after Lord Trimble's radio interview, the BBC corrected their earlier version of what he had said. Websites that carry both versions show identical timestamps, leading malicious tongues to claim that the "BBC has rewritten history" (ibid.).

The General Secretary of the registered NGO Celtic League, Rhisiart Tal-e-bot, wrote a complaint to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, in September 2014. The complaint was about breaches by the UK Parliament of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (signed and ratified by the UK) in relation to the independence referendum. According to Tal-e-bot, the UK government and three political parties had violated the Human Rights Committee guidance on adoption of Article 25 section 19 of the ICCPR, which says that "Persons entitled to vote must be free to vote for any candidate for election [...] and free to support or to oppose the government, without undue influence or coercion of any kind which may distort or inhibit the free expression of the elector's will" (see full section 19 at: UN Committee on Human Rights 1996). Three actions are named which are said to have constituted manipulation and interference with the voter's freedom of expression of choice. First, Rhisiart Tal-e-bot claims that the UK Government "solicited foreign governments and senior officials of international bodies such as NATO and the EU to attempt to influence the process". Second, he maintains that UK parties "actively solicited businesses i.e. supermarkets and banks to influence the process" and that three UK political parties had "outlined additional powers ('The Vow') to voters after the electoral process had started, i.e. after postal ballots had been cast." (Tal-e-bot 2014)

When one considers these three examples, and there are many more, it is hard to believe that the media did not succumb to pressure exerted on them during the run-up to the independence referendum. Whatever the truth of the allegations about the media having been fed with selected or even wrong information, however, it is certain that the internet has been and is still spreading doubts. I am opposed to censorship, but I am also opposed to the blind belief on the part of the voter that makes censorship possible. The thought of a 'No' vote having been favoured by media manipulation, that is by censorship, is one that raises doubts about the voters' engagement. The information listed above was, after all, already in the public domain pre-referendum.

In general, however, it must be said that the level of engagement was exceptionally high. Scotland saw a turnout of 84.5 % and extended the voting right to 16 and 17 year-olds. Therefore, "people aren't disengaged from politics. It's just that it is now personal politics that captivates us. People go on marches, they volunteer for pressure groups, they organise petitions, they connect and mobilise online and come out and vote for their country's future." (Iannucci 2014) If we accept that this is what happened, then the referendum result was, in my opinion, valid, a decision made through self-determination by engaged voters.

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### **A Bit of Scotland on Your TV: *Outlander*** Melanie Sommer (Mainz / Germersheim)

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the cinema release of *Braveheart* is a nice excuse for having a closer look at another, more recent production dealing with rough-and-ready, kilted Highlanders at loggerheads with the English: *Outlander*, a US-American TV show based on the popular eight-book series by Diana Gabaldon, that premiered in the US in August last year.

Long before the series was first made available to watch in the UK this March on [Amazon Prime Instant Video](#), *Outlander* had caused a bit of a stir in Scotland, with fans and always ready conspiracy theorists suspecting the UK release to have been deliberately postponed to a date after September 2014 so as to prevent it from influencing the outcome of the indyref and giving otherwise reluctant voters the courage to vote YES (cf. <http://io9.com/is-the-uk-missing-out-on-outlander-because-of-scottish-1636158008>). This speculation recently turned out to be less farfetched than initially thought, when e-mails which seem to prove that David Cameron met with representatives of Sony prior to the referendum to discuss the show were leaked (<https://wikileaks.org/sony/emails/emailid/1118679>, <http://www.scotsman.com/what-s-on/tv-radio/david-cameron-met-sony-over-outlander-uk-release-1-3747339>).

*Outlander* tells the story of English nurse Claire Randall, who, on a vacation with her husband in Inverness during the aftermath of WWII, accidentally time travels to the Scottish Highlands in 1743 where she finds herself taken for an English spy. While applying her 20<sup>th</sup> century medical knowledge working as a healer for her captors/hosts, the MacKenzie clan, she tries to figure out a way to return to her own time, but gets more and more entangled in the clandestine preparations for what would become the Jacobite Rising of 1745. As is almost obligatory for historical fiction, there is also a romantic entanglement waiting for Claire in the broad-shouldered shape of Jamie Fraser, the outlawed nephew of the clan chief, who takes a shine to her. Meanwhile, in 1945, Claire's 20<sup>th</sup>-century husband, Frank, is desperately looking for his missing wife.

*Outlander* boasts every cliché one might expect from a period show set in Scotland: kilt wearing Highlanders with coarse manners, noble hearts and more than one axe to grind with their southern neighbours, an evil English antagonist, bagpipes, sunlit lochs, misty glens, and a good deal

of whisky, all of which must have the Scottish tourism industry leaping with joy, which indeed seems to be the case, as they are quite obviously counting on an *Outlander* effect – with a *Braveheart*-style massive increase in visits to Scotland – and are already offering numerous themed tours and even an interactive map on the website of the Scottish national tourist organisation, which is now introducing already existing articles about Scottish history (especially the ones dealing with the Jacobite Risings), places to visit and culture with references to and pictures from the series (<http://www.visitscotland.com/about/arts-culture/outlander/map/>).

But despite (or maybe because of?) the stereotypes, *Outlander* is wonderfully entertaining – my only suggestion for the second season: cut down on the voice-over narration. It's supposed to be a TV show and not an audiobook after all. The series features a refreshingly strong female protagonist (something you still don't come across too often on TV), a captivating story that luckily keeps its fantasy element down to a minimum, intriguing characters, a lavish production design and several starting points for the interested viewer to dig deeper into Scottish history and culture. There is Jacobitism and Charles Edward Stewart (aka Bonnie Prince Charlie), for instance, or Scottish folk songs and their history, starting with the *Skye Boat Song*, whose melody, accompanied with the (slightly altered) lyrics of Robert Louis Stevenson's poem *Sing Me a Song of a Lad That Is Gone*, features as the show's theme tune.

The beautiful scenery filmed on location, will do its best to bridge the gap between now and the viewers' next trip to Scotland. And there are also the Gaelic and Scottish English dialogues – luckily most actors playing Scots in *Outlander* are actually Scottish, which should prevent the US-produced show from being included among the "film crimes against the Scottish accent", a fate that befell its brave-hearted predecessor (<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-25413482>). For students of English, or indeed for everyone not born north of Hadrian's Wall, the Scottish accent at times poses a bit of a challenge, but much of the show's charm is owed to it, and after the first two episodes at the latest the appeal of the trilling 'r's and Scotticisms more than makes up for any difficulties. For any deficiencies in Gaelic that most non-Scottish viewers will have, there are a couple of short (and not really serious) language lessons on YouTube, featuring the cast and their Gaelic tutor that help the interested viewer with the pronunciation of difficult character and place names and key phrases, such as Jamie's pet name for Claire *Mo Nighean Donn* ("My brown-haired lass") and the less romantic but equally important *Slàinte Mhath!* ("Cheers!"), an expression that always comes in handy when visiting Scotland, no matter the century (cf. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gc-F5dv3rZg>).

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### **New Scottish Poetry**

[Harry Giles](#) is a writer and performer from Orkney, living in Edinburgh. He founded [Inky Fingers Spoken Word](#) and co-directs the live art platform [ANATOMY](#). He has published two pamphlets *Visa Wedding* ([Stewed Rhubarb](#), 2012) and *Oam: Poems fae Govanhill Baths* (Stewed Rhubarb, 2013); he was the 2009 BBC Scotland slam champion; and he won the 2012 [IdeasTap](#) national poetry competition. His participatory theatre has been programmed by such festivals as [Forest Fringe](#), [Buzzcut](#), NTI (Latvia), [Bunker](#) (Slovenia), and [CrisisArt](#) (Italy). His performance *What We Owe* was picked by the *Guardian's* best-of-the-Fringe 2013 roundup – in the 'But Is It Art?' category. 'The Drone Watches a US Presidential Debate from a Travelodge off the M18 Near Doncaster' is taken from the forthcoming *Tryptych #1: Harry Giles, [Marion McCready](#), [J.L. Williams](#)* (Vagabond Poets).

## **The Drone Watches a US Presidential Debate from a Travelodge off the M18 Near Doncaster**

One of these men will have his finger on her button.  
She dips a sensor into a bag of Doritos and closes

her shocking eyes, massaging the remote: mute  
on, mute off, mute on. This man is lying. This man

hasn't read a novel for four years. She can  
relate. This man's face is made from fluoro silicone

rubber, slick under studio lighting. She guesses he needs  
an oil change. She can relate. This man wears

a He-Man t-shirt in bed. He carries a Thundercats lunchbox.  
He makes his own sandwiches. He does not choose

his own tie. This man cannot look at a gun without weeping.  
This man is a prayer. This man's teeth are crawling  
with nanobots. They shine like a row of white crosses.  
Like fallout. The drone folds and unfolds her absentee ballot.

[With thanks to the [poet](#) and to Colin Waters of the [Scottish Poetry Library](#)]

### **(New) Media on Scotland**

(compiled by Katharina Leible, Sherry Ishak Abadeer,  
Andrea Schlotthauer & Melanie Sommer)

Subsections:

- **Post-Referendum Britain**
- **Referendum Results / Independence Issue**
- **(Scottish) Justice**
- **Smith Commission**
- **General Election**
- **Labour**
- **Financial Sector**
  - **UK Banks**
- **Media**
- **Creative Scotland**
- **Other Topics**
- **As Others See Scotland**

Reports in chronological order (beginning with the most recent articles).

### Post-Referendum Britain

An excellent and very fitting text on this topic has been written by [Irvine Welsh, "Engerland swings like a pendulum do", \*Bellacaledonia\* 08-04-15](#). It is, therefore, highly recommended.

["England's uncertain future", \*Guardian\* 13-03-15](#): "Rescuing the English – what will become of England now that imperial Britishness has departed and global capitalism is eating the nation's soul? Will it be discussed at all during the general election? It is time to retell the country's story involving everyone, argues Paul Kingsnorth. And it's time for the left to rediscover 'Little England.'"

[Farquharson, Kenny: "Scotland is British", \*Scotsman\* 13-03-15](#): "Our political leaders have yet to fully absorb the lessons of the independence referendum, writes Kenny Farquharson."

["Former SNP leader: Sturgeon should declare independence if UK votes to leave EU without Scots' backing", \*Herald\* 09-03-15](#)

"Toward Democracy? Parts 1-6", *National* 25-02-15 – 09-03-15

(["Toward Democracy?: Part Six", \*National\* 09-03-15](#))

(["Toward Democracy?: Part Five", \*National\* 02-03-15](#))

(["Toward Democracy?: Part Four", \*National\* 25-02-15](#))

(["Toward Democracy?: Part Three", \*National\* 25-02-15](#))

(["Toward Democracy?: Part Two", \*National\* 25-02-15](#))

(["Toward Democracy?: Part One", \*National\* 25-02-15](#))

["Toward Democracy? Part Six", \*National\* 09-03-15](#): "Reader, last week's article ended too abruptly."

["Toward Democracy? Part Five", \*National\* 02-03-15](#): "Most readers are not, like me, Glaswegian, and this fifth article is mainly about Glasgow councils, past and present. I believe my hometown has problems in common with other Scots localities, for which Glasgow may serve as a warning, if not example."

["Toward Democracy? Part Four", \*National\* 25-02-15](#): "I enjoy novels about the future, not just extreme science-fiction futures but those set only a few years ahead, especially when they deal with Scotland. Three of them, accurately or misleadingly, reflect our politics."

["Toward Democracy? Part Three", \*National\* 25-02-15](#): "For several years the British may have been right to boast that our health service was the best in the world. That time has passed."

["Toward Democracy? Part Two", \*National\* 25-02-15](#): "These articles will speak of some ways in which a successful SNP has become less radical. Here I will concentrate on Scotland as the home of Britain's nuclear submarine base, an air force base capable of nuclear strikes, and the British Nato bases."

["Toward Democracy? Part One", \*National\* 25-02-15](#): "Scotland under Labour was a one-party state for far too long. Let those we elect in future discuss how to improve things in law, land use, industry, and find good grounds for agreement without splitting over differences: a left-wing vice."

["SNP attacks union flags plan as a 'silly gimmick'", \*National\* 02-03-15](#): "A plan to display Union Jack flags on roads, bridges and other publicly funded infrastructure projects across Britain has been branded a 'silly gimmick', even before its official launch."

["2014: The Year of our Revolution", \*National\* 24-02-15](#): "As the year expired, an elderly lady materialised on TV sets across the land."

["How do we reform Britain? Wales may have the answer", \*Guardian\* 19-02-15](#): "All eyes may be on Scotland come election day, but Wales could teach us how to save our ailing union."

["An EU referendum will be a nightmare for Britain. But it is inevitable", \*Guardian\* 17-02-15](#): "A vote will spawn so many new headaches for the Tories that they may try to get it over with in 2016."

["Many 'English issues' are Scottish ones too. That's why the SNP's MPs will vote on them", \*Guardian\* 08-02-15](#): "Scotland's first minister says the aftermath of independence referendum is now driving the political debate across the UK."

["How to Save the Union \(Jeepers! Should I Tell Anyone?\)", \*Bella Caledonia\* 06-02-15](#): "I'm starting to think, at the back of my head anyway, about where we go next. How we try to govern ourselves in the new circumstances in which we find ourselves in the meantime, before the big constitutional re-arrangement that surely can't be avoided anymore. And it has to be together. It's going to be together. Both within a politically divided Scotland, and in one set of Atlantic Islands. We all have to live here, meaning Scotland, and here, meaning the Atlantic Isles. So I've come up with a plan to save the Union."

["Scotland is now a progressive nation, so get over it", \*Herald\* 06-02-15](#): "When I left Scotland as a teenager, I truly believed I was leaving behind one of the world's parochial backwaters, a place devoid of innovation with a serious excitement deficit. In other words, I was an utter numpty."

["Scotland: Breaking up the estates", \*Financial Times\* 05-02-15](#): "The Scottish National Party wants land reform to revive rural communities, but critics say the plan smacks of class war."

[Brown, Gordon: "Scotland didn't kill off the United Kingdom – but Cameron would", \*Guardian\* 03-02-15](#): "The Tories cynically want to give English MPs a veto and create two classes of MP in our parliament. It is a recipe for constitutional chaos."

["Demanding Relatives", \*Bella Caledonia\* 31-01-15](#): "Federalism, is, like 'Home Rule' and 'sustainability' one of those now catch-all phrases that has been drained of it's meaning after long periods of abuse. This allows it to be brought up over and over like some kind of Pavlovian treat, always, but never quite achievable."

["SNP demands answers on civil service", \*SNP\* 20-01-15](#): "The Scottish National Party has demanded answers on civil service impartiality from the UK's top mandarin, following an extraordinary admission from the most senior civil servant at the Treasury about his and his department's stance on the Scottish independence referendum."

["What to expect from the political scene in 2015", \*Scotsman\* 01-01-15](#): "In the first of a three-part series looking at the year ahead, Political Editor Tom Peterkin considers lie of the electoral land in 2015."



["Do Scottish 16- and 17-year-olds want to vote?" Guardian 18-12-14](#): "What do young Scots make of being some kind of political vanguard? How did this young cohort respond and react to being the first of their age to be awarded the franchise? More to the point, will they grasp this electoral opportunity and reinvigorate electoral politics with sustained future engagement, underpinning higher levels of turnout in the future?"

["English devolution: better to get it right than get it quickly", Guardian 17-12-14](#): "Is David Cameron sleepwalking into a breakup of the United Kingdom for the sake of tactical party advantage?"

["The Guardian view on English votes for English laws: devolution for England is essential, but not like this", Guardian 16-12-14](#): "The UK needs to be remade, but William Hague's plans are a non-starter."

["When conspiracy theories enter the mainstream, it's time to worry", Guardian 25-11-14](#): "Secret oil fields in the North Sea, 'powerful forces' conspiring against Ed Miliband, the EU to blame for Russia pouring arms into Ukraine. Enough already."

["Ten Things to Consider About RIC2014", Bella Caledonia 24-11-14](#): "The Radical Independence Conference will go down as a huge, huge success. According to no less an authority than Tariq Ali, it will be noted as a pivotal moment in the development of radical ideas in Scotland. He may well be right. This really was not simply a one off event which people enjoyed and are going to forget about."

["We're better together with Europe, so we must learn from the Scotland campaign", Guardian 17-11-14](#): "The eurosceptics could win the in-out referendum before it's even begun. We must make the case for the EU now."

["How a decade of misguided war has corroded the idea of Britain", Guardian 12-11-14](#): "Persistent unease about the legitimacy of military action in Iraq and Afghanistan has left a toxic political legacy."

["The Guardian view on Scotland and the EU referendum: the question needs an answer", Guardian 29-10-14](#): "Nicola Sturgeon's call for a Scottish veto moves the debate about the future of the union onto fertile territory."

["If you want to kill off the United Kingdom, there is no better way", Guardian 17-10-14](#): "English votes for English laws is a kneejerk response to Ukip which shows a disregard for smaller nations."

["Scots referendum sparked sense of English identity", Scotsman 15-10-14](#): "English identity is on the rise thanks to perceived discontent south of the Border that Scotland has an 'unfair advantage' in the way it is governed, a new survey has found."

### **Referendum Results / Independence Issue**

["The nightmare of sleepwalking into another independence referendum", Herald 20-03-15](#)

["The 12 Best Bits Of Alex Salmond's Referendum Diary", Buzz Feed 19-03-15](#): "Alex Salmond has released his diary of the referendum campaign, *The Dream Shall Never Die: 100 Days that*

*Changed Scotland Forever*. We've given it a quick read – and here are the most extraordinary stories, claims, and revelations."

[Whitaker, Andrew: "Who will Salmond bring to book?" \*Scotsman\* 10-03-15](#): "It may be unfair to pre-judge the former first minister's account of the independence referendum, says Andrew Whitaker."

[McColm, Euan: "Don't hold your breath for Indyref 2", \*Scotsman\* 08-03-15](#): "What a time it is for Scottish Nationalists. Last year's independence referendum may have been lost – and by a fair old margin at that – but from defeat has come strength."

[Farquharson, Kenny: "To be a Nat, or not to be a Nat", \*Scotsman\* 05-03-15](#): "Does it matter if the SNP is split between those happy to call themselves nationalists and those who are not, asks Kenny Farquharson."

[Torrance, David: "Britain is neither 'broken' nor a failed state", \*Herald\* 02-03-15](#)

["How social media had an impact on the independence debate", \*Herald\* 24-02-15](#)

["Poll results: Flower of Scotland is your choice for an independent Scotland's national anthem", \*Scot goes Pop\* 18-02-15](#)

["Scotland fans back Flower of Scotland for anthem", \*Scotsman\* 13-02-15](#): "It has been the Tartan Army's rallying cry at Scotland's international football matches for decades. But the national team's famous supporters only narrowly voted in favour of Flower of Scotland being recognised as the country's anthem."

["Clegg: Scotland would become independent 'in a heartbeat' if the UK left the EU", \*Herald\* 05-02-15](#)

[Jamieson, Bill: "Wealthiest Scots behind SNP surge", \*Scotsman\* 04-02-15](#): "The opinion poll boost for the Nationalists is not coming from Scotland's poorest and most deprived, writes Bill Jamieson."

["Sturgeon: getting more SNP MPs is interim step to next indyref", \*Herald\* 25-01-15](#): "The Scottish National Party can be a 'progressive force' in UK politics, according to leader Nicola Sturgeon."

["More powers for Scotland - what does it mean?" \*BBC News\* 22-01-15](#): "The UK government has published plans for new Scottish Parliament powers, in the wake of September's vote against independence. Holyrood is on course to get new tax, financial and other responsibilities, but the proposals have provoked a political row, with the SNP describing them as a watered down version of what was first promised. So what does this all mean for Scotland and the rest of the UK?"

[Maddox, David: "History repeating itself for Lib Dems", \*Scotsman\* 19-01-15](#): "There is a certain irony that, in the same week as the Westminster parliament celebrates its 750<sup>th</sup> birthday, the UK government should be laying down the draft clauses to remove further power from it and devolve it to Holyrood."

["Quarter of youngest Scottish voters have joined a party since referendum", \*Guardian\* 16-01-14](#): "Online survey also found two-thirds of 16- and 17-year-olds were inspired by the campaign to find out more about politics."

["England-only votes: What are the options?" BBC News 06-01-15](#): "With the Scottish Parliament set to get more powers following the country's rejection of independence, what are the chances of wider change across the UK, including the idea of 'English votes for English laws'?"

[Peterkin, Tom: "No lines drawn under independence", Scotsman 31-12-14](#): "The No campaign may have won the battle but it has not apparently won the war, finds tom Peterkin."

["Move on from the referendum, says Carmichael, as he reveals a £15bn black hole in the SNP's independence blueprint", Herald 30-12-14](#): "Alistair Carmichael has urged Scots to 'move on' from the independence referendum but simultaneously highlighted how plunging oil prices would have left the Scottish Government's forecasts for the first three years of independence £15.5bn wide of the mark."

[Monteith, Brian: "Second indyref shouldn't be feared", Scotsman 29-12-14](#): "Anti-separatists have every right to want to avoid another referendum – but they should not fear it, writes Brian Monteith."

["5 things we've learnt from the Cochrane/Macwhirter/Torrance books about the Scottish independence referendum", Guardian 23-12-14](#): "At least three books have come out in the last few weeks about the Scottish independence referendum. (...) All three books have their merits, although none stands out as the definitive book on the subject. Of the three, Cochrane's is the most revelatory, Macwhirter's is the most cerebral and thought-provoking and Torrance's is the most fair-minded."

["New devolved tax deal 'may not be feasible or fair'", BBC News 18-12-14](#): "The cross-party agreement on devolving more tax powers to Holyrood may not be feasible or fair, it has been claimed."

["The real story of the Scottish referendum: the final days of the fight for independence", Guardian 16-12-14](#): "As the vote neared, Britain's breakup seemed a real possibility. In the second part of their series, based on extensive interviews with key players, Severin Carrel, Nicholas Watt and Patrick Wintour track the final days of an epic campaign."

["The real story of the Scottish referendum: Britain on the brink", Guardian 15-12-14](#): "It was the most seismic political event for a generation. In the first of a two-part series, based on extensive interviews, Severin Carrel, Nicholas Watt and Patrick Wintour tell the behind-the scenes story of how the union was saved."

["Alistair Darling's 5am plea to PM ignored after Scottish no vote", Guardian 15-12-14](#): "Ex-chancellor warned David Cameron that plans to restrict Scottish MPs' voting rights would throw lifeline to SNP."

["Cameron tells Scots 'focus on power you have'", Scotsman 15-12-14](#): "David Cameron will tell the leaders of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that it is time to concentrate on best using the powers they have, rather than debating what more could be devolved."

[Monteith, Brian: "Scots may vote Yes to an EU exit", Scotsman 14-12-14](#): "Our relationship with Europe is just as worthy of consideration as the one we have chosen to continue with the UK, writes Brian Monteith."

["Salmond: There will be another indyref in my lifetime", \*Herald\* 11-12-14](#)

[Kane, Pat: "SNP Westminster alliance could reform UK", \*Scotsman\* 11-12-14](#): "An alliance of SNP, Plaid Cymru and Greens could help Miliband rule and bring about 'whole-island reform', writes Pat Kane."

["Colonial' deal may safeguard Scottish Parliament", \*Scotsman\* 04-12-14](#): "Scotland could be handed a similar deal to former UK colonies through a 'charter of autonomy' to guarantee Holyrood's constitutional future, MSPs have been told."

[Peterkin, Tom: "SNP councillors' bonfire of vanity", \*Scotsman\* 03-12-14](#): "In this post-referendum era, more respects should be given to the views of others. Furthermore, it is worth remembering that burning documents does not have a healthy historical precedent."

[Wilson, Andrew: "Scots must set independence pace", \*Scotsman\* 30-11-14](#): "I read the Smith Commission outcome last week and watched the reaction. My overwhelming feeling was a yearning for us all to just pause, draw breath and savour a moment when we progressed together."

[Riddoch, Lesley: "This compromise just won't cut it", \*Scotsman\* 30-11-14](#): "The public is ready for proper solutions, but the politicians want to keep the real power at Westminster, writes Lesley Riddoch."

["What Scotland deal would mean for UK", \*BBC News\* 27-11-14](#): "If Scotland gets the powers promised to it by the Smith commission, the consequences will be felt across the whole of the United Kingdom."

["Veteran SNP MSP predicts a second referendum in 2017", \*Herald\* 23-11-14](#)

[Kerevan, George: "Is it too late for new radicals?" \*Scotsman\* 19-11-14](#): "With left-wing voters flocking to the SNP, the Radical Independence Campaign has its work cut out, says George Kerevan."

["Carmichael: I want to hit reset button on the relationship between Holyrood and Westminster", \*Herald\* 12-11-14](#): "The Scottish Secretary has said he wants to 'hit the reset button' on the relationship between the UK and Scottish governments and heal the divisions caused by the independence referendum."

["Ex-SNP boss Gordon Wilson unsurprised by No vote", \*Scotsman\* 04-11-14](#): "A failure to concentrate on the economy adequately during the debate on Scottish independence made it 'impossible' to clinch a Yes victory, according to former SNP leader Gordon Wilson."

["Campaign for 'meaningful' home rule launched", \*Scotsman\* 03-11-14](#): "Flagship proposals to hand new powers to Holyrood are in danger of failing to produce a 'visionary' deal to meet the needs of post-referendum Scotland, a new cross-party campaign for home rule has warned."

[Macwhirter, Iain: "Why the Yes movement still has a role to play", \*Herald\* 02-11-14](#)

["Scotland would now vote for independence, poll finds", \*Guardian\* 01-11-14](#): "Just six weeks after majority voted no, YouGov survey finds 52% of people in favour of leaving UK."

["In Scotland the old politics have crumbled, as they once did in Ireland", \*Guardian\* 22-10-14:](#) "In the recent referendum young voters opted for independence. As with Ireland in 1916, a new mood has taken hold and change seems inevitable."

["Middle class obscured in a Scots myth", \*BBC News\* 18-10-14:](#) "Studies have been trying to establish which groups tended to vote 'yes' or 'no' - and why."

[Wilson, Brian: "Let's move on from 'neverendum'", \*Scotsman\* 17-10-14:](#) "Falling oil prices prove the financial case for independence was based on false premises, writes Brian Wilson."

["Clashes continue over new Scottish powers", \*BBC News\* 17-10-14](#)

[Jones, Peter: "SNP can't take No for answer", \*Scotsman\* 13-10-14:](#) "SNP plans for increased powers at Holyrood represent independence by stealth and would make UK unworkable, writes Peter Jones."

["Scottish devolution 'command paper' published", \*BBC News\* 13-10-14:](#) "The UK government has formally published plans on giving more powers to the Scottish Parliament, following the vote against independence."

["Clegg 'guarantor' for new Scottish powers", \*BBC News\* 03-10-14:](#) "Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has declared himself the 'guarantor' in government over delivering more powers for Scotland."

["Taking a turn for the Orwellian?" \*BBC News\* 02-10-14:](#) "Perhaps it is post referendum ennui, perhaps it is the stimulating sight of the mighty United at the top of the league - but a curious detachment crept up on me during questions to the first minister."

["Is the campaign for Scottish independence over?" \*Guardian\* 02-10-14:](#) "Two weeks after the referendum, yes campaigners energised by the independence movement are looking for a new purpose."

### (Scottish) Justice

Robin McAlpine, "Scottish Nationalism and the Battle for Social Justice", *teleSur* (= "a Latin American multimedia platform oriented to lead and promote the unification of the peoples of the SOUTH", used as a geopolitical "concept that promotes the struggle of people for peace, self-determination, respect for Human Rights and Social Justice." "We are the space and a voice for the construction of a new communications order." (<http://www.telesur.tv/english/pages/about.html>)) 5-5-15 (<http://www.telesur.tv/english/opinion/Scottish-Nationalism-and-the-Battle-for-Social-Justice-20150505-0026.html>). The text puts forward very strong arguments for social justice, shows how necessary it is, and explains why Scottish nationalism, as represented by the SNP, is very different from right-wing nationalism. McAlpine in this way also nicely reveals how the 'Common Weal' (of which he is the head) establishes links to other grassroots organisations in very different areas of the world, which in their own way promote what the 'Common Weal' stands for, too, and which has nothing to do with nationalism of a negative kind. This substantial difference in Scotland is often totally disregarded or wilfully neglected by mainstream media (cf. the **Media** section below).



["Don't be fooled by George Osborne's cheer, economic apocalypse is looming", \*Times\* 21-03-15:](#) "Shortly before George Osborne rose to deliver his archly political, feelgood budget, cramming in the odd taxpayer-funded joke, a less well known but equally authoritative figure was warning of the apocalypse."

["Scotland's poor are too busy surviving to be 'engaged'", \*Guardian\* 21-03-15:](#) "Penury, starvation and homelessness are the main concerns of many of our poorest neighbours."

["Former British Gas boss criticised for 'lavish' windfalls put in charge of pay at HSBC", \*This is Money\* 20-03-15:](#) "Sam Laidlaw, who sits on the bank's board, received up to £5m a year at energy giant Centrica. But he is now being put in charge of setting pay levels at the embattled banking giant following a major boardroom reshuffle."

["How corrupt is Britain?" \*Transparency International UK\* 20-03-15:](#) "That is a question that is difficult to answer of any country. Most means of measurement are imperfect; corruption is by its nature a hidden activity; and at times the victims are unaware, or do not know the cause, of their suffering and injustice."

["Who wants to be a millionaire? Peter Osborne on Tony Blair", \*New Statesman\* 19-03-15:](#) "Peter Osborne reviews *Blair Inc*, an investigation into Tony Blair's financial dealings."

["People's Parliament to discuss How Corrupt is Britain?" \*Tax Justice\* 19-03-15:](#) "British people have long prided themselves on having a relatively corruption-free liberal democracy. Corruption, as the old saying goes, is something that happens in another country. Well that depends on how you define corruption."

["A People's University: Time for us all to learn about our Scottish homeland", \*National\* 19-03-15:](#) "Is it time for a People's University to take advantage of the incredible appetite for knowledge about Scotland since the referendum?"

["To austerity and beyond — the UK coalition's record in power", \*Financial Times\* 18-03-15:](#) "After 13 years of Labour rule, the Conservatives formed a coalition with the Liberal Democrats in 2010, on the promise of getting the economy back on track after the 2008 financial meltdown. Their plan centred on spending cuts that would hit many families in the pocket. But it was hoped that a stronger economy would leave households better off by 2015. Here, we look at how it all adds up."

["What you need to know about the Budget 2015", \*New Economics Foundation\* 18-03-15:](#) "Chancellor George Osborne delivered his last Budget of the current Parliament on Wednesday, a statement that showed once again how the government is failing to address any of the deep-rooted economic issues we face."

["Benefit Sanctions and Jeremy Clarkson - The Hell of Thatcher's Creation", \*Huffington Post\* 17-03-15:](#) "Benefit sanctions and Jeremy Clarkson. What more evidence do we need that Britain in 2015 is the hell of Thatcher's creation? As she lies a-mouldering in her grave, the Iron Lady can take satisfaction in the knowledge that she did her job well."

["Domestic Extremist", \*Bella Caledonia\* 11-03-15:](#) "Welcome to Powellite Britain (2015), where old men write of rivers of blood and BBC presenters talk of niggers and slopes, where people can't make up their minds whether immigrants are here to steal jobs or loll around on benefits."

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["Press Summary: Carlyle \(Appellant\) v Royal Bank of Scotland Plc \(Respondent\)", \*Supreme Court\* 11-03-15](#)

["There's more to a nation's wellbeing than cash", \*National\* 10-03-15](#): "Justice has to take precedence. It is not about the money.' Those are the words of one of the most respected figures in Scottish public life."

["British MPs condemn 'unacceptable' TTIP threat to environment", \*War on Want\* 10-03-15](#): "The House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) made the claim in the report of its investigation into the potential impact of the trade treaty being negotiated between the EU and USA."

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[Dinwoodie, Robbie: "When the miners fought austerity", \*Herald\* 05-03-15](#): "For some the miners' strike, which ended 30 years ago this week, was a matter of high politics, the battle between Mrs Thatcher and her self-proclaimed 'enemy within'."

["Wunden bis heute nicht geheilt", \*Deutschlandfunk\* 03-03-15](#): "Der Bergarbeiterstreik von 1984 bis 1985 war einer der längsten und härtesten in der Geschichte der britischen Arbeiterbewegung. Über hunderttausend Bergleute gingen ein Jahr lang in den Ausstand. Der Streik endete heute vor 30 Jahren mit einer Niederlage der Minenarbeiter - und hat tiefe Wunden hinterlassen."

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["Made in Britain", \*Bella Caledonia\* 02-03-15](#): "[#fundedbyukgov](#) has spawned a whole new comedy genre. It's the hashtag for Parody Britain. The botched brainchild of a nationalism running low on soft-power. The whole Made in Britain flag-waving bonanza discloses a deep uncertainty by the British politicians about the degenerating project and shaky identity of Britain and Britishness."

["Essay of the week: the good politicians guide", \*Herald\* 01-03-15](#): "It is a spectacle that has almost become as much a part of Westminster life as the state opening of Parliament."

["Feature: Inside Scotland's Jewish community at a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise", \*National\* 27-02-15](#): "Hate crimes against Jews in Scotland more than doubled between 2013 and 2014. Although the overall number remains relatively low – just 31 in total last year – the rising incidence of anti-semitism is making some Jews nervous."

["Pinkoes and Traitors by Jean Seaton review – my father, the BBC and a very British coup", \*Guardian\* 27-02-15](#): "The official history of the BBC misrepresents the removal of the director general in 1987, argues his son Seumas Milne. And the corporation."

["How will Scotland's social policy change with further devolution?" \*Guardian\* 25-02-15](#): "There is nothing inherently English or Scottish (or Welsh or Northern Irish) about a desire for social justice. The same problems are seen throughout the UK."

["Why I have resigned from the Telegraph", \*Open Democracy/Our Kingdom\* 17-02-15](#): "The coverage of HSBC in Britain's *Telegraph* is a fraud on its readers. If major newspapers allow corporations to influence their content for fear of losing advertising revenue, democracy itself is in peril."

["Nigel Farage and the future of the NHS", \*BBC News\* 20-01-15](#): "Nigel Farage tried and failed to persuade his party to back his view that the NHS should be replaced with an insurance based system like they have in many parts of the world."

["Victims of domestic abuse 'wait months for justice'", \*Scotsman\* 08-12-14](#): "Access to justice for victims of domestic abuse is being 'seriously constrained' by court closures and delays, it has been warned."

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["Campaigners unveil child poverty map of UK", \*BBC News\* 15-10-14](#): "Campaigners have published a child poverty map of the UK, which they said showed 'shocking levels of hardship' across the country."

### **Smith Commission**

["MoD tried to interfere in Smith Commission to limit further devolution", \*Common Space\* 13-03-15](#): "The Ministry of Defence (MoD) tried to stop any further devolution over matters like health and safety and the Crown Estate as it feared any new package could affect its operations, despite defence never being up for consideration itself in the Smith Commission."

["Watchdog orders Daily Record to publish correction over false Smith Commission 'vow delivered' claims", \*Common Space\* 23-02-15](#): "The Daily Record had claimed that the Scottish Government's budget of £30bn was set to increase to about £50bn."

["Pivotal Failure in Cameron's Proposals on Smith", \*Bella Caledonia\* 25-01-15](#): "On Wednesday 21st January, the current Westminster Government published its detailed proposals on the implementation of Smith. The intention of Smith was to give more powers, greater flexibility, and more responsibility to the Scottish Parliament."

["David Cameron has broken his 'vow' to the Scottish people", \*Guardian\* 22-01-15](#): "A Westminster veto on welfare policy is an unacceptable dilution of the Smith commission package."

[Maciver, Andy: "Forget Smith Commission report", \*Scotsman\* 12-12-14](#): "Westminster needs to realise that independence or federalism are only realistic options for Scotland, says Andy Maciver."

["Smith package 'incoherent' and 'unsustainable' warn academics", \*Herald\* 12-12-14](#)

["How Scotland's laws are passed", \*Guardian\* 12-12-14](#): "How does the Scottish parliament make decisions about Scotland? One of its most important roles is passing laws. Let us break that process down for you."

[Gray, Iain: "Smith Agreement is no piecemeal package", \*Scotsman\* 03-12-14](#): "The evening of the Smith Agreement found me sitting in a BBC studio with four of my fellow commissioners."

["Lord Smith: future UK Govt. could resolve Holyrood...but they will suffer a plague of boils if they try", \*Herald\* 02-12-14](#)

[Jones, Peter: "Share and share alike, or maybe not", \*Scotsman\* 01-12-14](#): "The Smith Commission proposals will tax the smartest brains and could leave the rest of us even more puzzled, writes Peter Jones."

["Scotland's thrilling new powers will make English politics more reactionary than ever", \*Guardian\* 28-11-14](#): "It's brilliant to see my home country heading slowly but inexorably towards social democracy – but it comes at an awful cost south of the border."

[McMillan, Joyce: "Sweeping powers? Give us a break", \*Scotsman\* 28-11-14](#): "Never mind all those claims that the Smith Commission has delivered devo-max. It's not even close, says Joyce McMillan."

["Devolution of tax powers won't shut down the Scottish independence debate", \*Guardian\* 27-11-14](#): "We don't know the winners and losers yet but the Smith commission's proposals are already being questioned."

["The Guardian view on Scottish devolution: patchwork power UK", \*Guardian\* 27-11-14](#): "The Smith commission has done a decent job in picking which powers to delegate. But no lasting settlement will be achieved until the constitution of Britain as a whole is overhauled."

["New powers for Scotland: key points from the Smith commission", \*Guardian\* 27-11-14](#): "Main points set out by body charged with formulating devolution commitments on further powers for Scottish parliament."

["The Smith Commission", \*Smith Commission\* 27-11-14](#): "Report of the Smith Commission for further devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament."

[Macwhirter, Iain: "Please make sure you have your say on more powers", \*Herald\* 23-10-14](#): "Across Scotland this week, concerned citizens are penning preambles to their submissions to the Smith Commission on the constitutional future of Scotland."

[Jones, Peter: "How Union works eludes all parties", \*Scotsman\* 20-10-14](#): "Smith's Commission faces a daunting task when no party seems to understand UK's economic system, writes Peter Jones."

### **General Election**

These are just ten sources dealing with the unexpected result of the general election: 1) a first effort to describe the results at *Common Space*, "What the hell happened? Explaining the general election

result" (<https://commons.scot/articles/1272/what-the-hell-happened-explaining-the-general-election-result>). 2) A strong demand for federalism now by George Kerevan, "Federalism or bust – SNP mandate now goes far beyond Smith powers", *The National* 9-5-15 (<http://www.thenational.scot/news/george-kerevan-federalism-or-bust-snp-mandate-now-goes-far-beyond-smith-powers.2787>). 3 + 4) A clear statement on the disastrous results of the Labour Party by Kevin McKenna, "Scottish Labour has only itself to blame for its crucifixion", *Guardian* 10-5-15 (<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/10/scottish-labour-jim-murphy-resign>). Tom Devine adds an historical analysis on "How Scottish Labour came to be routed in the general election", *Herald* 9-5-15 (<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/how-scottish-labour-came-to-be-routed-in-the-general-election.125566758>).

5 and 5a) Chuka Umunna, "Where Labour went wrong – and what we must do to put it right", *Guardian* 9-5-15 (<http://gu.com/p/4895x>). Labour MP for Streatham, shadow business secretary, the son of a poor Nigerian immigrant, then a successful City lawyer, Umunna might be the next leader of Labour. Do you find him convincing here? Paul Mason clearly is not convinced (<http://gu.com/p/488m3>), even says "I don't want to be English", and makes some good points against Umunna. Leaving Westminster, e.g., really won't help anybody, will just cost money that's better spent elsewhere. Labour must change its politics, ideology, thinking, and acting. It's got no connections with the general public, which is also the case with the SPD in Germany. But will they manage to do this? It's an enormous challenge, a Herculean task, but absolutely necessary for both parties' survival. And the SNP will need a strong Labour party as progressive as many people in Scotland already are, who want their politicians to be forward-looking and creative, too. Labour and the SPD need to change fundamentally, or they'll lose their political influence for a long time.

6) "Where the votes switched – and why. The key lessons for the parties", *Guardian* 10-5-15 (<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/may/10/election-2015-where-the-votes-switched-and-why>).

7) Iain Macwhirter draws another strong conclusion: "Extinction level event that points to SNP no longer being part of UK as we understand it today", *Herald* 9-5-15 (<http://www.heraldscotland.com/comment/columnists/iain-macwhirter-extinction-level-event-that-points-to-snp-no-longer-being-part-of.125543721>).

8) Lee Williams is already sure about what the Tory government will do, namely "Scrap the Human Rights Act and keep TTIP", *Independent* 8-5-15 (<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/scrap-the-human-rights-act-and-keep-ttip-heres-what-you-voted-for-and-will-get-with-a-tory-government-britain-10235374.html>).

9) The revelatory front pages in the dominant newspapers. In case you are not yet aware of the profound differences between the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Mail*, just compare them at <http://www.theguardian.com/media/gallery/2015/may/08/election-2015-the-front-pages-in-pictures>.

Cf. the section on the **Media** below for insights into media neutrality and bias.

10) But let's end on a positive note with Neal Ascherson's firm belief that "For Scotland, independence day has already dawned", *Guardian* 10-5-15 (<http://gu.com/p/489cx>), finishing with the comforting statement "So, relax England! You'll feel so much better when it's over."

In addition to the political results and effects, another question needs an answer: why have the pollsters been so utterly wrong? Cf. the *Huffington Post* 10-5-15 on "British Pollsters Shamefaced After Getting British Election Badly Wrong" ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/08/british-pollsters-election-wrong\\_n\\_7241346.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/08/british-pollsters-election-wrong_n_7241346.html)).

[May 2015: An election site by the \*New Statesman\*](#)

["General election: lessons from Scotland's recent political history", \*Guardian\* 20-03-15](#): "Scotland's election result is the single factor most likely to shape the next government. No combination of parties would have the required numbers without the votes of the SNP."



["George Osborne, your budget is a pathetic bribe - thankfully the UK public haven't bought it", \*International Business Times\* 20-03-15](#): "Neither version of the coalition's budget is likely to turn the election campaign on its head – which means neither version is ever likely to be implemented."

["Welcome to the election. But only if you're a hardworking family", \*Guardian\* 20-03-15](#): "There's no denying it, over-firmly or otherwise: political language is a turnoff for many voters. Now we want to see your (least) favourite examples."

["Dame Judi Dench joins cast of election night drama", \*BBC\* 20-03-15](#): "Dame Judi Dench has been cast in a ground-breaking new stage play set in a fictional polling station on UK election night."

["UK Shifted Left Under Coalition, Study Claims", \*Sky News\* 20-03-15](#): "Academics say the results are a warning to the Tories but point out Labour is struggling to attract support despite the trend."

["An English Labourman speaks", \*Bella Caledonia\* 19-03-15](#): "Last summer in England, many Labour supporters were engaged and enthused by the independence campaign. It seemed to be coming from the same place that many of us had been trying to approach, only articulating our desires with a clearer voice. Sadly, it turns out not enough of us were listening properly."

["Will we get a Scotland-only instant reaction poll after the leaders' debate?" \*Scot goes Pop\* 19-03-15](#): "If we only get GB-wide reaction polls, that won't really tell us anything useful about Nicola Sturgeon's performance - you could easily imagine her being judged the debate's best performer in a Scottish poll, but only being ranked fourth or fifth in a GB-wide poll."

[Dunn, Ian: "The necessary death of Scottish Labour", \*Common Space\* 19-03-15](#): "For all the talk of coalitions and polls, the real story of the General Election in Scotland is the looming annihilation of one of the most successful political parties in post-war Europe: Scottish Labour."

["Labour have said they don't want my vote. So where am I supposed to go now?" \*New Statesman\* 18-03-15](#): "Labour have swallowed the Conservatives' rhetoric about 'us and them'. But I'm one of 'them', so where does that leave me?"

["The Budget showed Osborne's greatest skill: the ability to rebrand his failure as success", \*New Statesman\* 18-03-15](#): "The Chancellor has made a virtue of coalition government and of missing his deficit targets."

["Scottish Greens hand in 10,000+ petition to STV over TV debate absence", \*Common Space\* 17-03-15](#): "The Scottish Greens handed in a petition containing over 10,000 signatories on Monday to the STV offices in a bid to exert pressure on the broadcaster over its plans to hold a General Election television debate with every party in the Scottish Parliament represented except the Greens."

["New Women For Independence team to take on broadcasters, imprisonment and political parties", \*Common Space\* 17-03-15](#): "The first annual general meeting of Women For Independence (WFI) took place in Perth on Saturday and pinpointed a number of campaigning priorities for the year ahead."

["Sturgeon: I'd probably vote Green if I lived in England", \*Herald\* 17-03-15](#): "Nicola Sturgeon has come as close as she may ever do to urging people to vote Labour; in England that is."

["Sturgeon is playing a clever game", \*Herald\* 17-03-15](#): "It is a pity that Ed Miliband timed his announcement ruling out a formal coalition with the SNP on the day of Nicola Sturgeon's latest speech to the metropolitan thinking classes in London."

["Ed Miliband: Labour will not form coalition with SNP", \*Guardian\* 16-03-15](#): "Labour leader moves to shut down Conservatives' claim that he is planning to assume power on coattails of Scottish National party."

["Election 2015: Academics predict Labour will win 20 more seats than Tories and form next government", \*May 2015\* 16-03-15](#): "Polling Observatory's maiden seat forecast is in stark contrast to five other election forecasts, which predict a Tory 'win' in May."

[Lawson, Neal: "Why Labour must do a deal with the SNP", \*New Statesmen\* 16-03-15](#): "A more social democratic Britain can be achieved, and Scottish Labour's recovery set in train, if a deal is done between Labour and the SNP."

["The 8 key points from today's YouGov Scotland poll \(none are good for Labour\)", \*May2015\* 13-03-15](#): "The SNP surge hasn't faded and seems unlikely to – most SNP voters have decided how to vote."

"General Election 2015: Parts 1-2", *National* 06-03-15 – 13-03-15  
 ("General Election 2015: Part 2, Argyll & Bute and a land that time forgot", *National* 13-03-15)  
 ("General Election 2015: Part 1, Glasgow Central", *National* 06-03-15)

["General Election 2015: Part 2, Argyll & Bute and a land that time forgot", \*National\* 13-03-15](#): "Vestiges of Dunoon's day-tripper heyday remain dotted along the swash-flecked esplanade."

["General Election 2015: Part 1, Glasgow Central", \*National\* 06-03-15](#): "For the first part of a weekly series in which The National will explore some of Scotland's key constituencies, Peter Geoghegan spends time in Glasgow Central and finds that nothing is how it once was."

["Everything we're hearing about this election feels like spam email", \*Guardian\* 11-03-15](#): "Scaremongering about the SNP, denial about coalitions and a tedious debate about debates are distracting us from the fact the UK is pulling apart."

["Ex-Labour MP calls on party to support Scottish independence if it loses General Election", \*Common Space\* 11-03-15](#): "Scottish Labour should prepare to abandon its support for the UK and back independence, according to the independent MP for Falkirk."

["Alles ist möglich", \*Deutschlandfunk\* 11-03-15](#): "Großbritannien steuert auf eine völlig unvorhersehbare Parlamentswahl am 7. Mai zu. Wenn keine stabile Mehrheit der Konservativen oder der Labour-Partei zustande kommt, drohen Destabilisierung, Legitimitäts- und Verfassungskrise. Grund dafür sei unter anderem das ungerechte, veraltete Wahlsystem."

["Election 2015: Your complete guide to predictions about Scotland and the SNP: Can the SNP win more than 50 seats in May? We run through every seat in Scotland", \*May2015\* 11-03-15](#): "Last week, Lord Ashcroft's latest batch of seat polls confirmed that the SNP could win more than 50 seats in May. Ever since he released his first round of Scottish polls last month, *May2015* has predicted Scotland's nationalists would win nearly every seat in Scotland."

["A general election campaign that is turning into a vile witchhunt", \*Herald\* 10-03-15](#): "The prospect of SNP participation in a future government of the UK was always going to rile a certain number of extremists south of the border."

["Every Tory attack on the SNP is another blow to the union", \*Guardian\* 09-03-15](#): "By scaremongering about a possible Labour/SNP government, the Tories have turned from champions of the union to its inadvertent saboteurs."

["The union is once again at risk – thanks to Labour", \*Guardian\* 07-03-15](#): "The party doesn't understand that by siding with the Tories on the referendum it alienated many voters forever."

["TV-Duell ohne Cameron?" \*Deutschlandfunk\* 06-03-15](#): "Der konservative Premier David Cameron kämpft für seine Wiederwahl in 62 Tagen, der Labour-Oppositionsführer Ed Miliband will ihn ablösen. Schon jetzt tobt eine heftige Debatte, ob es Fernsehdebatten der Spitzenkandidaten geben soll. Bei der vergangenen Wahl wurden sie von 22 Millionen Briten verfolgt."

["Changing Paisley: SNP's youngest candidate Mhairi Black on media battles and how she can beat Douglas Alexander", \*Common Space\* 06-03-15](#): "In Paisley - like in many central belt towns of Scotland - General Elections have passed with laborious regularity. In all 18 UK General Elections since 1945 the south of Paisley has voted Labour. But that might be about to change."

["Public information or propaganda?" \*BBC News\* 04-03-15](#): "More powers have been promised to Holyrood after the general election in May."

["The Real Alternative", \*Bella Caledonia\* 04-03-15](#): "In terms of real political shifts in British politics, it's clear we are still living through historical change. Alex Massie writes: 'We've not seen anything like this, you know, since Sinn Féin won a landslide in the Irish portion of the 1918 election. And you will remember what happened after that.'"

["The campaign state of play – plus latest marginal", \*Lord Ashcroft Polls\* 04-03-15](#): "There is plenty of time for movement before polling day. For the reasons I explained earlier, many voters have dilemmas to resolve over the next nine weeks. And as these numbers show, the outcome really will come down to the results in individual constituencies."

["Labour urges rejection of anti-SNP alliance", \*Scotsman\* 01-03-15](#): "Labour last night urged its supporters to reject a new grassroots campaign set up to combat the rise of the SNP by providing advice on tactical voting."

["UKIP Is Going To Stand At Least 40 Candidates In Scotland", \*Buzz Feed\* 21-02-15](#): "BuzzFeed News went along to UKIP Scotland's election campaign launch and spoke to the people hoping to become Scotland's first UKIP MPs."

["UKIP 'to stand in every Scots seat' at general election", \*BBC News\* 21-02-15](#): "UKIP has said it hopes to field candidates in every seat in Scotland at the general election as the party formally launched its campaign."

["Scottish Tory conference: Past, present and future", \*BBC News\* 20-02-15](#): "Coalition was much on the mind of David Mundell as he opened the Scottish Conservative conference in Edinburgh today. Not, you understand, for his own party in the future."

["Tories up six points in latest ICM poll", \*Guardian\* 16-02-15](#): "Conservative party gains in voter support despite week that saw them under pressure over wealthy donors and HSBC revelations."

["Political tie-up between Miliband, Sturgeon likeliest option after elections, research shows", \*Herald\* 07-02-15](#): "A Labour-SNP coalition is the most likely outcome of the General Election, new polling research suggests."

["Scottish electoral geography is working to the SNP's advantage", \*Spectator\* 06-02-14](#): "Polls suggest the SNP will take 55 out of 59 seats and of the 14 constituencies surveyed by Lord Ashcroft, only Glasgow North East is set to remain in Labour hands. Such political collapses are rare in UK politics – so what's going on?"

["Splitting centre left vote in Scotland is Cameron's best chance of retaining power, warns Labour", \*Herald\* 05-02-15](#): "Pressure is mounting on Ed Miliband and Labour in the run-up to the General Election as a new poll predicted the party faces a wipe-out in Scotland."

["Labour facing 'categorical' threat in Scotland, according to new analysis", \*Holyrood\* 01-02-15](#): "The SNP threat to Labour is 'categorical', with the party forecast to win 45 seats in May's general election, and Labour reduced to all but ten in Scotland, according to one of the UK's most experienced political academics."

["Ditch Trident and austerity and reform Westminster: the Common Weal launches 'Red Lines' General Election campaign", \*Common Space\* 01-02-15](#): "Five red lines intended to maximise impact of smaller parties in the next UK Government: The Common Weal think-tank has launched a campaign to encourage voters to elect politicians at the 2015 General Election who will stick to key 'red line issues' that can 'transform lives for the better'."

["Election 2015: Scottish political parties mark 100 days to vote", \*BBC\* 27-01-15](#): "Scotland's political parties mark 100 days to go to the General Election by promoting some of their key messages."

["100 things you should know about the general election", \*Guardian\* 27-01-15](#): "With 100 days to go until polling day on 7 May, Guardian writers get you up to speed on the slogans and anthems you may expect to hear, the constituencies you need to watch, and the new faces you'd best get used to."

["Dundee launches electoral registration app for mobiles", \*BBC News\* 19-01-15](#): "Scotland's first voter registration mobile app has been launched in Dundee. The pilot project is aimed at encouraging young and first-time voters to join the electoral roll."

[Kane, Pat: "Trident takes centre stage in election", \*Scotsman\* 18-01-15](#): "SNP, Green Party and Plaid Cymru want rid of nuclear subs – and could soon hold the balance of power, writes Pat Kane."

["What is Britain? The right answer could win the next election", \*Guardian\* 04-01-15](#): "The Conservatives are winning the battle to appeal to the unhappy English voter over the future of Britain and its place in Europe. Labour needs to sharpen up."

## **Labour**

["Devo max is austerity max: Murphy", \*Herald\* 12-03-15](#): "Mr Murphy's warning comes as a report from the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee says full fiscal autonomy would reduce

Holyrood's budget by £6.5billion immediately, a sum equivalent to more than half NHS Scotland's budget."

["Election 2015: Labour 'would put debates into law'", \*BBC News\* 08-03-15](#): "A future Labour government would legislate to ensure TV debates became a permanent feature of general elections, party leader Ed Miliband has said."

["Scottish Labour 'will keep free university tuition'", \*BBC News\* 03-03-15](#): "A Scottish Labour government would keep free university tuition for Scottish students, Jim Murphy has said. He also said the party would set up funding to "properly support" Scottish universities alongside Labour's plan to reduce tuition fees in England."

["A Labour failure in Scotland will lead to a battle for Britain itself", \*Guardian\* 05-02-15](#): "Every Ed Miliband misstep plays right into SNP hands, undermining Gordon Brown's compelling case for the union."

["Gordon Brown: Scottish Labour's secret weapon in general election", \*Herald\* 31-01-15](#): "Gordon Brown is being lined up as a 'secret weapon' in Labour's general election campaign in Scotland, in the hope he can replicate the dramatic impact he had on the independence referendum."

["Five Magic Words", \*Bella Caledonia\* 30-01-15](#)

[Kerevan, George: "Labour impaled on a blunt Trident", \*Scotsman\* 20-01-15](#): "Party has form when it comes to promoting expensive and ineffectual nuclear delivery systems, writes George Kerevan."

["Labour's failures 'worse than Kinnock', says David Hare", \*Guardian\* 20-01-15](#): "Playwright says Ed Miliband is struggling to take advantage of the open goals provided by a Tory prime minister."

["Jim Murphy: Labour party 'open to Yes voters'", \*Scotsman\* 11-01-15](#): "Jim Murphy yesterday moved Scottish Labour away from its historic commitment to the UK by proposing a new constitution signalling that the party is open to supporters of independence."

["The Guardian view on Scottish public opinion: Labour on the edge", \*Guardian\* 26-12-14](#): "The independence referendum has reset the dials. It's certainly not always progressive, but the SNP is in the ascendent. Scottish Labour could face a historic catastrophe next year."

["The Guardian view on Jim Murphy: Scottish Labour's new leader faces a huge task", \*Guardian\* 14-12-14](#): "Whether he was their choice or not, the Labour party in Scotland must unite behind their new leader."

[McLeish, Henry: "Labour must revive leftist heart", \*Scotsman\* 04-11-14](#): "Labour's new leader must re-capture the 'left-leaning' sympathies of Scots voters to revive the party's fortunes, former first minister Henry McLeish has said."

["The Guardian view on Johann Lamont's resignation: reform is long overdue", \*Guardian\* 26-10-14](#): "Labour delivered devolution but has never adapted its own party structure to it."



## Financial Sector

[Jones, Peter: "Dump fiscal autonomy – it's insanity", \*Scotsman\* 23-03-15](#): "As the price of oil has plunged, so has the case for Scotland securing extensive new powers, writes Peter Jones."

["Scotland's severe poverty laid bare", \*Scot-Buzz\* 16-03-15](#): "Far from life getting better in Scotland, the scale of severe and extreme poverty is laid bare in a new Scottish government report. It's a sobering antidote to all those 'economy getting better' press releases from the Holyrood administration."

["Nicola Sturgeon attacks UK Treasury as 'transparently party political'", \*National\* 10-03-15](#): "First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has called the Treasury 'transparently party political' in a scathing letter to the Head of the UK Civil Service."

["Why is local government debt so high in Scotland?" \*Guardian\* 05-03-15](#): "Scottish local authorities owe twice as much per household than those in England and Wales."

["Corporation tax cut pledge dropped by Scottish government", \*BBC News\* 03-03-15](#): "The Scottish government has revealed in its new economic plan that it is no longer committed to a 'blanket' three point drop in corporation tax."

["Families still worse off than when Tories came to power, study claims", \*Independent\* 03-03-15](#): "Families still have less money to spend than when David Cameron came to office in 2010, although average living standards have returned to pre-recession levels of seven years ago, a report shows."

["Analysis: Focus on party politics hampers a broad public debate about energy policy", \*National\* 02-03-15](#): "We have reached the point where the Scottish Government, in cooperation with the Scottish Parliament and other actors, has to help produce a long-term strategy to secure its energy needs within a UK and EU framework."

["The city that privatised itself to death: 'London is now a set of improbable sex toys poking gormlessly into the air'", \*Guardian\* 24-02-15](#): "Bit by bit, the capital has been handed over to pinstriped investors 'reeking of lunch'. Are Londoners resigned to a grey cloud of commerce, or can they reclaim a hopeful, collective future?"

→ Is this happening in Scotland, too? **Tell us what you think!**

["Real wages to rise for first time since 2007, says EY", \*BBC News\* 23-02-15](#): "It says that real wages - those taking out the impact of inflation - will rise by 1.8% this year, before 'further steady rises thereafter'. Prices have risen faster than wages in recent years, but falling inflation means the situation has now reversed."

["Scotland could use oil price crash to kick-start CCS", \*Guardian\* 23-02-15](#): "Shell's announcement that it is to decommission North Sea oil platform could open up an opportunity for carbon capture and storage (CCS)."

["Scotland's jobless total falls by 15,000", \*BBC News\* 18-02-15](#): "Unemployment in Scotland fell by 15,000 in the three months to December and now stands at 149,000, according to official figures."

["Longannet: Vince Cable says possible closure 'no threat to energy supply'", BBC 17-02-15](#): "The UK government's Business Secretary Vince Cable has said there is no threat to the security of Scotland's electricity supply."

["Obesity and the Constitution", Bella Caledonia 16-02-15](#): "The public in the UK has drastically misinformed views about benefits and their levels, and the government can mobilise support by being 'tough' on claimants, while ignoring corporate fraud and tax avoidance on a gargantuan scale. The latest instalment came last week with David Cameron's announcement that he is investigating stripping benefits from those who are obese, smokers or have addictions, unless they submit to government mandated treatment programmes."

["No fracking 'will lead to sky high prices'", Scotsman 10-02-15](#): "Professor Gordon Hughes, a former world bank adviser, warned Scotland could be sleepwalking into key decisions over its energy future without a 'genuine debate about reality rather than phantasms'."

["Scottish Friendly closes in on takeover of Marine & General", BBC News 02-02-15](#): "The deal will be the largest takeover by Scottish Friendly to date and will double its assets to about £2bn."

["Qatar royal family buy Cluny Estate", Land Matters: The Blog and Website of Andy Wightman 30-01-15](#): "Last week, land agents were on site at Cluny Estate. Asked who had bought it, they said they did not know and did not want to know. They are instructed by an agent in London who, in turn, is instructed by another agent."

["Scottish bankruptcy figures 'at pre-recession levels'", BBC News 28-01-15](#): "The number of personal bankruptcies in Scotland has fallen to its lowest level for nearly 10 years, according to official figures."

["Scotch whisky industry 'bigger than UK iron and steel or computers'", Guardian 27-01-15](#): "Report finds investment pouring into new distilleries, but Scotch Whisky Association calls on government to reduce tax."

["Transport Scotland in new free bus travel deal", BBC News 23-01-15](#): "A deal worth £414m has been reached to secure free bus travel for elderly and disabled Scots over the next two years."

["Edinburgh Airport set for next £50m expansion stage", BBC News 22-01-15](#): "During a visit by the prime minister, it was announced that a new immigration and baggage hall is to be built, which should triple the capacity for larger long-haul aircraft."

["Comment: North Sea oil at point of no return", Scotsman 18-01-15](#): "Without an agreement on immediate action, the current crisis of confidence threatens to do irreparable harm to Scotland's oil and gas industry."

["How Westminster helped squander Scotland's black gold", Guardian 18-01-15](#): "The collapse in North Sea oil prices is being used to score cheap political points by the SNP's opponents."

["Scottish Government in record £444m underspend", Herald 09-01-15](#): "The Scottish Government ended last year with a record underspend, despite repeated complaints from the SNP administration about Westminster austerity cuts squeezing its budget."

[Kerevan, George: "How Saudis have us over a barrel", \*Scotsman\* 06-01-15](#): "The oil price slump shows why Holyrood needs to control, and protect, the North Sea industry, argues George Kerevan."

["Scotland could be fossil fuel-free by 2030, says report", \*Guardian\* 05-01-15](#): "Planned renewable energy projects combined with energy savings could decarbonise the country's power sector, claims WWF-back study."

["Cost of Scottish independence referendum to exceed £16m", \*Herald\* 31-12-14](#): "The direct cost to the taxpayer of the Scottish independence referendum is set to exceed £16m but the true total, including related and knock-on costs, may never be known."

["Female employment in Scotland at record high", \*BBC News\* 29-12-14](#): "Female employment in Scotland has risen by 46,000 over the past year to a record 1,288,000, government statistics have revealed."

[Jones, Peter: "Slump exposes frailty of Yes fantasy", \*Scotsman\* 22-12-14](#): "An independent Scotland would look very different in a \$60 oil world. Is the 'carbon bubble' about to burst, asks Peter Jones."

["Green light for world's largest planned tidal energy project in Scotland", \*Guardian\* 19-12-14](#): "MeyGen project could power nearly 175,000 homes through network of turbines on seabed at Ness of Quoy off Caithness."

["Post welfare or fully integrated: what will social care be like in a decade?" \*Guardian\* 15-12-14](#): "Four possible scenarios for social services in Scotland in 2025."

["Holyrood gets power to issue bonds", \*Herald\* 12-12-14](#): "Holyrood will be able to pay for capital projects such as roads, hospitals or schools by issuing bonds for the first time, the Treasury has announced."

[Jones, Peter: "Cheaper oil means vanishing jobs", \*Scotsman\* 08-12-14](#): "Motorists might cheer falling pump prices but crude at \$60 a barrel would hit Scotland's economy hard, writes Peter Jones."

["No wonder landowners are scared. We are starting to learn who owns Britain", \*Guardian\* 03-12-14](#): "Scotland is breaking the cover-up that stifles our political thought. Bring the Highland Spring south."

["Scotland's jobs market 'continues to improve'", \*BBC News\* 17-11-14](#)

[Jones, Peter: "Paving the way for a tax 'betrayal'", \*Scotsman\* 17-11-14](#): "Total devolution of income tax would put the fiscal system at risk – and play into the SNP's hands, writes Peter Jones."

["Devo More: What does business want?" \*BBC News\* 14-11-14](#): "Scotland could become a world leader in driverless cars, urban drones and animaloid robots. Yes, animaloid. We're already leaders in subsea robots, so why not?"

["Wind energy alone powered Scottish homes in October", \*Scotsman\* 04-11-14](#): "October was a 'bumper month' for renewable energy in Scotland, with wind power alone producing more than enough electricity to meet the needs of every home in the country, campaigners have claimed."

[Monteith, Brian: "EU exit would help save the NHS", \*Scotsman\* 26-10-14](#): "Not paying the fee to be part of the European market would finance the shortfall in health funding, writes Brian Monteith."

["The Guardian view on Scotland's budget: a moment of history", \*Guardian\* 09-10-14](#): "John Swinney's new taxes on property may feel like minor-key stuff. But devolving what is best taxed at local level blazes a trail for further devolution."

["Taxpayers foot the bill as Scottish Enterprise loses £13m", \*Herald\* 07-10-14](#): "Taxpayers have been left with a bill of more than £13 million after Scottish Enterprise was forced to write off record levels of bad investments last year."

["The spending state we're in", \*BBC News\* 12-09-14](#): "It's time to talk about the state, as a historic shift in government spending emphasises the National Health Service and older people's benefits at the expense of quite a lot else."

["Who will be the winners and losers of the new Scottish property tax system?" \*BBC News\* 09-09-14](#): "The Scottish Finance Secretary John Swinney has outlined his budget plan for 2015-16 - and he's shaking up the housing market."

### **UK Banks**

["RBS Chief Admits: More Banking Scandals To Come", \*LBC\* 13-03-15](#): "Ross McEwan told LBC that they are trying to rebuild trust in the banking industry, but he would expect more problems lying ahead."

["Osborne should break up RBS and Lloyds, not chase a fast buck", \*Ian Fraser\* 11-03-15](#): "Britain's banks would never have been able to get away with behaving as badly as they have done, missell as many products or ruin as many viable UK small and medium-sized enterprises if their sector had been subject to proper competition, the former entrepreneur-in-residence at the Department of Business Innovation and Skills, Lawrence Tomlinson, has said."

["Breaking up the banks could stop public getting poor deal, say MPs", \*Telegraph\* 10-03-15](#): "Treasury select committee voices concerns over the lack of 'genuine choice' in banking for customers and small businesses."

["Osborne wants quick RBS sale but could still take years – FT", \*Reuters\* 06-03-15](#): "'When I say 'get rid' of it, I mean put it into the good hands of the private sector,' Osborne told the Financial Times in an interview, in which he also admitted he made a mistake in not radically restructuring the bank when the Conservative-led coalition came to power in 2010."

["Bank of England liquidity auctions probed by fraud office", \*BBC News\* 05-03-15](#): "The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) is investigating the way the Bank of England lent money to banks during the financial crisis, the Bank has said."

["BoE is proceeding in a way quite inappropriate to such a serious matter", \*Financial Times\* 04-03-15](#): "It is simply not appropriate for the Bank to proceed in this way on such a serious matter, in its first inquiry under the newly empowered Oversight Committee, and given the still higher standards to which it properly aspires."

["Death, Drugs and HSBC: How fraudulent blood money makes the world go round." \*Medium\* 02-03-15](#): "Recent reporting on illegal tax evasion by the world's second largest bank, HSBC, opens a window onto the pivotal role of Western banks in facilitating organised crime, drug-trafficking and Islamist terrorism."

["'Sorry' sometimes seems like the easiest of words in the UK banking sector", \*Herald\* 27-02-15](#): "In all-too-familiar fashion, 'sorry' appears to once again be becoming the theme of the latest bank reporting season in the UK, either in terms of the actual word itself or the general sentiment being expressed by the sector's top brass."

["RBS: Retreat and misdemeanours", \*BBC News\* 26-02-15](#): "Seven years of Fred Goodwin's plenty, followed by seven years of famine, or at least seven vast losses."

["False hope", \*Economist\* 21-02-15](#): "Most trading strategies are not tested rigorously enough."

[Kingsmill, Denise: "Finance start-ups are taking on the UK's arrogant banking sector", \*Management Today\* 30-01-15](#): "New banks are taking on the corrupt and out-of-touch high-street names. About time too."

### Media

Ian Bell again has a very appropriate comment on how "The Tories and the right-wing press play a dangerous game stirring up hatred of Scotland", *Herald on Sunday* 10-5-15 (<http://www.heraldsotland.com/comment/sunday-herald-view/the-tories-and-their-right-wing-press-play-a-dangerous-game-stirring-up-h.125592308>).

David Axelrod, "top aid to Barak Obama who has advised Ed Miliband in the British election", calls the "UK media most partisan I've seen – even more than Fox News", *Guardian* 7-5-15 ([http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/may/07/david-axelrod-uk-media-most-partisan-fox-news?CMP=ema\\_546](http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/may/07/david-axelrod-uk-media-most-partisan-fox-news?CMP=ema_546)).

["New media, new model: Are you playing your part in Scotland's independent media?" \*Common Space\* 13-03-15](#): "Common Space editor Angela Haggerty explains how the news service is already changing the narrative, but asks whether the readers of this emerging media realise how important their part in the new model is."

["The media is changing ... become part of it", \*National\* 23-02-15](#): "The dedication to build a new media from old institutions depends upon the long-term financial commitment of the public and a wider demand for quality journalism rather than more of the same under a pro-independence banner."

["The National's Richard Walker: 'We can and will be critical of the SNP'", \*Guardian\* 22-02-15](#): "Editor of new daily newspaper and Sunday Herald on being radical and the challenges of covering independence."

[Silver, Christopher: "Why we need to address Scotland's media deficit", \*Common Space\* 18-02-15](#): "Scotland's media is in crisis. This crisis is taking place on a number of levels and the symptoms are manifold. They include systemic declines in staff numbers and newspaper circulation, a crisis of legitimacy at the BBC, acutely damaging managerial cultures intent on doing 'more with less' and the formation of 'old' and 'new' media echo chambers."



Cf. also Christopher Silver's *Case for a Scottish Media* which is waiting for your support at <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/the-case-for-a-scottish-media>.

["Our unique television culture needs friends in high places", \*Guardian\* 08-02-15](#): "The Conservatives have dreamed of privatising state-owned TV for years. Come the next election, they may finally get their chance."

[Scott, Hamish: "General Election will be next big test for Scotland's new media", \*Common Space\* 06-02-15](#): "Marking the official launch of Common Space, author and poet Hamish Scott takes a look at how the media landscape in Scotland has been rocked by the emergence of new media."

["Every UK national newspaper editor urges Prime Minister to stop RIPA spying on journalists", \*Press Gazette\* 19-01-15](#): "Every national newspaper editor has backed the Press Gazette Save Our Sources campaign and signed a joint letter of protest to Prime Minister David Cameron over police spying on journalists' phone records."

At <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/21525> you can either borrow or buy the documentary 'Scotland Yet. A film about independence' for € 5.61 or € 9.36. "A film charting the rise of grassroots politics in Scotland during the referendum on Scottish independence in 2014."

[Silver, Christopher: "Questioning a declining media", \*Common Space\* 14-12-14](#): "It's time to relentlessly question such centralised, narrow and archaic media and to start mapping our ways in which we can re-make it for the 21st century."

["It's Time to Question a Declining Media", \*National Collective\* 13-12-14](#): "I didn't make it through all of Thursday night's instalment of Question Time, it seems I was not alone in this. I switched on to find talk of Nigel Farage's plan to have 'a grammar school in every town'. I also caught a bit of a ruckus in the audience about whether disliking immigrants was racist or not. As has been widely noted the episode played host to two very different radicals: one with big ideas and a twitter following, the other with no ideas and a well resourced political machine at his back. This was the high camp rehearsal for a tipping point in British politics: the full scale farce is destined to take place in six months time."

### **Creative Scotland**

[Massie, Alex: "Where's the art, National Collective?" \*Scotsman\* 14-03-15](#): "Do you remember National Collective, the fey, painfully earnest, assembly of 'artists and creatives' who gallantly took on the burden of 'imagining a better Scotland' during the independence referendum campaign? Perhaps you do."

[Piper, Alison: "Reclaiming film - how Tartan Features is giving Scots filmmakers a vital network of support", \*Common Space\* 06-03-15](#): "It's not even a very good film,' Neil Rolland deprecates as he gestures at the cinema screen on which we've all just watched his quite moving portrayal of a depressed husband and father, in his first feature film 'Take It Back and Start All Over', made on a budget of £1,000 and shot in five days towards the tail end of 2013."

["Glasgow Film Festival viewers warm to Radiator", \*National\* 02-03-15](#): "Low-budget British film Radiator has won the first ever Glasgow Film Festival Audience Award."

["The Spectator declares war on bad public art", \*Spectator\* 28-02-15](#): "Stephen Bayley announces the launch of The Spectator's inaugural What's That Thing? Award for the worst piece of public art of 2015."

["Lost Sherlock Holmes story discovered", \*BBC News\* 23-02-15](#): "A long-lost Sherlock Holmes story has been rediscovered more than a hundred years after it was first published."

["Scottish film industry 'left to wither' and lags behind neighbours, Holyrood finds", \*Guardian\* 18-02-15](#): "Institutional neglect, lack of facilities and a talent drain have led to a situation where 'it's that bad, even films with a Scottish story can't come here'."

["Glasgow School of Art: what architect could restore Mackintosh's masterpiece?" \*Guardian\* 15-02-15](#): "As Charles Rennie Mackintosh's drawings go on display at the RIBA, the search is on for the architect who might best restore the glory of his fire-damaged masterpiece, the Glasgow School of Art. Rowan Moore reports."

["Tommy Sheppard selected as SNP Edinburgh candidate", \*Scotsman\* 27-01-15](#): "Comedy boss Tommy Sheppard has been selected as the SNP's candidate to fight the seat of Edinburgh East in May's General Election."

["How Robert Burns trod a path to the door of Scotland's rich and influential", \*Guardian\* 25-01-15](#): "Farmer's son at his poetic peak was feted during his walking tours, academics reveal."

["Richard Findlay appointed head of Creative Scotland", \*Scotsman\* 14-01-15](#): "A Scottish media veteran is to become the new figurehead of national arts agency Creative Scotland."

["Mystery book sculptor answers questions", \*BBC News\* 12-01-15](#): "An anonymous artist has been leaving delicate paper sculptures made from old books at locations in Edinburgh and around Scotland for more than three years."

["Mark Fisher's top 10 theatre of 2014", \*Guardian\* 21-12-14](#): "An online monologue lasting minutes, an epic historical trilogy and an Ivor Cutler musical are this year's highlights on and off Scotland's stages."

["New V&A Dundee design museum to tour Scotland in 2015", \*BBC News\* 11-12-14](#): "A 'travelling gallery' will visit 78 venues across the country including schools, museums and libraries before a final stop at the original Victoria and Albert Museum in London."

["Give Glasgow a gallery worthy of our best artists", \*Guardian\* 07-12-14](#): "The Two Roberts exhibition at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, celebrating the work of Robert Colquhoun and Robert MacBryde, highlights the need for a national gallery in the west."

["Ken Stott blasts BBC over referendum coverage", \*Scotsman\* 29-11-14](#): "Scottish actor Ken Stott – who had supported Scottish independence – voiced criticism of the BBC for its coverage of the referendum, saying the corporation was a 'mouthpiece' for the establishment."

["Rabbie Burns brought to life as comic book hero", \*Scotsman\* 24-11-14](#): "It is the epic poem recited at Burns Suppers around the world every year in honour of Scotland's national bard."

["Dougie MacLean: BBC sidelining folk music", \*Scotsman\* 10-11-14](#): "One of the nation's leading singer-songwriters has accused the BBC of sidelining traditional Scottish culture."

["Arts groups share £100m of Creative Scotland funding", \*BBC News\* 30-10-14](#): "Ayr's Gaiety Theatre, Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh and Wigtown Book Festival are among the arts organisations being given regular funding by Creative Scotland for the first time."

["Waverly Station pays tribute to Sir Walter Scott", \*Herald\* 14-10-14](#): "Edinburgh is celebrating the 200th anniversary of Sir Walter Scott's Waverley at the railway station named in the novel's honour."

### Other Topics

["BBC poll suggests 64% of Scots want immigration reduced", \*BBC News\* 10-03-15](#): "Almost two-thirds of Scots think immigration should be reduced, a poll commissioned by the BBC has suggested."

["Terror is not as big a threat to British values as the hysterical response to it", \*Guardian\* 10-03-15](#): "Philip Hammond attacks Isis 'apologists', but scaremongering politicians, a greedy security industry and reckless media all carry heavy responsibility too."

["Germany's far-right Pegida movement sets up in Scotland and plans anti-Islam march in Edinburgh", \*Herald\* 01-03-15](#): "The first demonstration by the Scottish branch of Pegida, the far-right anti-Islam movement from Germany, is planned for Edinburgh this month."

["Almost nine in ten Scots think sectarianism is a problem for Scotland", \*Guardian\* 24-02-15](#): "Around nine in ten Scots think sectarianism is a problem for the country, while two thirds think it's only a problem in specific areas, according to survey findings."

["EU: Scots prisoners' vote ban 'violates rights'", \*Scotsman\* 10-02-15](#): "Convicted paedophiles and murderers in Scotland's prisons had their human rights violated after being denied the vote, European judges have ruled."

["Four-fifths of Scots back state assisted suicide", \*Scotsman\* 03-02-15](#): "Almost four-fifths of Scots think it is important for controversial proposals on assisted suicide to become law, a poll has suggested."

["Charlie Hebdo: David Cameron at odds with Pope", \*Scotsman\* 19-01-15](#): "David Cameron has entered the debate over free speech by insisting that the media had a right to 'cause offence' but should not be subject to revenge attacks for voicing their views."

["Keep UK flag off driving licences says 'petty' MSP", \*Herald\* 08-01-15](#): "A nationalist MSP has sparked a row after suggesting that the Union Jack flag should be kept off new UK driving licences."

["Civil partnerships converted into same-sex marriages", \*Scotsman\* 16-12-14](#): "Same-sex marriages have come into being for the first time today in Scotland."

["Scotland cuts drink-drive alcohol limit", \*BBC News\* 05-12-14](#): "A new law has come into force which makes the legal drink-drive limit in Scotland lower than elsewhere in the UK. The change reduces the legal alcohol limit from 80mg to 50mg in every 100ml of blood."

["Dundee first city to get vegetable vending machine", \*Scotsman\* 03-12-14](#): "A vegetable vending machine is proving a big hit in a city notorious for high rates of child obesity and heart attack deaths."

["Struggles of Scotland's veterans highlighted", \*Scotsman\* 03-12-14](#): "Health problems, difficulties with finances and social isolation are some of the key issues facing Scotland's veterans, according to new research from Poppyscotland."

["26% of Scots have experienced mental health issues", \*Scotsman\* 11-11-14](#): "A quarter of Scots have experienced a mental health problem, according to a new survey commissioned by the Scottish Government."

### **As Others See Scotland**

["Scotland's international reputation slips compared with other countries despite historic year", \*Herald\* 31-12-14](#)

["Dundee the UK's first Unesco 'City of Design'", \*Scotsman\* 01-12-14](#): "It has given the world Desperate Dan and Grand Theft Auto, forging a reputation as a place of creativity and invention."

["Perthshire hotel named on global 'must-stay' list", \*Scotsman\* 25-11-14](#): "A Highland hotel has made it on to a global list of 28 unique places 'to stay at before you die.'"

["Two Scottish roads among most dangerous in Britain", \*Scotsman\* 04-11-14](#): "Two of Scotland's roads have been listed among the top ten most persistently dangerous in Britain."

["How Scotland's 'No' vote resonates around the world", \*BBC News\* 19-09-14](#)

### **Education Scotland**

(compiled by Katharina Leible, Sherry Ishak Abadeer,  
Andrea Schlotthauer & Melanie Sommer)

["Edinburgh university among top 30 in the world", \*Scotsman\* 12-03-15](#):

"Edinburgh University has vaulted into the top 30 of the best universities in the world."

["Union calls for more transparency on university pay", \*BBC News\* 04-03-15](#):

"The University and College Union (UCU) Scotland has claimed Scottish universities have broken promises made on transparency over principals' pay."

["Scotland angers European allies over 'failing' language policy", \*Herald\* 02-03-15](#):

"Ministers have come under fire from some of the most powerful countries in Europe over Scotland's school languages policy."

["William Wallace terrorist or hero, pupils asked", \*Scotsman\* 02-03-15:](#)

"A secondary school at the heart of Scotland's Braveheart country asked pupils to discuss whether William Wallace was a freedom fighter or a terrorist."

["Staff tell Edinburgh University: sell shares in fossil fuel and arms companies", \*National\* 02-03-15:](#)

"The principal and vice-chancellor of the University of Edinburgh is under pressure to withdraw almost £45 million worth of the institution's investments from fossil fuel companies and the arms industry."

["'Crisis of confidence' over Highers", \*BBC News\* 24-02-15:](#)

"The SSTA union is warning of a 'crisis of confidence' over the new Highers."

["Scots uni leaders 'afraid' to call for tuition fees", \*BBC News\* 19-02-15:](#)

"A university principal claims Scottish university leaders are afraid to call for the introduction of tuition fees."

["Scotland can't be fair while private schools thrive", \*Guardian\* 01-02-15:](#)

"Nicola Sturgeon and Jim Murphy need to crack on and do something about independent education."

["Are state school pupils losing out on appeals?" \*BBC News\* 29-01-15:](#)

"Labour is claiming that changes to Scotland's school exam appeal system favour privately-educated youngsters over state school pupils. Are those at state schools losing out to save cash?"

["Scots women top of class for university degrees", \*Scotsman\* 17-01-2015:](#)

"Scottish students are graduating with the highest marks in the UK, with nearly four out of five women achieving top honours."

["Comment: Outward Bound boosts inner strengths", \*Scotsman\* 16-01-15:](#)

"Preparing young people to have key life skills for when they leave school is vital importance, writes Martin Davidson."

["Worrying fall in university students from key overseas markets", \*Herald\* 16-01-15:](#)

"The number of overseas students from key countries studying at Scottish universities has fallen in the wake of tough new immigration rules introduced by the Westminster Government."

["Universities 'want life experience'", \*Herald\* 15-01-15:](#)

"Would-be students increasingly need to show evidence of their outside interests and life experience when applying to university, it has been suggested."

["Skye primaries look set to close", \*Herald\* 14-01-15:](#)

"Highland councillors have voted to close four primaries on Skye and amalgamate them in a new school, but the local MSP had already appealed to ministers to call in any closure decision."

["Inquiry into Scottish 'education gap'", \*BBC News\* 12-01-15:](#)

"An inquiry is to look into whether enough is being done to cut the gap in educational attainment between Scotland's poorest and richest pupils."

["Dyson: Overseas student expulsion will hurt UK", \*Scotsman\* 05-01-15:](#)

"Inventor and entrepreneur Sir James Dyson has hit out at plans by Home Secretary Theresa May to expel overseas students as soon as they graduate, warning that it will simply help Britain's international competitors."



["Pupils turning their back on Scottish Studies", \*Herald\* 27-12-14:](#)

"A flagship qualification aimed at broadening the study of Scottish history, geography, culture and literature has failed to spark the interest of pupils, according to new figures."

["Scottish university research praised", \*BBC News\* 18-12-14:](#)

"The range and quality of research at Scotland's universities has been praised in a new UK-wide survey."

["More school leavers in work, training or education", \*BBC News\* 16-12-14:](#)

"The number of youngsters who leave school with nowhere to go is at its lowest level for 10 years, according to new figures. In total, 92.3% of school leavers this year were in work, training or education - a rise of 0.9%."

["Gaelic 'at Glasgow University for over 500 years'", \*Scotsman\* 08-12-14:](#)

"One of Scotland's oldest universities has had a continuous presence of Gaelic speakers for more than 500 years, a new study has found."

["Promoting Scots as it should be spoken", \*Herald\* 26-11-14:](#)

"A scheme to promote and encourage the use of Scots language within schools has been launched."

["Alex Salmond: Free university vow 'writ in stane'", \*Scotsman\* 18-11-14:](#)

"The Scottish Government's commitment to providing free university education is now 'writ in stane', Alex Salmond declared as he unveiled a monument to his administration's 'biggest achievement'."

["Campaign aims to tackle poor reading skills early", \*BBC News\* 17-11-14:](#)

"One in five children from poor families in Scotland leaves primary school unable to read well, according a group aiming to tackle poor literacy levels."

[McCade, Fiona: "I'd prefer my son to choose a trade", \*Scotsman\* 12-11-14:](#)

"Parents think a trade trumps a degree for employability, but they still push their kids to go to university. It's madness, says Fiona McCade."

[Wilson, Brian: "Pay is price of 'Tartan Tory' policy", \*Scotsman\* 07-11-14:](#)

"Universalism and council tax freeze help the rich at poor's expense, and education bears the brunt, writes Brian Wilson."

["Call for more action on widening university access in Scotland", \*BBC News\* 04-11-14:](#)

"Progress is being made but increasing the number of university students from deprived backgrounds remains a challenge, according to a new report."

["University to promote Gaelic language on campuses", \*Scotsman\* 15-10-14:](#)

"The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) has announced new plans to promote Gaelic at its 13 centres."

["Glasgow becomes first university in Europe to divest from fossil fuels", \*Guardian\* 08-10-14:](#)

"University court votes to divest £18m from fossil fuel industry in what campaigners call 'dramatic beachhead'."

## **Scottish Award Winners**

### **Literature**

The £10,000 [Dundee International Book Prize](#) for 2014 was won by [Amy Mason](#) for her debut novel *The Other Ida*. Mason, who lives in Oxford, is a writer and performer. Her autobiographical show *The Islanders* won the [IdeasTap/Underbelly Edinburgh Fringe Fund](#) in 2013. *The Other Ida* is published by [Cargo](#).

The [Saltire Scottish Literary Book of the Year Award](#) for 2014 went to Ali Smith for *How to be Both* ([Hamish Hamilton](#)). The Research Book of the Year Award winner was *The Scottish Town in the Age of the Enlightenment 1740-1820* ([Edinburgh University Press](#)) by Bob Harris and Charles McKean. Poetry Book of the Year was *Bones and Breath* ([Salt](#)) by Alexander Hutchison, First Book of the Year, *Moontide* ([Bloodaxe](#)) a collection of verse by Niall Campbell and Scottish History Book of the Year, *Scottish Gods: Religion in Modern Scotland 1900-2012* ([Edinburgh University Press](#)). The Saltire Society Scottish Publisher of the Year Award went to [Sandstone Press](#) in Dingwall.

[Scottish Book Trust New Writers' Awards](#) for 2015 have been presented in the following categories: Fiction and Non-Fiction in English and Scots, Poetry in English and Scots, Children's and Young Adult Fiction in English and Scots. Winners in Fiction were: [Rachelle Atalla](#), [D.P. Colgan](#), [Basil W. Davies](#), [Julie Martis](#) and [Olga Wojtas](#). Poetry awards went to [Stephen Keeler](#), [Lindsay Macgregor](#) and [Aiko Greig](#). [Michael Richardson](#) and [Claire Squires](#) received the awards in the Children's and Young Adult section. [Robert Louis Stevenson Fellowships](#) for 2014 were awarded to Iain Johnstone, Lisa Ballantyne, Stuart A. Paterson and Tom Pow. [Young Writer Awards](#) for 2014 went to Charlotte Luke, Melissa Thomas and Madison Rennie. Gaelic Young Writers awardee was Fionnlagh Cunliffe. Winners of the Scottish Book Trust [Scottish Children's Book awards](#) for 2015 were Ross Collins, Alex McCall and Cathy MacPhail.

### **Film Television Media**

[British Academy Scotland Awards](#) (BAFTA) winners for 2014 included: Actor Film, James McAvoy for "Firth"; Actor Television, David Tennant for "The Escape Artist"; Actress Film, Shirley Henderson for "Southcliffe". Winner in the Animation category was "Monkey Love Experiments" – Will Anderson, Ainslie Henderson, Cameron Fraser, Hopscotch Films, DigiCult, Ko-Lik, White Robot. Best Children's Programme was "All Over the Place Australia" – Louise Brown, Maria Stewart, BBC Scotland/CBBC. Director Film/Television category prize went to David Mackenzie for "Starred Up", which also took the Feature Film award – David Mackenzie, Gillian Berrie, Jonathan Asser Sigma Films/Twentieth Century Fox – and the Writer Film/Television award for its writer Jonathan Asser. Best Single Documentary was "Keys to the Castle" and best Short Film "Getting On" – Ewan Stewart, Liam Stewart, Maeve McMahon Foundling Films. The first ever Glasgow Film Festival Audience Award was won by "Radiator"

### **Art**

Glasgow-based Irish artist Duncan Campbell won the 2014 [Turner Prize](#) for his contribution to the Scotland pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

The 2014 [Max Mara Art Prize for Women](#) was won by Scottish-based artist Corin Sworn.

### **New Publications October 2014 – March 2015**

(compiled by Andrea Schlotthauer)

Adams, Sharon / Goodare, Julian (eds.), *Scotland in the Age of Two Revolutions*, Woodbridge: Boydell Press 2014 (hardback £65.00)

The seventeenth century was one of the most dramatic periods in Scotland's history, with two political revolutions, intense religious strife culminating in the beginnings of toleration, and the modernisation of the state and its infrastructure. This book focuses on the history that the Scots themselves made. Previous conceptualisations of Scotland's 'seventeenth century' have tended to define it as falling between 1603 and 1707 - the union of crowns and the union of parliaments. In contrast, this book asks how seventeenth-century Scotland would look if we focused on things that the Scots themselves wanted and chose to do. Here the key organising dates are not 1603 and 1707 but 1638 and 1689: the covenanting revolution and the Glorious Revolution. Within that framework, the book develops several core themes. One is regional and local: the book looks at the Highlands and the Anglo-Scottish Borders.

(<http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=14555>)

Allen, Aaron / Spence, Cathryn (eds.), *Edinburgh Housemaids Taxation Book, 1634-1636*, Woodbridge: Boydell Press 2014 (hardback £40.00)

In 1633, plans were made for a new tax on the people of Edinburgh, to help pay the stipends of the town's clergy. The tax (never actually collected) was to be based on rent values and a detailed assessment of the town's properties. This book offers the first full edition of these records, which provide incredible detail on individual properties and their occupants. It thus gives an unprecedented insight into the socio-economic composition and landscape of early modern Edinburgh, and forms an invaluable resource for those interested in topics such as the demographic and economic history of preindustrial towns, urban topography and the local and genealogical history of Scotland's capital. The volume also includes an extensive historical introduction explaining the nature, context and utility of the records.

(<http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=14553>)

Andrew, Patricia R., *A Chasm in Time. Scottish War Art and Artists in the Twentieth Century*, Edinburgh: Birlinn 2014 (hardback £30.00)

This is the first study of Scottish war art and artists of the twentieth century. A fascinating visual record of Scotland's experience of conflict, both on the home front and in theatres of war, it features over 200 works of art, many of which have never been reproduced in book form before. Patricia Andrew looks at the context in which artists undertook their work, how it was received, and the influence the experience had on their careers.

Although the book naturally concentrates on the First and Second World Wars, it begins as the century opens with the ongoing war in South Africa, and ends with recent conflicts which are still continuing today. Themes discussed include developments in photography, poster design and camouflage. In addition to the work of artists in the thick of war, the book also discusses those who were conscientious objectors, or peacetime meditators on war. The concluding chapter examines how Scotland has commemorated and remembered the sacrifices made during a century of conflict.

(<http://www.birlinn.co.uk/Chasm-in-Time-A.html>)

Barrie, David G. / Broomhall, Susan, *Police Courts in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, 2-volume set, Aldershot: Ashgate 2014 (hardback £139.50)

Taking the form of two companion volumes, *Police Courts in Nineteenth-Century Scotland* represents the first major investigation into the administration, experience, impact and representation of summary justice in Scottish towns, c.1800 to 1892. Each volume explores diverse,

but complementary, themes relating to judicial practices, relationships, experiences and discourses through the lens of the same subject matter: the police court.

([https://www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=637&calcTitle=1&title\\_id=1219171212&edition\\_id=1219186397](https://www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=637&calcTitle=1&title_id=1219171212&edition_id=1219186397))

Beckett, Francis / Hencke, David / Kochan, Nick, *Blair Inc.: The Man Behind the Mask*, London: John Blake Publishing 2015 (hardback £20.00)

Since leaving office in 2007, the empire of Tony Blair has grown exponentially. As a businessman he has been unprecedentedly successful for a former public servant, with a large property portfolio and an estimated £80 million of earnings accrued in just a few short years. But how has he managed to achieve this? Being an ex-Prime Minister comes with certain advantages, and besides his excellent state pension and twenty-four-hour security team, Blair enjoys the best contacts that money can buy - as do those willing to pay him for access to those contacts.

Consequently, Tony Blair Associates' clients can be found around the world, and include the controversial presidents of Kazakhstan and Burma. There is also Blair's role as special envoy in the Middle East. While his record as a peacemaker is in doubt, the position has brought him into contact with a variety of oil-rich potentates in the region who now number among his most profitable clients. *Blair Inc.: The Man behind the Mask* takes a close look at the complex financial structures in Blair's world.

From the many layers of tax liability to the multiple conflicts of interest produced by his increasing web of relationships, this book exposes the private dealings of this very public figure.

(<http://www.johnblakepublishing.co.uk/e-store/Blair-Inc-The-Man-Behind-The-Mask-HB.html>)

More information on the book can be found in this article:

(<http://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2015/03/who-wants-be-millionaire-peter-oborne-tony-blair>)

Blakeway, Amy, *Regency in Sixteenth-Century Scotland*, Woodbridge: Boydell Press 2015 (hardback £60.00)

Three monarchs of Scotland (James V, Mary Queen of Scots, and James VI/I) were crowned during the sixteenth century; each came to the throne before their second birthday. Throughout all three royal minorities, the Scots remained remarkably consistent in their governmental preferences: that an individual should "bear the person" of the infant monarch, with all the power and risks that entailed. Regents could alienate crown lands, call parliament, raise taxes, and negotiate for the monarch's marriage, yet they also faced the potential of a shameful deposition from power and the assassin's gun.

In examining the careers of the six men and two women who became regent in context with each other and contemporary expectations, *Regency in Sixteenth-Century Scotland* offers the first study of regency as a political office. It provides a major reassessment of both the office of regency itself and of individual regents. The developments in how the Scots thought about regency are charted, and the debates in which they engaged on this subject are exposed for the first time. Drawing on a broad archival base of neglected manuscript materials, ranging from financial accounts, to the judiciary court records, to diplomatic correspondence scattered from Edinburgh to Paris, the book reveals a greater level of continuity between the personal rules of the adult Stewarts and of their regents than has hitherto been appreciated.

(<http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=14666>)

Brophy, Kenneth / MacGregor, Gavin / Ralston, Ian B. M. (eds.), *The Neolithic of Mainland Scotland*, Edinburgh: EUP 2014 (hardback £75.00, paperback £24.99)

What was life like in Scotland between 4000 and 2000BC? Where were people living? How did they treat their dead? Why did they spend so much time building extravagant ritual monuments? What was special about the relationship people had with trees and holes in the ground? What can

we say about how people lived in the Neolithic and early Bronze Age of mainland Scotland where much of the evidence we have lies beneath the ploughsoil, or survives as slumped banks and ditches, or ruinous megaliths?

Each contribution to this volume presents fresh research and radical new interpretations of the pits, postholes, ditches, rubbish dumps, human remains and broken potsherds left behind by our Neolithic forebears.

(<http://www.euppublishing.com/book/9780748685738>)

Bryden, John, *Northern Neighbours: Scotland and Norway since 1800*, Edinburgh: EUP 2015 (hardback £70.00)

How did the development of two small countries at the north of Europe, whose histories were joined from about the year 795 AD – including a 300-year alliance – nevertheless diverge sharply in the modern era?

This edited collection of essays covers various elements of this analysis including land ownership, politics, agriculture, industry, money and banking, local government, education, religion, access and the outdoor life, as well as several more synthetic chapters. Written as it is by historians, political scientists, economists, sociologists, anthropologists and human geographers, the book moves beyond historical narrative, and outlines elements of a theory of divergent development between Norway and Scotland over the long term, and so towards a novel history which will be of interest to a wider audience.

(<http://www.euppublishing.com/book/9780748696208>)

Cosh, Mary, *Edinburgh: The Golden Age*, Edinburgh: Birlinn 2014 (paperback £25.00)

*Edinburgh: The Golden Age* is a major contribution to the literature on the Scottish Enlightenment and an extraordinarily lucid insight into Edinburgh during the most exciting and stimulating period of its history. Based on an astonishingly wide range of sources – local newspapers and journals, published accounts of travels to Scotland, diaries, letters, reminiscences etc., as well as more modern texts – it covers the social and literary history of the city from around 1760 until 1832, the year in which Sir Walter Scott died.

The development of Edinburgh into one of the great intellectual centres of Europe is paralleled in the story of the growth of the city, as architects such as James Craig and Robert Adam reflected the confidence of a new age in the wide and imposing thoroughfares of the New Town, a far cry from the dank and overcrowded closes of medieval Edinburgh.

(<http://www.birlinn.co.uk/Edinburgh-The-Golden-age.html>)

Falconer, Rachel, *Kathleen Jamie: Essays and Poems on Her Work*, Edinburgh: EUP 2014 (hardback £70.00)

Kathleen Jamie's works are classics. No one can read Kathleen Jamie and remain indifferent or unchanged. Nationally acclaimed since her first major publications in the 1980s, Jamie stands out from other contemporary poets in her exceptional musicality, her strikingly unusual perspectives, her wry humour, translucent imagery, and hard-edged economy of expression. These 16 newly commissioned critical essays and 7 previously unpublished poems by leading poets make up the first full-length study of Kathleen Jamie's writing. The essays discuss all of her poetry collections, including *The Queen of Sheba* (1994), *Jizzen* (1999), *Mr and Mrs Scotland Are Dead: Poems 1980-94* (2002), *The Tree House* (2004) and *The Overhaul* (2012), as well as her travel writing, including *Among Muslims* (2002), her nature writing, *Findings* (2005) and *Sightlines* (2012) and her collaborative work, including *Frissure* (2013), with artist Brigid Collins. Whether engaging with national politics, with gender, with landscape and place, or with humanity's relation to the natural environment, this volume demonstrates that Kathleen Jamie's verse teaches us new ways of listening, of seeing and of living in the contemporary world.



(<http://www.euppublishing.com/book/9780748696000>)

Fleet, Christopher / MacCannell, Daniel, *Edinburgh: Mapping the City*, Edinburgh: Birlinn 2014 (hardback £30.00)

Maps can tell much about the story of a place that traditional histories fail to communicate. This is particularly true of Edinburgh, one of the most visually stunning cities in the world and a place rich in historical and cultural associations. This lavishly illustrated book features 71 maps of Edinburgh which have been selected for the particular stories they reveal about the political, commercial and social life of Scotland and her capital. Many are reproduced in book form for the first time. Together, they present a fascinating insight into how Edinburgh has changed and developed over the last 500 years, and will appeal to all those with an interest in Edinburgh and Scottish history, as well as anyone interested in urban history, architectural history, town planning or the history of cartography.

(<http://www.birlinn.co.uk/Edinburgh.html>)

Fry, Michael, *A Higher World. Scotland 1707-1815*, Edinburgh: Birlinn 2014 (hardback £25.00)

In his journey from the Union of 1707 to its centenary and beyond, Fry takes in vivid scenes from all over the country, ranging up and down the social scale from peeresses to prostitutes, from lairds to lunatics, and covering every major aspect of national life from agriculture to philosophy. Most other Scottish histories published in recent times concentrate on social and economic history, but Fry insists that any true understanding of the nation, in the past as in the present, needs to pay at least as much attention to politics and culture.

(<http://www.birlinn.co.uk/A-Higher-World-Scotland-1707-1815.html>)

Geoghegan, Peter, *The People's Referendum: Why Scotland Will Never Be the Same Again*, Edinburgh: Luath Press 2014 (paperback £9.99)

*The People's Referendum* is the story of Scotland's historic vote, not as recorded by pollsters and politicians, but as experienced by some of the ordinary – and extraordinary – people involved. Taking the scenic route we travel from 'the Debatable Lands' of the Scottish Borders to the Western Isles; meet ageing Communists rallying behind the independence cause in post-industrial Fife and loyal Orangemen backing the union; and soak up the ambience with secessionists across Europe trying desperately to follow Scotland's lead.

(<http://www.luath.co.uk/peoples-referendum.html>)

More information on the book can be found in these articles:

(<http://sluggerotoole.com/2014/12/31/the-peoples-referendum-why-scotland-will-never-be-the-same-again-peter-geoghegan/>)

(<http://news.stv.tv/scotland-decides/analysis/307095-peter-geoghegans-the-peoples-referendum-reviewed-by-aidan-kerr/>)

More information on the author can be found on his home page:

(<http://www.petergeoghegan.com/>)

Groundwater, Anna, *Scotland Connected: The History of Scotland, England and the World at a Glance*, Edinburgh: Luath Press 2014 (paperback £9.99)

Anna Groundwater has long experience of dealing with British, foreign and Scottish students, of all ages, bewildered by the huge task of trying to reconcile the development of Scotland as a nation with what they know of global history. Over time she has developed a way of presenting Scottish history, within a simple framework of dates, which students find helpful.

(<http://www.luath.co.uk/books/coming-soon/scotland-connected.html>)

Jeffrey, Robert, *Scotland's Cruel Sea: Heroism and Disaster off the Scottish Coast*, Edinburgh: Black & White Publishing 2014 (paperback £9.99)

High cliffs jutting out into the Atlantic and the North Sea, many hundreds of rocky skerries, deep sea lochs, dangerous unseen reefs, powerful tides and gales that batter the land fiercely from all points of the compass...Scotland has a coastline of immense beauty and danger, and its cruel sea has claimed many lives down the years.

Disaster at sea is a poignant part of Scotland's history, and in this chilling and awe-inspiring book, bestselling author Robert Jeffrey tells the compelling stories of the victims of the ocean depths. Car ferries, fishing boats, troopers, pleasure yachts and Navy vessels of all sorts, including submarines, have gone to the bottom. And in brave attempts to save those in danger with lifeboats, many have died.

Including the famous tales of the Princess Victoria, the ill-fated K13 submarines, the Longhope lifeboat and the *lolaire*, Scotland's Cruel Sea remembers the maritime tragedies that made headlines and became part of the folk memory of a seagoing nation.

([http://www.blackandwhitepublishing.com/index.php/books/view/scotlands\\_cruel\\_sea1](http://www.blackandwhitepublishing.com/index.php/books/view/scotlands_cruel_sea1))

McAlpine, Robin / Dinan, Will, *Power Failure: Exploring how Scotland is run and what it means for our democracy*, Edinburgh: Luath Press 2015 (paperback £7.99)

A select few hold a monopoly of power over Scotland. But why is this? And what can be done about it?

In *Power Failure*, Robin McAlpine and Will Dinan strip back the power dynamics involved in Scottish politics, examining the nation's leading political elites, corporations, policy-makers and pressure groups, and exploring the social, political and economic implications. This book is essential reading if you want to know who is currently running Scotland, and how you can take control from them.

(<http://www.luath.co.uk/books/coming-soon/power-failure.html>)

McCredie, Alan, *100 Weeks of Scotland: A Portrait of a Nation on the Verge*, Edinburgh: Luath Press 2015 (paperback £9.99)

From the signing of the Edinburgh Agreement through to the referendum and its immediate aftermath, this book charts a country in the grip of political debate. *100 Weeks of Scotland* is not simply a political book. It brings together stunning photography and stimulating commentary to capture a country in transition.

It examines Scotland in all its forms from its stunning landscapes to its urban sprawl to, most notably of all, its people as they live their lives in the run up to the most significant democratic event in their country's history. It is a portrait of a nation on the verge of the unknown.

(<http://www.luath.co.uk/books/new-books/100-weeks-of-scotland.html>)

Macwhirter, Iain, *Disunited Kingdom: How Westminster Won a Referendum but Lost Scotland*, Glasgow: Cargo Publishing 2014 (paperback £8.99)

What does the future hold for Scotland?

On the 18th September 2014, Scotland voted to stay in the Union. In this provocative new book, Iain Macwhirter argues that the UK will never be the same again. *Disunited Kingdom* explores Scotland's political and cultural landscape in the immediate build up to, and the aftermath of, the referendum. Combining expert and personal insight, Macwhirter deftly examines the future of Scotland, the UK, and the enduring passion for independence.

(<http://www.cargopublishing.com/books/disunited-kingdom-how-westminster-won-a-referendum-but-lost-scotland/>)

Meir, Christopher, *Scottish Cinema: Texts and Contexts*, Manchester: MUP 2015 (hardback £70.00)  
Over the last three decades, Scottish cinema has seen an unprecedented number of international successes. Films ranging from *Local Hero* to *The Last King of Scotland* have not only raised the profile of film-making north of Hadrian's Wall, but have also raised a number of questions about the place of cinema originating from a small, historically marginalised, as yet stateless nation, within national and transnational film cultures.

By providing detailed case studies of some of the biggest films of contemporary Scottish cinema, including *Local Hero*, *Mrs. Brown*, *Morvern Callar* and others, this volume will help readers to understand the key works of the period as well as the industrial, critical and cultural contexts surrounding their creation and reception. As the field of Scottish film studies has also grown and developed during this period, this volume will also introduce readers to the debates sparked by the key works discussed in the book.

(<http://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/cgi-bin/indexer?product=9780719086359>)

Mutch, Alistair, *Religion and National Identity: Governing Scottish Presbyterianism in the Eighteenth Century*, Edinburgh: EUP 2015 (hardback £70.00)

Presbyterianism has shaped Scotland and its impact on the world. Behind its beliefs lie some distinctive practices of governance which endure even when belief fades. These practices place a particular emphasis on the detailed recording of decisions and what we can term a 'systemic' form of accountability.

This book examines the emergence and consolidation of such practices in the eighteenth century Church of Scotland. Using extensive archival research and detailed local case studies, it contrasts them to what is termed a 'personal' form of accountability in England in the same period. This supports the contrast that has been made by other authors between a focus on system in Scotland, character in England. The wider impact of this approach to governance and accountability, especially in the United States of America, is explored, as is the enduring impact of these practices in shaping Scottish identity.

(<http://www.euppublishing.com/book/9780748699155>)

Salmond, Alex, *The Dream Shall Never Die: 100 Days that Changed Scotland Forever*, London: William Collins 2015 (hardback £12.99)

Former first minister Alex Salmond is to tell his side of the story of the Scottish referendum in a new book only six weeks before May's general election. He said: "The referendum changed Scotland for ever. This is my story of the campaign and hopes for the future of the nation."

(<http://www.harpercollins.com/9780008139766/the-dream-shall-never-die-100-days-that-changed-scotland-forever>)

More information on the book can be found in these articles:

(<http://www.heraldscotland.com/mobile/news/home-news/the-dream-shall-never-die-salmonds-indyref-memoir-title-echoes-edward-kennedy.1425431040>)

(<http://www.buzzfeed.com/jamieross/the-dream-will-never-diary>)

Silver, Christopher, *The Case for a Scottish Media: A concise exploration of Scotland's media deficit and how we can tackle it*, Edinburgh: Indiegogo 2015 (available in June, hardback £12)

Featuring interviews and insights from leading journalists, commentators, experts and thinkers, this book will offer a compelling and well-researched case for the renewal of a vital component in Scotland's national life.

Scotland is a country of diverse economies, varied landscapes, distinct cultures and big ideas. As the past year has shown us, our politics can grab the attention of global audiences and move millions.

At the same time there is widespread anger and distrust throughout the country about the conduct of newspapers and broadcasters as a result of their coverage of the referendum. It's time to channel that strength of feeling into a compelling set of demands for change. But this question goes beyond politics and our own borders: the rapidly declining resources available for quality journalism, diverse opinion and innovative programming in Scotland should be a matter of concern for all.

(<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/the-case-for-a-scottish-media>)

More information on the author can be found on his home page:

(<http://www.christophersilver.co.uk/>)

Szechi, Daniel, *Britain's lost revolution. Jacobite Scotland and French grand strategy, 1701-8*, Manchester: MUP 2015 (hardback £70.00)

This book is a frontal attack on an entrenched orthodoxy. Our official, public vision of the early eighteenth century demonises Louis XIV and France and marginalises the Scots Jacobites. Louis is seen as an incorrigibly imperialistic monster and the enemy of liberty and all that is good and progressive. The Jacobite Scots are presented as so foolishly reactionary and dumbly loyal that they were (sadly) incapable of recognising their manifest destiny as the cannon fodder of the first British empire. But what if Louis acted in defence of a nation's liberties and (for whatever reason) sought to right a historic injustice? What if the Scots Jacobites turn out to be the most radical, revolutionary party in early eighteenth-century British politics? Using newly discovered sources from the French and Scottish archives this exciting new book challenges our fundamental assumptions regarding the emergence of the fully British state in the early eighteenth century.

(<http://manchesteruniversitypressblog.blogspot.de/2015/01/britains-lost-revolution.html>)

Torrance, David, *100 Days of Hope and Fear: How Scotland's Independence Referendum was Lost and Won*, Edinburgh: Luath Press 2015 (paperback £9.99)

What can the people of Scotland – and other aspirant nations – learn from this seismic democratic event? Scotland's independence referendum on 18 September 2014 was the most significant ballot in Scotland's history. The 100 days up to 18 September was the official campaign period and the world's media was watching. David Torrance was there throughout, in front of the cameras, on the radio, in the newspapers, at the debates and gatherings, privy to some of the behind-the-scenes manoeuvrings.

(<http://www.luath.co.uk/books/new-books/100-days-of-hope-and-fear.html>)

Torrance, David, *Nicola Sturgeon: A Political Life*, Edinburgh: Birlinn 2015 (paperback £8.99)

A Biography of the current First Minister of Scotland and the Leader of the Scottish National Party.

(<http://www.birlinn.co.uk/Nicola-Sturgeon-A-Biography.html>)

### **Book Reviews**

**Smollett, Tobias. *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle. In which are included, Memoirs of a Lady of Quality*, introd. & notes by John P. Zomchick and George S. Rousseau; the text ed. by O. M. Brack, Jr. and W.H. Keithley, Athens/London: The University of Georgia Press 2014 (924 pp., hardback € 269.98)**

The British humour of *Peregrine Pickle* is not to the taste of every contemporary reader. Nevertheless, Orwell believed "these petty rogueries worth reading about": "In the first place because they are funny - Secondly, by simply ruling out 'good' motives and showing no respect whatever for human dignity." (1944)

The preface and the detailed introduction to this edition of *Peregrine Pickle* successfully try to explain the strengths and alleged weaknesses to the reader, in a way that offers a highly academic and often entertaining approach to Smollett's novel. His narrative achievements are assessed in their own right and not measured against Smollett's rivals such as Henry Fielding.

This edition of *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* is a collaborative effort, owing to the fact that John Zomchick succeeded G.S. Rousseau as editor. The late O. M. Brack Jr, and W. H. Keithley prepared the text. The academic achievement of this edition demonstrates once more the high quality of the whole editorial project.

The introduction discusses the history of the publication, the "Biographical Background," dedicates a whole chapter to "Composition, Printing, and Reception," and concludes with a section on "Comedy, Satire, and Realism." Its purpose is to clarify the controversial and complicated history of the text and the topics that distinguish Smollett's novels from those of many contemporaries.

Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* was originally published in 1751. The second (1758) and the third editions (1765) took a further seven years each to appear. The novel contained an exchange of letters between Lady Vane and an unnamed Lord. Smollett thoroughly revised many passages in the second edition, reacting to criticism of having written an immoral book. Until the beginning of the twentieth century *Peregrine Pickle* was published quite regularly and became almost as popular as *Roderick Random* (1748) and *Humphry Clinker* (1771). In spite of the widespread criticism, the novel was included in all significant editions of Smollett's works. In the twentieth century it was the Oxford University Press that provided the basis for many more editions to follow.

Neither the autograph manuscript nor any of the printer's copies of Smollett's works has survived. The copy-text from the University of Iowa is that of the first edition (1751). The textual apparatus lists the emendations of the first three editions published in 1751 (not 1755 as erroneously written on page 827), 1758, 1765, and the present edition, a list of word divisions, and the historical collation. The editors justify the decision to publish the first edition with the unobliterated authenticity of this version, "with a liberal—if not libertine—comic spirit unfettered by critical censure." (xvi) The text of the first edition "flowed freely from the pen of an author too impassioned to think much about the rules of decorum," as the editors justify their decision. Smollett's revisions to the first edition can be found in the historical collation (xvi). Some 24,000 words out of 380,000 were deleted by Smollett, what Scott called using "the pruning knife" (xliv).

The extensive notes that include a wealth of updated bibliographical references are based on former editions by Herbert and Clifford and the studies and biographies on Smollett that have been published ever since the 1920s. In addition, the editorial work has benefitted from digitised text corpora and publications such as the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO). The book illustrations selected from Fuseli, Corbould, Rowlandson, and Cruikshank enrich this impressive book project.

The introduction gives a detailed account of Smollett's life with an emphasis on the period when he wrote *Peregrine Pickle*. This includes Smollett's double career as medical doctor and writer and his influential experiences in the British navy (ixxx). The background, important to an understanding of Smollett's novel, goes beyond this extraordinary biography. Smollett was not only inspired by maritime war, but also by his strong feelings of animosity towards some of his literary competitors. Some have seen the notorious, personal attack on Henry Fielding as distressing jealousy of an unforgiving writer; the editors characterise Smollett as "vicious" and "cruel" (xxxiv). In his dedication of *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, Smollett offers some reconciliatory remarks "I can despise your pride, while I honour your integrity; and applaud your taste." Still he believed Fielding to be "impatient of caution or controul" (xxxvi). Here the editors see a connection to *Peregrine Pickle*, who suffers from "the same pride and resentments that characterized his creator" (xxxvi). Whatever one might say against these random biographical references and explanations, in an introduction to a novel such as *Peregrine Pickle* they offer a highly welcome personal



involvement and vivid immediacy that prepares the reader for the peculiarities of Smollett's narrative art.

The plot of the story is not only extraordinarily lengthy, but also hardly structured. One episode follows the next and the approximately 380,000 words, some 50,000 of which are given to the interpolated tale entitled "Memoirs of a Lady of Quality," were written in such a short period of time that Smollett must have grasped his pen "wherever and whenever he could during 1750" (xxxvii). The troubled life story of Lady Frances Anne Mine, her two marriages, the latter being forced upon her, her separations and love affairs do "not carry the same interest for the modern reader as it did for her contemporaries," as the editors appropriately remark and therefore the attention is shifted to issues of composition and authorship (xxxix).

On the question of whether "Lady Vane or a ghostwriter other than Smollett" wrote the interpolation, the editors contribute a new and convincing argument to the controversy. A quotation from *Gil Blas* is much more likely to originate from Smollett himself, who had translated and published the French novel in 1748 and revised the text in 1749 (xxvii). The editors are careful not to speak of conclusive proof concerning Smollett's collaborative authorship, but one agrees with the quality of this finding that reads like "an occult signature easily overlooked in a fifty-thousand-word manuscript" (xl).

The contemporary critics called the novel "an immoral piece, and a scurrilous libel" and declared the book to be "void of humour, character and sentiment" (xlii). This involved a considerable commercial disappointment for Smollett (xlii) that might not have been as devastating as he believed. The editors conclude their account of a commercial disappointment with the discussion of a highly diverse and entertaining text. Another interpolation, the Annesley case, for instance, includes episodes from the life story of Daniel MacKercher (1702-72), "a soldier, lawyer, lover, humanitarian, and merchant" (xl). *Roderick Random* had been much more successful and therefore the commercial failure of *Peregrine Pickle* "was most likely an unpleasant surprise and a bitter disappointment to the ambitious author" (xli).

In their chapter on "Comedy, Satire, and Realism" the editors approach the episodic character of Smollett's novel describing it as "successive rather than causal, additive rather than developmental." (xlvi) If there is any development evolving from the text then it is motivated by the hero's "moral transformation over time" lacking any "causal connections between specific episodes in the plot," as the editors explain (xlvi). There is no such thing as a "finely constructed plot" and compared to Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, the reader of *Peregrine Pickle* might therefore come to the inappropriate conclusion that it is "a flawed performance" (xlvi). The explanation given in the introduction presents a subtle and complex case. Quoting James Clifford, the editors show how various traditions such as "the picaresque, classical formal satire, comedy, melodrama, the new sensibility, and at times stark realism" convey Smollett's "unique vision of experience" that contributes a new style to the genre, revealing minute details of the real world with "force and immediacy of a revelation" (xlvi). Following the picaresque tradition more rigidly than Fielding, Smollett "thinks of novel composition spatially first and temporally last," as the editors summarise their findings.

This is supported by a famous explanation given by the author in *Ferdinand Count Fathom* when he compares the novel with a picture and reduces plot to a function of personage (xlvi). The editors do not see personage accounting for all the effects Smollett's style of writing exerts on the reader, but rather see Smollett's "intellectual honesty" compelling him "to render experience vividly and [...] tied directly to the principal personage" (xlviii). The plot is of no concern here.

The editors offer a few well-chosen examples of Smollett's sketching and unfolding of memorable characters with psychological depth (liii), such as Commodore Trunnion. They show how the

narrative "genius" of Peregrine Pickle is woven into "the entire canvas upon which is painted a densely populated and vividly realized fictional world." (lix)

The publication of his longest novel celebrates the success of this publication project of the University of Georgia Press. Brack's conclusion, in his 2011 essay on Smollett, that "the Scottish author of some of the best novels in English, will continue to be misunderstood, his life and career shrouded in an undeserved obscurity" (34), has come under revision by this edition of *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* and the conclusion of the entire publication project after well over forty years.<sup>6</sup>

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**Macwhirter, Iain, *Disunited Kingdom: How Westminster Won a Referendum But Lost Scotland*, Glasgow: Cargo 2014 (174 pp., £8.99 paperback and Ebook).**

Iain Macwhirter is a journalist with extensive experience through his work for *The Herald*, the *Sunday Herald*, the BBC, and many other sources of public information (cf. his homepage <https://iainmacwhirter.wordpress.com/> and his articles <http://journalisted.com/iain-macwhirter?allarticles=yes>). He was also Rector of Edinburgh University from 2009 to 2012, and has thus been involved in intriguing and important areas of our contemporary society. *Disunited Kingdom* gives readers a first-hand insight into his experiences during the referendum and his evaluations of the events and people that were relevant in this process. What began in the months before September 2014 and resulted in that month's referendum is far from being over. It has just influenced the general election in Britain in May 2015, and will have further effects on the Tory government in power from now on. A sound description of the referendum from the point of view of an enlightened and critical Scot is, therefore, very helpful for everybody trying to understand what has been going on in Britain.

Macwhirter directly says that this book "is a personal account: history as I saw it. But I believe it is also an accurate one, based on direct contact with most of the key people involved." Change now is absolutely necessary, and while the referendum "result was fascinating in its ambiguity", "the real victors were the Scottish people themselves." (9) The book has already received much praise and only little criticism. Harry McGrath, e.g., thinks that it does not reveal many new things to anybody familiar with Macwhirter's popular newspaper columns, and he especially wonders about the fact that there are mainly male commentators mentioned and only 18 men thanked in the acknowledgements (cf. the [Scottish Review of Books 21-1-15](#)). One can only agree with him on these points, but this does not at all reduce the book's enormous usefulness as a sound description of key events, a good analysis of political, economic, and social contexts, and as providing intriguing background information that even people in Scotland will not always have. Many important well-known as well as little known people are mentioned, too, and the resulting sense of intimacy with events as they actually unfolded takes the reader into the midst of the action.

The eight chapters have one main topic each, well expressed in the chapter titles, even though there are also often deviations and excursions into other areas, which is, however, easily acceptable in a "personal account" and a very readable text. Chap. 1 thus is about "The Glorious Revolution – Scotland's Festival of Politics", which was so glorious because it made "ordinary people, who would never have dreamed of public speaking, talk [-] of their 'journey' to the independence cause and their dreams of a better society." (14) This was indeed one of the key achievements of the referendum, but Macwhirter also mentions the shortcomings "within the Yes Scotland headquarters" (20), such as not strongly enough confronting the endless "story of Yes intimidation" by the main

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<sup>6</sup> Brack, O.M. "Tobias Smollett: The Life of an Author." In: *New Contexts for Eighteenth-Century British Fiction*. Ed. Christopher D. Johnson. Newark: University of Delaware Press 2011. 17-40.

media supporting Better Together. "So, almost everything that could go wrong with the Yes Campaign organisation probably did go wrong." (21)

Chapter 1 finishes with Macwhirter's main points, which I will highlight here, as he mentions them just in passing, but they characterise his position and the entire book, namely 1) that the "Union won at best a Pyrrhic victory" and that without "a very rapid, fully federal transformation of the UK another referendum in the next decade or so will assuredly lead Scotland out of it." 2) Scotland has changed significantly by the creation of "a powerful independence movement unprecedented in modern Scottish history." 3) The "press, perhaps unconsciously, became an arm of the Better Together campaign. Social media was only able to mitigate this negativity, not balance it." There clearly was "a lack of press diversity." It is a bit odd that the experienced journalist Macwhirter thinks it really possible that this effect of the media could indeed have come about "unconsciously". Even though some journalists might not have been aware of what they were doing, the people in command definitely were. Is this, perhaps, just another example of too much Scottish politeness and reticence to speak out? As Macwhirter usually is not really shy, is this rather an indication of too little reflection here? Later on in the book, he clearly says "I don't think it was entirely unconscious. [...] I believe in their hearts many Scottish and UK journalists knew exactly what they were doing to the Yes campaign. It is called 'monstering'." (95) So why does he not say so here? This is just one of several signs that a bit more editorial work on the book would have prevented such weaknesses.

The next main point 4) is that the "Scottish independence campaign was a progressive force, like the civic nationalist movements of central Europe in the 1990s." (27) One thing is very relevant in this context, and Macwhirter expresses it quite clearly: "Nationalism in Scotland has shown itself capable of mobilising progressive forces for change in a way the Marxist and non-Marxist left has not been able to do for half a century. It is now imperative that this broad decentralised movement finds new non-sectarian structures to keep this civic engagement fresh and alive. The Yes Scotland campaign ceased to exist on 19<sup>th</sup> September; a grass roots home rule movement must fill the vacuum. It should not merely be collapsed into the Scottish National Party." (27f) It seems as though Common Weal has now done this (cf. my plea "Let's Support a Common Weal Scotland" in the *Scottish Studies Newsletter* 44, Oct. 2014, 26-34).

5) Macwhirter is clearly also correct in assuming that Westminster is not serious about creating "a federal state", and he, therefore, agrees with Alex Salmond "that victory for independence is only a matter of time." 6) His evaluation of Salmond as "Scotland's first truly national political leader", who "helped the Scottish nation rediscover itself", will again find general agreement. And so will the last two points Macwhirter makes at the end of chapter one and repeatedly throughout the book: 7) "The Scots are not revolutionary people" and were, therefore, much influenced by the threat that they would lose the pound. 8) The referendum result thus "was a grudging No vote bought by threats and negativity." But it also produced "a near-death experience for the British state" (29), a situation which is still not resolved.

Chap. 2 deals with "The Pound and Disunion" (30ff), discusses Salmond's weakness in the first TV encounter with Alistair Darling demanding to hear Salmond's plan B, as plan A, a currency union, would not come true, and then claims that Better Together used this for "what was essentially a single issue campaign based on the future of Scotland's currency." (34f) The Tories, Liberal Democrats, and Labour were all united in this view, even though it was rejected by important economists. (37f) Macwhirter creates an intriguing story out of the events showing how this "Declaration of the Pound was intended to wreck the Scottish Government's plans, and it did", but at the same time "it was also about to come close to wrecking the Better Together campaign." (42) The reason for this was that most Scots did not believe the chancellor, and an enormous credibility problem arose for Better Together. What was even more important was the fact that the pound exclusion revealed "that the Union ha[d] ceased to be a partnership of equals". (49) Macwhirter's story climaxes with the sentence that "as a moral community, the Union died on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014,

and that it was George Osborne who wielded the knife." (50) Again one is inclined to agree with him, and it is also good that in this context he mentions Robin McAlpine's criticism of Yes Scotland and the Scottish Government failing "to mobilise an effective economic counterargument." Both too often "relied on faith, hope and assertions" (46), which usually are not enough.

The following chapters continue in this way, chap. 3 shows "How Art became Politics" (51ff) and provides insight into as well as information on important people involved in the Edinburgh Festival, the National Collective, the Scottish literary community and so on. The BBC is harshly and correctly criticised here as an example of the "patronising, top-down attitude of metropolitan news bulletins", whereas "people in Scotland have moved, younger voters in particular, into the multichannel digital age", leaving the former "cultural priesthood" of the BBC behind. (66f) The main point about art becoming political, however, is that it "engages people emotionally and spiritually and not just as an electoral army trying to win an election." And this is what Macwhirter noticed: "People felt genuinely transformed by their experience of the campaign." (68) They were inspired "with a vision of what could be a better society." (69) His main conclusion is that the "ideology of the Yes campaign was eclectic, socialist, pacifist, and sometimes confused, but it was invariably inclusive and democratic." (70)

But it completely lost against "Mainstream Media", the topic of chap. 4, providing intriguing insights, such as, e.g., the difference between the *Sunday Herald* and its "sister paper, *The Herald*," the first supporting independence, the second not. (75) For Macwhirter (and everybody else) "it was abundantly clear [...] that the Scottish and UK press was hostile to independence", was in fact "A Partisan Press". (77, 76) As he shows in his first appendix, "negative stories dominate overall by around three to one." (78) He becomes even more critical and outspoken, saying that "it was as if they [all newspapers] had all suddenly become *The Telegraph*. The press pack engaged in a kind of war of escalating hyperbole, vying with each other to deliver the latest independence shock." (83) His conclusion is evident: "Democracy doesn't work when voters are not exposed to both sides of the story." (87) Scotland, like any other nation, requires free media, and the new media began to offer them, "websites like *Wings Over Scotland*, *Newsnet Scotland*, *Bella Caledonia*, *National Collective* and a host of other aggregators". (88f) There are also negative elements here that Macwhirter discusses, such as narrowness and sectionalism, he again mentions important names, and concludes that this explosion of initiatives on the internet "has altered the media landscape of Scotland forever." (90) It is appropriate that this chapter ends with "Bashing The BBC" (91ff), even though for analytical reasons it would have been nicer to have this topic in just one chapter, or to have it collected in an index, rather than have it appear repeatedly in different places in the book.

Chap. 5 is on "The Nationalist Janus – The Two Faced Bastard" and again begins in the typically intriguing way that characterises this book, namely with "the BBC's Big Big Debate" [sic] at the SSE Hydro in Glasgow a week before the referendum. (96) Blood and soil nationalism does not exist in the SNP, Macwhirter shows, and he also emphasises that it is "wrong to conflate the Yes campaign with the SNP. Many of the most energetic activists in the Yes campaign were from the Green Party and the Scottish socialists", others came from Women for Independence, Asians for Independence or the other groups mentioned here. (97) References to such connections are a key asset of this book, which also deals intelligently with nationalism, pointing out its tradition (or lack of it), again in connection with important and very different people, such as George Orwell, Wilfred Owen, and Oswald Mosley. This is another good chapter pointing out relevant historical contexts as well as "two competing nationalisms: British and Scottish", and using "Gellner's definition of 'civic nationalism' as a movement" with which one can "address a perceived democratic deficit." (108) This became important in Scotland only in the 1990s, and Macwhirter thinks that "self-determination for Scotland is the only sensible solution to this contradiction between Scottish aspirations and UK political reality, and if that's what nationalism means, so be it". (109)

Chap. 6 is on "The Constitution – The 15% Federal Solution" (114ff) and discusses the difficulties connected with this situation. In theory, federalism makes much sense in a

"multinational state like Britain. However, [...], it may be that the federal moment has passed for the United Kingdom." (131) It has passed, because Scotland is already far down that road, but Westminster is both unwilling and unable to accept this for the entire UK.

Chap. 7 is about the shift "From Salmond to Sturgeon" (132ff) and provides space for pointing out Salmond's achievements, such as securing "party unity" (135), as well as his shortcomings, exemplified by "Salmond's failure on the pound." (137) Space is also given to "another 'queer fish' as Labourites on Twitter put it", namely Nicola Sturgeon, who is described as "an immensely capable politician". (143) Again one can only agree with Macwhirter that her "number one priority will be to win the 2016 Scottish parliamentary elections". (145) And again the chapter ends with something not at all covered by its title, namely the situation of the Labour Party after the resignation of Johann Lamont and her replacement by Jim Murphy. But this works well to point out the enormous contrast between the so-called losers of the referendum and its pseudo winners.

Chap. 8 is on "The Permanent Referendum [...] and the End of the United Kingdom" (150ff), where Macwhirter once more speaks about the "extraordinary changes in Scottish attitudes to self-government in the past twenty years", the fact that the people who think independence is necessary in order "to create a fairer nuclear free society [-] are not going to go away", and his conviction "that Scotland will be an independent country. And we may not have to wait very long to see it." (161)

Macwhirter's book gives excellent information on the key issues connected with the Scottish referendum. It is particularly important for everybody interested in the media as well as in grassroots organisations and groups arising out of local communities or political interests that had often been separated but came together in connection with the referendum and formed new units, such as the Radical Independence Campaign. He usually gives short, but helpful information on their political and social contexts. It is a great pity that the book does not have an index which would help readers to put the material available in different chapters together and see it as a whole. There is a list of 55 references at the end, mostly to websites, which is useful, and some books. There is also an appendix consisting of "Leading stories in the Referendum Campaign as compiled by Press Data's Referendum Daily, 1/9/2014-17/9/2014", one on each British constituency and its "opinion on re-distribution of wealth" (171), one on the "major parties' proposals to the Smith Commission", a "Referendum Poll Tracker from January 2012 to October 2014" (172), and the fifth and final appendix consists of the exit polls on 18 and 19 September 2014. This is another good indication of the kind of information one finds in this highly recommendable book.

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**Fraser, Ian, *Shredded. Inside RBS, the Bank that Broke Britain*, Edinburgh: Birlinn 2014 (511 pp., £25 hardcover and Ebook)**

How well written and intelligently thought through this book is becomes instantly evident with a look at its table of contents and the headlines of its 36 chapters. Beginning with "The battle Royal" (1-11), each chapter has a title that directly reveals its topic and expresses it in a concise, pithy form. This review will select just a few of them, in order to give readers a good idea of how the book is written and what its main points are. "Bagging NatWest" (chap. 9, 78-95) is another example providing all the necessary information on troubles NatWest had since it began in 1970, but then, of course, focussing on Peter Burt's attempts to take it over in 1999. As in all other chapters, background information is given on Burt's history at the RBS, and an earlier takeover attempt by him in late 1997, which "had been rebuffed." Fraser is not only excellent with facts, though, he also offers appropriate imagery, in this case, e.g., when he says that "From his office in the Bank of Scotland's high-Victorian palazzo overlooking Edinburgh's Princes Street, Peter Burt was like Captain Ahab sharpening his harpoon." (79)

Fraser does not only express his own opinions, analyses, and evaluations, he regularly corroborates them with those of experts and important insider information, such as this of an ex-advisor recalling "a strong anti-English flavour to the Royal Bank's battle plans, where one RBS banker "saw himself as the reincarnation of Prince Charles Edward Stuart." The mindset of the RBS people was "'along the lines of 'We're going to stuff those bastards in London.' They thought Royal Bank was streets ahead of any of the English banks and wanted to prove it.'" This kind of language makes for light, entertaining reading and nicely counterbalances the fact-based or analytical parts of the book. Fraser shows that the "RBS top brass did have an Achilles heel" (82), he actually reveals several of them in each chapter, most of them connected with stunning ignorance of the matters dealt with and disgusting arrogance, which, of course, is not a sign of a professional and rational approach to one's job. One example in this chapter is provided by "Mathewson's contempt for fund managers, the very people the bank had to woo in coming weeks." (82, speaking of George Mathewson, RBS's CEO) The result of the final RBS's £21-billion takeover of NatWest is eventually described by Tim Hindle, associate editor of *The Economist* and author of several books on banking [...], "as a defensive manoeuvre designed to shore up an outmoded business model from the threat posed by e-banks like Prudential's Egg." Before this damaging evaluation, Fraser himself had already quoted the fallen share prices and concluded that the "Scottish banks had sacrificed an awful lot of shareholder value in the pursuit of NatWest." (94)

"Royal Bank of Fred" (chap. 15, 150-155) is about RBS's CEO from 2000 to 2008 Fred Goodwin, also known as "Fred the Shred" or "Fred the Impaler". (87) In 2002, Goodwin became Forbes Global Businessman of the Year, and sources close to him "believe that the award played a big part in inflating his ego, conceit and lust for power." (150) Inside *Forbes*, "the editorial team always used to wonder whether someone who was featured on the cover would succumb to the 'cover curse' – meaning they would start to believe their own PR, become hubristic and make bad business decisions. In the case of Goodwin, that transformation happened overnight." (151) The chapter is full of details confirming this transformation, which continues in the next chapter, where Goodwin becomes the "Laird of Gogarburn" (156-166), when RBS buys the site of the Gogarburn Psychiatric Hospital for its new "'world headquarters' office building" (156), "officially opened by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh in an extravaganza also attended by Lord Provost of Edinburgh Lesley Hinds, Scotland's First Minister Jack McConnell, Secretary of State for Scotland Alistair Darling and Deputy First Minister Nicol Stephen." (158) These names are simply exemplary of the many politicians connected with the RBS who have always wanted to profit from it and always failed disastrously in controlling it or making sure it offered good services to the public.

The chapter then gives precise information on the bank buying new expensive premises in all kinds of cities, new aircraft for Goodwin, "a fleet of 12 chauffeur-driven Mercedes S600 cars [...] painted in Pantone 281 – the shade of dark blue used in the bank's 'cow's arse' logo. Their leather seats were coloured Pantone 7409, the same amber as the office carpets." (163) Clearly essential assets of a bank. The same is true of the "permanent suite at the Savoy Hotel that Fred Goodwin used whenever he was in London. It came complete with a valet to look after his clothes, all at an estimated annual cost of £700,000." Before going into the "three-year sponsorship deal with the Williams Formula One motor sport team", which meant giving Williams "£28-million-a-year", Fraser has already given readers an explicit evaluation: "Obsessed with the accoutrements of wealth and power, Goodwin was becoming increasingly detached from reality and, in playing along with his bizarre obsessions, his subordinates were making things worse." (164) Nobody in control once again. But customers became "concerned about Goodwin's megalomaniacal tendencies", or were "alarmed that the RBS board seemed content to allow Goodwin to run RBS as a personal fiefdom and even as a vanity project." But Fred was not the only one "liberally spraying shareholders' capital around." (166) Fraser does not say so here, but his book makes it very clear that this kind of



behaviour is very much connected with the banking system and not just an individual character's weakness.

"Three Pillars of Ignorance" (chap. 19, 184-189) deals with the institutions established to control banks and "to underpin monetary and financial stability by fostering cooperation between the world's central banks." (184) First the Bank for International Settlement (BIS), created in Basel in 1930, then the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS), founded in 1947. Fraser instantly criticises the fact that this committee "operates like conclave of cardinals" [sic], i.e. "outwith public scrutiny." (184) Between "1988 and 2008, this organisation introduced a series of policies that were highly favourable to the short-term interests of banks but disastrous for the rest of us." (184f) Fraser gives detailed information on why this was the case, revealing his expert knowledge of these things, explaining Basel I of 1988, then Basel II of 2004. Basel II had "three so-called pillars: (1) minimum capital requirements [...]; (2) supervisory or regulatory review of banks' internal assessment process and capital adequacy; (3) effective use of disclosure to strengthen market discipline as a complement to supervisory efforts. The hope was that three pillars would be stronger than one." (187) Strong voices were soon raised that Basel II would fail disastrously, but were not heeded. The result: "Basel was spurring banks to move into a fast-moving world of 'originate and distribute', securitisation and shadow banking in which the reduction of perceived credit risk and the avoidance of tax came to be seen as the key to banking success." What an appropriate description of what indeed happened. "Bank regulators patted themselves on the back and said, 'Look – we've made banks safer.' But they've only done so by making other parts of the system weaker", says Avinash Persaud, chairman of London-based liquidity advisory firm Intelligence Capital." (188f) The last two paragraphs in this chapter deserve to be quoted in full: "To their delight, bankers had created a system that enabled them to deploy sophisticated arrays of smoke and mirrors to deceive investors, regulators, depositors, politicians and just about everyone else."

This harsh criticism is further increased and a fully justified blame is expressed with regard to politicians: "The author of the UK's 2000 review into the banking sector, Don Cruickshank, believes that Basel II was the prime cause of the global financial crisis and that it was a dereliction of duty for politicians to allow the bankers to write their own rules. 'In Basel II, we effectively let the banks decide what risk meant, and their balance sheets broadly doubled in about six years', said Cruickshank. 'I have not dug into the process; all I would observe is that the rules that emerged from that process were written in a way that enabled banks to deliver the very high leverage ratios which brought about the collapse of banks including RBS and HBOS in 2008.'" (189)

Similar kinds of ignorance, arrogance, and dereliction of duty are described throughout this excellent book, where I now must finish this review with some comments on the final chapter, called "The guilty men" (405-435), and leave out the chapters about how RBS swindled or harmed its customers so that it has "become such a hated institution". RBS now needs "to rebuild trust. But that will only be possible if the bank behaves in a trustworthy way right across its business." (404) "Royal Bank of Scotland was not alone in being shabby, reckless, greedy, dysfunctional and corrupt during the build-up to the crisis. Nor was it alone in being like that in its aftermath." "But there was only one person in the driver's seat [...] and he had been in that position for the previous eight and half years", Fred Goodwin. (405) "Goodwin's approach of verbally dismantling ('shredding') subordinates in front of their colleagues, his reluctance to heed advice and his lack of any internal confidants ensured he was increasingly out of touch and behaving like a medieval monarch, surrounded by cronies, courtiers and 'yes' men, without even a fool to remind him of his own human frailties." (407) An ex-executive director of RBS says that Goodwin also lacked basic knowledge and skills for his job, e.g., "he did not understand corporate banking, corporate credit or treasury function". (407)

"Tom McKillop – RBS chairman 2006-09" (409), "George Mathewson – RBS chairman 2000-06" (411), "Johnny Cameron – CEO/chairman RBS Global Banking and Markets 2000-08" (412)

are further guilty men, as are "Corporate governance/non-executive directors" (414), and a "Board and Bank too Scottish". (415) Fraser begins this sub-chapter with a sentence that is another example of his wonderful writing skill, style, and profound knowledge not only of the financial world: "Samuel Johnson once said that 'patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel' but, at RBS, it was seen as a virtue." (415)

Poor "Risk management" must also laid at the door of the guilty men, because as "in other banks, risk management at RBS was a box-ticking exercise where independence of thought was discouraged." (417) It would be interesting to go through the entire book again, in order to find out how often this point is actually made: people are not allowed to think independently. This has clearly changed now in Scotland generally as a result of the referendum, but has it really changed at RBS and other banks? This book lucidly and unambiguously says, no, it hasn't.

"The markets/institutional investors" are another big group of significant guilty men creating "the 'dictatorship of equity' – in which the ownership and control of banks are in the hands of a small and diminishing band of shareholders" who simply "focus on growing short-term shareholder returns". (418) Long-term perspectives and anything else but profit are totally irrelevant. The guilt, ignorance, and arrogance of "Regulators – the FSA [Financial Services Authority], DNB [De Nederlandsche Bank] and others" has already become evident: "Like the institutional investors, the FSA was a watchdog that did not bark – or, if it did bark, it did so up the wrong tree." Again and again two wrong assumptions were made: "that their boards of directors knew what they were doing and that they had integrity." (420) The result is evident: "The 'revolving door' between regulators and regulated made proper regulation of the UK banking sector all but impossible. It meant the regulators shared the same world-view as the people they were supposed to be regulating. It also encouraged regulators to be unduly gentle with the banking sector." (421) And things have not changed at all: "Five years on from the crisis, I am afraid that in a great many cases the kneejerk response of senior regulators and the directors of British banks is still to sweep evidence of high-level financial wrongdoing, fraud and 'white-collar' crime under the rug." (421f) In fact, many bankers have been led "to assume they [are] immune from prosecution and above the law." (422)

The next group of guilty men is an evident one, where many more names could be mentioned, especially those of politicians still in power: "Politicians – Bill Clinton, George Bush, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown". They were surrounded by "free-market ideologues" (424) with close links to the financial world. David Cameron's government "has singularly failed to deliver" on repeated promises "of jailing criminal bankers". "The overall problem is the seemingly simplistic relationship between banks and politicians has morphed into one in which the 'pinstripe Scargills' have been able to hold the government to ransom." (426. The expression 'pinstripe Scargills' was already used by the Liberal Democrat Vince Cable in the 2010 debate among possible future chancellors, cf. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eirWmHzyz4g> or [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/8593969.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/8593969.stm).) That the Tories have been hand-in-glove with the financial sector won't surprise anybody, but the description of Labour by the *Spectator* editor Fraser Nelson might have been a shock to that party's supporters in the past, though not any longer, as Labour's results in the recent general election reveal that people are fed up with Labour politicians. Nelson says that "'Labour ran a form of crony capitalism'". (426)

"Central bankers – Alan Greenspan and Mervyn King" (426ff) are also among the guilty men, understandably, and Fraser supplies further illuminating reasons why this is so with regard to the Federal Reserve chairman and the governor of the Bank of England from 2003 to 2013. King's repeated statements "that there was nothing the Bank of England could do to avert or quell the crisis" are revealed as blatant lies, "it could have done quite a lot", and Fraser gives just two examples. Albert Edwards, global strategist at Société Générale, is quoted with a clear judgement on King: "He has been at the helm and should, in my view, bear primary responsibility for the UK's economic collapse." (428. For people who want to learn more from Edwards, Fraser provides this URL to the 2012 text: [www.deflation.com/time-to-strip-sir-alan-greenspan-and-sir-mervyn-king-of-](http://www.deflation.com/time-to-strip-sir-alan-greenspan-and-sir-mervyn-king-of-)

[their-knighthoods-too/](#). This is just one of many examples where accolades like this are simply bad jokes, confirming the damaging links between politicians and finance.) Mitch Feierstein, hedge fund manager and *Planet Ponzi* author, points out this link again and provides a well-justified final evaluation: "The legacy of Lord King's (and Gordon Brown's) career has been an economy still limping along far below peak output, with real wages caught in a vice. Few recent careers have more comprehensively failed." (428, again with a link to the 2013 article in the *Independent*: [www.independent.co.uk/news/business/comment/mitch-feierstein-we-put-out-one-fire-but-now-mark-carney-wants-to-start-another-8911902.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/comment/mitch-feierstein-we-put-out-one-fire-but-now-mark-carney-wants-to-start-another-8911902.html).)

The shortcomings of the "Basel Committee on Banking Supervision" are summarised, and the first sentence already highlights one of its key problems: it is "an unaccountable private sector body". (429) We have had this long disastrous history, and politicians are now trying to do similar things with agreements like TTIP, which is just another example of their ignorance and arrogance. "Accounting Standards – International Standards Board (IASB)/the auditors" belong in the same category of official institutions not regulating anything and making bad work easier for banks, because under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) "– which were adopted by all larger companies in the UK from January 2005 – a bank is not required to admit that loans are in trouble until they actually sour." (430) Fraser has another expert express the result: "Tim Bush, head of governance and financial analysis at corporate governance group PIRC, said that IFRS [International Financial Reporting Standards], as applied in the UK and Ireland, enabled banks to create phantom profits and phantom capital that 'misled creditors, misled shareholders, the Bank of England, FSA and others'." (430f) It also "prompted the boards of banks to make illegal dividend payouts to shareholders while artificially inflating executive bonuses." In this way, the RBS "ended up hiding an astonishing £32 billion of loan losses." (431)

In his final "Conclusion" (432-5), Fraser holds Fred Goodwin responsible, then the many people in the RBS superstructure whose role it should have been "to stop imperious chief executives from leading companies to their destruction" (432), but who failed to act accordingly and instead preferred "to go with the flow, suck up to Fred and flatter his ego in the hope of maximising their fees." (433) "Among this bunch, blame must be widely shared but Sir Tom McKillop, chairman from April 2006 until February 2009, is more blameworthy than most." Only then does Fraser say something that I think he could have emphasised more often: "If there is to be one lesson from the RBS catastrophe from an internal company perspective, it is that Britain's much vaunted system of corporate governance is broken and is [sic] need of an urgent overhaul." (433) Yes, individual human beings have failed tremendously, but the system has allowed them to do so. Not only must the individuals be replaced, but above all the system must be changed fundamentally.

His very next sentence has already forgotten the system. One can, nevertheless, agree with what he says here, because it is so evidently true: "However, the true villains of the piece are the politicians, central bankers, regulators and the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision." Fraser then particularly and correctly blames Brown and Blair for giving up "any pretence of trying to regulate the banking sector" in mid-2002. "From that moment on, banks thought they could get away with virtually anything, whilst defying financial gravity and existing above the law. It meant morality and ethics were thrown out the window and we saw the mis-selling of rip-off products on an epic scale". Everybody who should have listened "turned a deaf ear to the complaints from the banks' millions of 'victims'". (433) Why does Fraser put 'victims' in inverted commas?

After the October 2008 collapse of RBS, the "government had an unprecedented opportunity to sort" things out by dividing RBS into a good and a bad bank, "following the model adopted by the Swedish government for its bombed-out banking sector in 1992. That would have permitted a harsher treatment of certain categories of creditors and a much more profound restructuring than was possible under the Labour government's half-baked bailout." It would also have been a better opportunity for "greater honesty and transparency in the way the bank was run and a less vindictive approach to smaller business customers whose businesses and lives the bank has destroyed." (434)

All of this has not become any better: "the bank continues to lose the confidence of customers and its own employees. [...] And RBS continues to be seen as the most toxic bank brand on the British high street – with the possible exception of Barclays." (434)

Fraser's final evaluations will find most readers' support: "In failing to consider policies along these lines, the governments of both Gordon Brown and David Cameron have let the British people down. The result has been that, at the time of writing, RBS is probably a worse bank than it was under Fred Goodwin". (434) He mentions the numerous problems RBS is facing, which he also described in the *Sunday Herald* on 3-11-13, "[£1trn timebombs RBS must defuse](#)". And he finishes by emphasising the key element of the many changes necessary: "An ethical revolution is required. And that will be tough." Again it seems as though a thorough change of the system is not really under consideration. Accordingly, the final expert's statement speaks of reform only: "Describing the Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards report published on 19 June 2013, *The Financial Times*' chief economics commentator Martin Wolf said, 'One cannot read the commission's report without feeling real anger. The banking industry has taken the public for a ride. Despite substantial and welcome reforms, it still does so. The argument it makes is that it is too important to reform. In fact, it is too important not to be reformed.'" (435, with a link to [Wolf's text "Reform of British banking needs to go further", \*Financial Times\* 20-6-13](#)).

This book has received much praise (just cf. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/books-poetry/reviews/ian-fraser-shredded-inside-rbs-the-bank-that-broke-britain-birlinn.24514569>; <http://www.fabians.org.uk/review-shredded-inside-rbs-the-bank-that-broke-britain/>; <http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/books/shredded-inside-rbs-the-bank-that-broke-britain-1-3452610>; or [Fraser's homepage](#), all of which is fully deserved. It has a useful index, which is helpful, even though not totally reliable (Fred Goodwin, e.g., is also mentioned on p. 87, but not in the index there), a glossary, or rather a list of abbreviations (which, however, again does not include everything, DNB, e.g., is missing), and unfortunately only a short bibliography, which fails to mention several of the interesting sources in the endnotes. For another edition, these small shortcomings should be remedied. But the book gives readers an excellent description of the monstrous history of the RBS, a precise account of the bank's wrongdoings, the impertinence of its CEOs, as well as of the complete negligence, ignorance, and incompetence of both politicians and the institutions that are meant to control banks. *Shredded* is compulsory reading for everybody interested in finding out important truths about the political and financial worlds we live in. A great book which I keep on recommending to students and everybody else. It is absolutely precious and invaluable, as it passes on first-hand information, provides background stories, historical insights, and sound analyses of key areas of today's world. Yes, by now we all know how closely connected finance and politics always are, but to learn about these links, the arrogance and impudence of the people involved in this explicit, straightforward, illuminating, and often humorous way is a wonderful experience for the reader and proof of the author's exceptional and noteworthy achievement. This is simply a masterpiece.

Klaus Peter Müller (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)

**Selle, Rosemary Anne, *The Parritch and the Partridge: The Reception of Robert Burns in Germany. A History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. and aug. ed. by Lennart Brieger, Tiana Mareen Fischer, Ines Gundlach, Mirja Kristina Michels, Juliane Pflugmacher, Frauke Reitemeier & Mar Sydymanov, Frankfurt am Main et al.: Peter Lang 2013 (Scottish Studies International. Vol. 38) (481 pp, hardback, € 86.95; eBook, € 96.75)**

Selle charts German Burns reception from the late eighteenth century onwards. The first edition of this study was an unpublished doctoral thesis completed at the University of Heidelberg in 1981 whose distribution was limited to a small number of specimen copies in certain German libraries. The present second edition goes back to a "research-oriented teaching and learning" project at the University of Göttingen, where Dr. Frauke Reitemeier formed some of her students into an editorial team in 2012 in order to give them first-hand practical experience with high-level academic research and publishing.

Selle's original text begins with an authorial preface and general introduction which lay down the parameters of this study and relate it to previous research. Chapter 1 surveys the reception of Burns in Germany and other parts of the German-speaking world between 1786 and 1980 in various forms: the reception of British publications, reprints of Burns's original texts by German publishers, German translations, obituaries, biography, reviews, academic literary and linguistic scholarship, literary histories, reactions of general readers, as well as correspondence, essays and creative responses by German-language writers (e.g. Herder, Freiligrath, Fontane). She also makes brief reference to musical settings (e.g. by Haydn, Mendelssohn, Schumann) and (more recently) recordings. This chapter is subdivided into the following phases: Between 1786 and 1829, German Burns reception, still limited and largely indebted to British sources, saw Burns mainly as an exceptional personality (focusing on images of the 'heaven-taught ploughman' but also of the morally questionable 'heavy drinker' and sexual libertine), and preferred sentimental poems and songs over longer poems, satires, epistles and radical works. From 1830 to 1896, increased translation and publication activity widened Burns's German-speaking audience considerably, but the Burns canon and the writer's public image often remained within their previous restrictions. There was also considerable reluctance to tackle the bawdy aspects of his work. Burns's politically radical works, however, received some recognition in the democratic revolutionary climate of the 1840s. But there were also conservative interpretations which appropriated the patriotic aspects of Burns's work for German militaristic nationalism, especially towards the end of the century. A third strain of reception saw Burns mainly as an "apolitical folk poet" (149), again aligned with supposedly similar German traditions. Reliance on British sources increasingly gave way to an independent German critical assessment. The period from 1897 to 1919 saw further appropriations of Burns by both radicals and conservatives: socialism and literary naturalism on the one hand, German right-wing nationalism and the anti-urban, anti-modern *Heimatkunstbewegung* on the other. Other right-wingers, instead of *appropriating* Burns, *denigrated* him as an example of British inferiority to German culture. The canon remained limited, and there were fewer new translations, but scholarship saw some advances in biography and in detailed studies of Burns's sources which placed him in a wider context. The period from 1920 to 1955 was characterised by stagnation. A relatively limited and 'tamed' image of Burns continued to predominate. During the Nazi period, there were similarities to earlier right-wing traditions of Burns reception which either appropriated or rejected the Scottish poet in the service of their own German national-chauvinist projects. The fact that Burns was also appropriated in *British* patriotic propaganda in both World Wars may have damaged his popularity in Germany. The post-war period showed a general desire to re-establish international connections, but Burns reception often retained older sentimental and 'folksy' limitations. Between 1956 and 1980, Selle identifies some advances in international and even German Burns reception (e.g. in linguistic criticism and some opening of the canon towards progressive, radical and bawdy elements), but on the whole German reception is still criticised for

being too indebted to older, more limited images of the poet and his work. She also notes the revival of political and folk song in the 1960s and 1970s as a factor in modern Burns reception.

Chapter 2 zooms in on issues of translation. It begins with a general survey of the most important challenges faced by translators of Burns into German, for instance concerning the variety of linguistic registers and mediation between different cultural contexts. Selle then provides detailed case studies of eight Burns poems in translation: "A Red, Red Rose", "John Anderson, my Jo", "Corn Rigs", "Robert Bruce's March to Bannockburn", "For a' that", "Holy Willie's Prayer", "The Twa Dogs" and "Tam O'Shanter". After a brief analysis of each poem, different translations are surveyed, analysed, compared "with the original and [...] each other" (19), and evaluated according to the criteria of formal, semantic and situational equivalence. Selle assesses not only the merits of the translations as such, but also how they reflected prevailing (and influenced subsequent) attitudes to Burns, and how this related to the general *zeitgeist*. For some passages, she suggests alternative translations of her own.

A third chapter summarises key findings of the preceding chapters, draws conclusions, charts connections with the contemporary situation around 1980, and identifies desiderata for future Burns reception. She argues that more attention should be paid to the satirical, epistolary and bawdy poetry, the prose works, and music. Selle also sees room for further translation criticism, re-examinations of Burns's position in literary history between Enlightenment and Romanticism, and more detailed studies of his works in relation to the late-twentieth-century folk-song revival. She stresses the merits of bilingual editions, of eclectic collections where the translator differs from poem to poem, and of amalgamating the most successful passages from different translations of the same poem into an optimised conflated version. Selle also calls for entirely new translations in different varieties of German, and adds a few practical suggestions.

The text of chapters 1 to 3 appears to have been reproduced largely unaltered. The revisions and augmentations undertaken for this second edition mainly consist of a fourth chapter in which Selle's modern editors survey post-1980 developments in Burns reception (ch. 4.1 by Sydymanov) and translation studies (ch. 4.2 by Brieger), and a fifth chapter (by Reitemeier) on the history and outcomes of their editorial project. There have also been some additions to Selle's original bibliography (part 6), and revisions in the appendix (part 7), which lists poems and translations used in the case studies of chapter 2 and, where these are difficult to access elsewhere, also gives the full texts. The augmented prelims also contain a new preface by Selle herself.

Selle's study is splendidly researched; we get the impression that not a single scrap of Burns-related text escaped her notice. Her critical analyses are also meticulous. This necessarily results in some degree of repetitiveness as there are so many overlaps and continuities between sources she scrutinises one by one, and the level of detail can also seem a little overwhelming at times, especially when reading from cover to cover rather than using this book merely as a reference work. But this is a small price to pay for the tremendous level of precision which her approach provides. Moreover, Selle's lucid and well-written presentation of her findings ensures that this book remains a highly enjoyable reading experience.

Helpfully, Selle also contextualises Burns's reception in the German-speaking world in relation to his reception in Britain. Furthermore, she provides interesting comparisons between Burns and certain German poets (e.g. Heine, Goethe, Schiller), as well as discussing questions of direct influence. There is also some comparative discussion of writers in other languages, such as Pierre Jean de Béranger (France) and Sándor Petöfi (Hungary). Moreover, it is fascinating to see how Burns has been appropriated by both ends of the German political spectrum. On the left-wing side, Freiligrath's translation of "for a' that" as "trotz alledem" in the 1840s became a famous political slogan, its influence stretching all the way to the early-twentieth-century revolutionaries Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and even beyond that to late-twentieth-century poet and songwriter Wolf Biermann's critique of both East and West German society. Another interesting aspect is the comparison between translations into Standard German and those into regional



varieties like Low German or Swiss German; and Selle's delineation of Burns's influence on the development of German dialect literature. Selle's discussion of occasional mistranslations gives insight into linguistic and cultural misconceptions and at times adds a humorous dimension, as with the blunder that gave her book its title: In Adolf Laun's translation of "The Cotter's Saturday Night" (1869), Burns's humble Scots *parritch* (porridge) was misunderstood as *partridge*, so that the resulting translation as "Rebhuhn" gave the cotter's family a far grander meal (96, 278).

Selle's study is an impressive achievement, and her contemporary editors are to be highly commended for making this work available to a wider audience. Moreover, Reitemeier deserves praise for her commitment to research-oriented academic teaching which made her share this editorial task with her students – and obviously with good results. Her team also undertook a praiseworthy effort to supplement the second edition of Selle's tome with a brief survey of translations and research developments which happened after the publication of the first edition.

Nonetheless, some minor points of criticism might be noted. Clearly, due to limitations of space, experience and research time, one could hardly expect Reitemeier's students (at least some of whom were undergraduates) to do their update on recent developments with the same level of detail that characterises Selle's PhD thesis. Nonetheless, at a little over 2 pages, the survey of Burns reception since 1980 appears *too* brief – *some* more detail may well have been feasible. There is also incongruity between the headings and contents of chapter 4: its main heading promises a focus on "[t]he reception [...] in Germany," but only the first two thirds of section 4.1 deal with that subject, whereas the rest of 4.1 deals with the international Burns reception and section 4.2 surveys international translation theory. While the inclusion of wider international contexts is consistent with Selle's own approach, the way it is dealt with in this update could have been improved by a more logical organisation of chapter headings. Moreover, the German dimension could at least have been slightly expanded on; various texts that would fall within the scope of Selle's and her editors' interests have been omitted.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Such texts could easily have been found, for instance, in the online databases of the German and Scottish national libraries (*Katalog der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek*, Scottish Bibliographies Online / SBO, Bibliography of Scottish Literature in Translation / BOSLIT). Thus, since Selle tackles not only translations and translation criticism, but also other areas of German academic criticism, it is surprising that no mention is made of Dietrich Strauß's *Die erotische Dichtung von Robert Burns: Bedingungen, Textüberlieferung, Interpretation, Wertungen* (PhD thesis, University of Frankfurt a. M., 1975; publ. Frankfurt et al.: Peter Lang 1981). Selle's own omission of this work is perfectly excusable as the book only appeared after her cut-off date of 1980, and the 1975 dissertation manuscript was easy to miss in the days before electronic national catalogues. However, her 2012/2013 editors could easily have found the book in the National Library's online catalogue, to at least briefly mention it in their survey of post-1980 publications. Since erotic poetry was one of the fields which Selle identified as needing further attention, a brief discussion of this book might have fitted well into the editors' assessment of the progress which has been made. They might also have mentioned Strauß's subsequent anglophone essays "Burns: Literary Focus of Scottish National Identity?" (*Nationalism in Literature – Literarischer Nationalismus: Literature, Language and National Identity. Third International Scottish Studies Symposium – Proceedings*, ed. Horst W. Drescher & Hermann Völkel, Frankfurt a. M. et al.: P. Lang 1989, 107–116), "Burns's Attitude to Medieval Reality" (*Studies in Scottish Literature* 26, 1991, 522–535) and "Some Reflection on Burns's Command of English" (*Studies in Scottish Literature* 30, 1998, 77–89). Another anglophone essay by a critic with a German-speaking background is Peter Zenzinger's "Low Life, Primitivism and Honest Poverty: A Socio-cultural Reading of Ramsay and Burns" (*ibid.*, 43–58). Since Selle's editors also note recent British scholarly work on German translations, they might have included J. Derrick McClure's 2009 essay on a Swiss translator who features prominently in Selle's work: "August Corrodi's Translations of Burns" (*Scottish Literary Review* 1.2, 45–61). A slightly more thorough survey of recent German Burns translations would also have been desirable. For instance, Karlhans Frank, whose 1980 translation of *Tam O' Shanter* Selle discusses (though the book erroneously gives his name as "Karlheinz"), later also published translations of "Auld Lang Syne," "Red Red Rose" and "My Girl she's Airy" (*Schottische Lieder und Balladen: Texte und Noten mit Begleit-Akkorden*, ed. Frank, Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer 1984). Moreover, the editors mention Heiko Postma's collections *Mit Whisky*

In chapter 4.2, the modern translation theories surveyed are all quoted second-hand from a single textbook; here it would have been better if a slightly wider text base and first-hand citation had been adopted. It would also have been helpful to find at least some hints as to how these general theoretical developments might be applied to modern *Burns* translations. Might these new theories modify some of the conclusions Selle drew in 1981? Or does Selle's work already anticipate some later theoretical developments? Which aspects of Burns translation (studies) would benefit especially from these new theoretical insights? Clearly, none of these things could have been covered *exhaustively* within the given framework, but at least a few tentative, thought-provoking suggestions may have made this update even more inspiring. The editorial updates to Selle's bibliography occasionally suffer from similar incongruity to that of chapter 4: some new publications discussed in 4.1 which we might expect to be listed in section 6.2 of the bibliography ("Works on Robert Burns") instead appear in 6.3 ("Further Literature"), while a few others are not listed at all. In the appendix, it is not clear why the original text of "Holy Willie's Prayer" is included in full, although easily available elsewhere (e.g. in Kinsley's edition), whereas Silbergleit's much less accessible German translation (a key focus of Selle's discussion) is neither reproduced nor given a bibliographical reference. It would have been more consistent with the editors' policy towards the other poems if Burns's original poem had been replaced with a short reference to Kinsley and a full reproduction of Silbergleit's translation. Finally, the addition of an index would have made the volume even more reader-friendly, although the detailed multi-level subdivision of the contents table and chapter headings compensates for this up to a certain point.

However, these should be taken as relatively minor weaknesses in what is overall a truly fantastic volume – not only as regards Selle's own impeccable research, but also concerning the highly commendable work of the editorial team. Moreover, the volume's two-tiered structure (1981 and 2012–2013) in itself gives interesting insights into different phases of the ongoing process of German Burns reception. This volume is also an inspirational reminder of the merits of integrating students (even undergraduates) more closely into academic research. It is to be hoped that we will see more projects of this kind in future, not only in further Burns research, but also in other areas of Scottish Studies – and beyond.

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### **Scottish Area Studies at the University of Konstanz**

(Fiona Ross)

In the first of our series on Scottish Studies, Fiona Ross, who retired from the University of Konstanz in Germany in 2013, takes a look back at her experiences of conceiving and developing a Scottish Area Studies course for German students in the 1980s and how this changed the way she saw her own country.

I was born in the heart of Scotland, grew up on the west coast and went to university in Glasgow, doing an honours degree in French and German at Strathclyde. My working life was spent at the University of Konstanz in Germany, teaching a wide range of English language classes including Area Studies Scotland.

The purpose of this article is to outline my Area Studies Scotland course, explaining how it came into being, what my aims were, and how the students responded to it. For contact details and

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*trotzen wir dem Satan!"* (2003) and *Auf wildem Pfad durch Fels und Heide* (2008), but fail to add that the former was later reprinted in considerably extended form (7<sup>th</sup> ed., Hannover: JMB 2009) and that Postma published two further Burns volumes, *Tam O'Shanter: Eine Erzählung* and *The Jolly Beggars / Die munteren Bettler* (Hannover: Revonnah, 2000 & 2005 respectively).

further information on the course, including materials produced by the students for use in schools, please see the [Find Your Feet](#) website.

'Scotland Small? Our multiform, our infinite Scotland *small*'?

How it began:

When I started planning the Area Studies Scotland course in the 80s I knew I had a great deal to learn. Of course I had read widely but the reading was not systematic. In fact, I lived for many years in Germany without realising that the Scotland I had left in the 70s was actually very much alive, creative, productive, developing, thriving, with an increasingly strong sense of identity. This ignorance was in part due to the fact that the so-called national newspapers I subscribed to provided me with information on anywhere in the world – except Scotland. It seemed not to exist. Or was so unimportant that it might as well not exist. It took me a long time to waken up to the truth and realise that Scotland was a worthy topic for an Area Studies course. I gradually became aware of the subtle ways employed in the media and various British institutions to discount Scotland. This experience of discovery and 'enlightenment' was central to the course and I referred to it explicitly and built examples into many of the topics covered.

Target group:

Although the primary target group was future teachers of English, for whom an Area Studies course is a requirement, Bachelor students doing English and American Studies or Linguistics were keen to join, as were any students planning a stay in Scotland. We were also joined by exchange students, from the USA and Canada, France, Italy, Spain and Poland.

Course description:

The following is a typical course description, in brief: 'Participants will gain an insight into Scotland as a whole. Some background information will form the introduction to this course and following that, the participants will choose a topic of interest and present it to the class. This is usually done in pairs, and topics range from important historical events, music and dance, languages, literature and film, to food, traditions, pioneers and explorers.'

Topics covered:

In fact, despite having only thirteen sessions of ninety minutes each, through careful planning and linking of topics we always managed to 'cover' all the above plus geography, tourism, population, politics, the economy, sport, education, the media, symbols, festivals and celebrations. To these I added the question of identity, as an in-class discussion topic at the end of the term. Below are two of these topics with examples of the kind of questions we asked and tried to find answers to.

Languages:

What are the official languages of Scotland? Which languages are spoken/written/taught in Scotland today. The attitudes of people towards them, and their relative standing. What is the difference between Scottish English and Scots. Where is Gaelic used today: TV, radio, film, print media, school, law courts?

Music and Dance:

What kind of music is being made in Scotland today? Internationally famous performers. What is traditional music and where can you find it? What vocal and instrumental traditions are there? What part do they play in Scotland today?

### Resources:

Essential for the course were the excellent on-site resources of the University library. To these were added my own collection of materials: from maps, brochures and newspapers to recipe books, personal correspondence, board games created by students, and interviews I recorded. There is even a can of the national soft drink Irn Bru. My Scottish accent also contributed to the course, as did my anecdotes e.g. almost literally stumbling over Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at Sydney Harbour (a plaque embedded in the paving), or finding a memorial to R L Stevenson on Waikiki Beach.

### Methodology and wider aims:

As a language teacher I kept some basic principles of learning in mind, and created an environment where learning could take place through interaction and communication, rather than teaching the class as a seminar or lecture series. 'Presentations' by students were not monologues but rather invitations to think and be active. Obviously the students also received clear feedback and help with their English.

Of great importance for me was always encouraging the students to relate what they were learning about Scotland to their knowledge of their own country and the wider world. Before starting on the topics outlined above, we always took a look at some concrete facts and figures about Germany and specifically Baden-Württemberg, their 'home', to use as a comparison to Scotland. For example, if the students find out the size, population and population density of Baden-Württemberg and understand what one square kilometre actually looks like, figures on Scotland become more meaningful. Similarly, the 'meagre' height of Ben Nevis, 1352m, only gains real meaning when the students understand that this ascent has to be completed from sea level. The special character of the Scottish education system only becomes clear if the students first consider and draw a flow chart of their own. The question of how skewed the presentation of British/Scottish history is becomes truly interesting for them when they reflect on the writing of their own country's history.

Equally fundamental to the course was linking topics to each other, as well as across the centuries and around the world, so that no topic was ever treated as isolated or disconnected. This was my responsibility. For example, recent history, society, language, and the influence of the media are all present in an 'Oor Wullie' from 1940 on the joys of evacuation: "Jings! Evacuatin's great!". Food and the languages of Scotland, as given on the Scottish Parliament website, can be linked to ethnic minorities and integration. Music brings together many strands: there is politics and economics in The McCalmans' album 'Flames on the Water'; The Corries' 'Flower of Scotland' links up with sport (football and rugby internationals), and Runrig with the history of Gaelic. 'A man's a man' sung at the official opening of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 makes the connection between the past and the present, literature and politics. Recipes for 'sweeties' and fruit cake tie in with economic history, with song ('Coulter's Candy') and festivals (Black Bun at Hogmanay). Sir Walter Scott's 'Lochinvar' and the 20<sup>th</sup> century 'Lochinvar Revisited' by Alasdair Maclean belong together. Place names (Uig and Wick; Edinburgh and Dunedin) are keys to history and language. John Rae, John Muir, John Buchan are all linked to North America.

All the threads were gathered together in the final topic, which required no preparation outside class. It was the question of identity: What makes a people perceive itself as a nation? The students can then see that they have learnt about specific instances of the factors involved such as shared behaviours or shared value systems.

To sum up: with this methodology I tried to create a kind of living 'tapestry' in the students' minds.

### Learning outcomes:

The methodology worked. The students' ability to deal with the question of national identity in Scotland was one proof. Furthermore, at the first meeting of the course the students were asked to

make posters of Scotland, based on their own associations. At the end of the term they were asked if they would change or add anything. Of course the castles and sheep and bagpipes and whisky would stay, but the students realised that they now knew much more than just the superficialities, and what is more, they knew a great deal about how things are connected with each other, across time, and across the continents.

The enthusiasm of the students was an indication for me that the course had also touched their hearts. Some highlights of their 'presentations' were: a piper invited along to play for us; a demonstration of how to make Cock-a-Leekie soup followed by a ready prepared potful; a whisky tasting; teaching us the steps of Strip the Willow and dancing it; a photo tour of Scotland by students who had already attended the course once, gone to Scotland, and then attended the course again. The knowledge acquired, combined with their enthusiasm, led to the production of materials on Scotland for use in schools.

So, Scotland small? Yes. With a map of Europe on the wall, and a map of the world in our minds, the students never forgot this. However, through the variety of perspectives taken in the course, Scotland now had added dimensions – of depth and diversity, as so beautifully expressed by Hugh MacDiarmid.

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<http://www.findyourfeet.de/>

### StAnza 2015

"StAnza for me always helps usher winter into the dark, and marks a door opening into the bigger light of spring."

So said [Gerry Cambridge](#), who this year was tutoring one of the two all-day poetry workshops at [StAnza](#). For the first time we were working with the [National Trust for Scotland](#) holding workshops in two of their properties in east Fife, Hill of Tarvit, where Gerry Cambridge led a workshop on food and drink metaphors in writing, and at Kellie Castle, where another Scottish poet, [Alexander Hutchison](#), winner of the [2014 Saltire prize for poetry](#), chose the ballad tradition for his workshop.

They were just two of the line-up of Scottish poets taking part in the StAnza poetry festival this year. Others included [Anna Crowe](#), who collaborated with three artists on an exhibition inspired by the zoological collection of the Bell Pettigrew Museum in St Andrews. [JL Williams](#), [Robert Crawford](#) and [Rab Wilson](#) were all commissioned to produce their own versions of neo-Latin Scottish poems recently translated into English for an installation at the festival. JL Williams also read along with [Helen Mort](#) in one of this year's sell-out Five O' Clock Verses.

StAnza 2015 is the eighteenth StAnza festival to take place in the Fife coastal town of St Andrews. The official launch was presided over by festival director Eleanor Livingstone, who congratulated StAnza on reaching its 18th annual event, highlighting the fact that there were over 100 events throughout the four days, with poets and artists travelling from as far as New Zealand, Jamaica, Canada and the United States to take part. As an introduction to this year's talent, there were a few sneak previews of upcoming events, with poets [Shara McCullum](#), [Glyn Maxwell](#) and [Sheenagh Pugh](#) giving captivating performances of their work, a mix of thought-provoking and entertaining words, followed by folk music from [Kirsty Law](#).

There was added glamour for the eighteenth year in the shape of [Clive Russell](#), star of the international hit TV show *Game of Thrones*. Russell, himself from Fife, talked at length about his delight at being a part of StAnza 2015 telling the crowd, "There is nothing more delightful or life-affirming than a week spent with poets and artists." The opening night show was a performance of *Bedazzled: A Welshman in New York*, which celebrates the life of Dylan Thomas. The show saw the Byre Theatre transformed into the heady, bohemian world of downtown Greenwich Village in the

1950s with audience members invited to enjoy a drink onstage with the various incarnations of the famous poet.

On the Thursday [Anne Stevenson](#) and Sheenagh Pugh gave pleasure to audiences delighted with their long awaited return to StAnza, after twelve and nine years respectively. Helen Mort was also making a return visit. She took part in the festival when her first chapbook collection was published and returning as a T.S. Eliot shortlisted poet, gave a reading which justified such acclaim. She is also now gaining a reputation as a runner and climber with many of the poems she read on this theme. She explained to the audience that she had to run off immediately after her reading to represent Yorkshire in a cross country event. Then on the Saturday [Ilya Kaminsky](#), originally from the Ukraine and now resident in the US, brought a flavour of the Russian folk tradition to a reading full of both humour and loss, which, in his own very different style, [Ian Duhig](#) reading after him complemented well.

The main evening readings also saw large audiences well rewarded by a diverse range of captivating readings from major poets from all points on the globe, [Carolyn Forché](#), [Bill Manhire](#) from New Zealand, [Paul Durcan](#) and [Sinéad Morrissey](#). Forché, a major poet in the US but less well known in the UK, on her first appearance in Scotland, was hailed as a major discovery by many attending the festival, [Alice Notley's](#) reading was described as 'life-changingly good', and Durcan and Morrissey demonstrated the breadth and depth of Irish poetry.

On the Saturday evening [Kei Miller](#) gave a reading which amply explained why he is both the latest Forward Prize winner and also 'the coolest guy' in poetry; and [Simon Armitage](#) reading after him was at his most engaging and most compelling. Miller was without doubt one of the highlights of the festival, simply radiating charisma as he recounted tales of the infamous 'Cartographer' from *The Cartographer Tries To Map a Way To Zion*. Miller is quick and sharp, attentive and expressive as he flows easily between the rhythmic colloquialisms of the Jamaican dialect to strikingly emotive poetry. Armitage also has a wonderfully engaging style, his humour, in both his engagement with the audience and in his written poetry, is captivating.

It wasn't only the headline readings which sold out or delivered memorable readings. The Border Crossings strand attracted large and enthusiastic audiences to hear some of poetry's newer voices such as [Kim Moore](#) and [D.A. Prince](#), or poets from overseas including [Martin Glaz Serrup](#) from Denmark and [Kim Simonsen](#) from the Faroe Islands. And each of the lunchtime stand-up poetry events were a huge success. On Thursday [Agnes Török](#) and [Toby Champion](#), both well-known on the performance circuit, stuck with the food theme with a challenge to each other to write about love using food prompts: pie, wine, thyme, jelly, cottage cheese, udon noodles... all these tastes were turned into poems, inspiring reflections on family acceptance and loss.

StAnza was delighted to include Writing Motherhood in the programme with poets [Hollie McNish](#), [Kathryn Maris](#) and poet/novelist [Carolyn Jess-Cooke](#). The trio read extracts of their work for Cooke's Writing Motherhood project, dedicated to exploring the impact of motherhood on the experience of the female writer. [Claire Trévien's](#) one-woman show, *The Shipwrecked House*, was also a hit, turning the Byre into an abandoned home full of memories, with the stage covered with an array of sheets representing sails and cloths covering old furniture resembling part of a shipwreck.

StAnza 2015 was an overwhelming success, and definitely befitting of the festival's eighteenth year. The praise has been plentiful. Here is just a short selection of some of the kind comments:

"What an incredible festival StAnza continues to be! An overwhelming experience all around, the readings, the friendships, the wine - but the moment that I think will stay with me, the moment when for some inexplicable reason I choked up and had to look away, was the moment when the Catalan poet [Josep Lluís Aguiló](#) talked about the 'small' language he wrote in: 'I have no choice in the matter' he said, and then turning to his translator continued with such astounding vulnerability, perhaps unintentional but so to the point of it all ... 'I am in your hands.' (Kei Miller)



"Throughout life I have often seemed to arrive in places where the general consensus is that the golden days are over. Very glad to see that is not the case with my first trip to StAnza. I had a fantastic time and met a raft of fine people." ([Tammy Adams](#))

"StAnza poetry festival was so worth it, as always. One aspect was the generosity, welcome, and encouragement of other poets, which I have found nowhere else. Carolyn Forché said publicly the quality of the audiences and the workshop attendees was astonishing." ([Joan Hewitt](#))

Louise Robertson (Press and Media Manager, StAnza poetry festival)

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[www.stanzapoetry.org](http://www.stanzapoetry.org)

### **Conference Announcements**

#### **The Legacy of James Macpherson and his Ossianic Publications**

18-19 April 2015, Kingussie Heritage festival and the University of the Highlands and Islands Kingussie, Badenoch, Scotland – [Conference website](#)

##### **Call for Papers**

2015 sees the 250th anniversary of the publication of the first collected edition of James Macpherson's Works of Ossian. The occasion will be marked by a two-day conference run jointly between the Kingussie Heritage Festival and the University of the Highlands and Islands. The conference will take place in Kingussie, in Macpherson's native Badenoch, on 18 and 19 April 2015.

Proposals for 20-minute papers are sought from new and established scholars on any aspect of Macpherson's life and works. Topics may include (but are not limited to)

- Macpherson as historian
- Macpherson's personal life
- Macpherson's early works, published and unpublished
- Macpherson's legacy and impact
- Macpherson's politics and influence in London
- Macpherson's involvement in Indian affairs
- Macpherson's patronage and engagement with Highlanders
- Macpherson's importance as local laird in Badenoch
- The importance of Ossian to Scottish/British/European/World Literature
- Ossian and art/music/culture
- Ossian and Gaelic tradition

Please submit abstracts of 250-300 words for 20-minute papers to Dr Kristin Lindfield-Ott and Dr. David Taylor at [in13kl@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:in13kl@uhi.ac.uk). The deadline for abstracts is 28 February 2015.

#### **Forgotten Histories, New Perspectives and J.M. Barrie**

26-27 June 2015, The Solway Centre for Environment & Culture, Dumfries, Scotland

[Conference website](#)

Explore the forgotten history of Scottish children's literature, from the eighteenth century onwards. Two days of discussion and performance in Dumfries, hosted by The Solway Centre for Environment & Culture, the University of Edinburgh and the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust.

Friday 26th June, The Minerva Hall, Dumfries Academy: A special evening organised by the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust, currently developing Scotland's Centre for Children's Literature and Storytelling, based in the Dumfries house and garden which inspired J.M. Barrie's iconic 'Peter Pan'. The Scottish Youth Theatre will give the first reading of Barrie's first play *Bandelero the Bandit* since he premiered the work whilst a pupil at the school. Prior to this, the registration event at Rutherford McCowan, Crichton Campus, will feature Tom Pow, who has collaborated with

illustrator Ian Andrew, to produce a new book for children, *Sixteen String Jack & the Garden of Adventure*.

Saturday 27th June, 10 am – 6 pm Rutherford-McCowan Building, University of Glasgow & Dumfries & Moat Brae A symposium, topics include the birth of Scottish children's literature; 'Scottishness' and the idea of the child in children's literature; didactic and instructional literature including children's chapbooks; authors' perspectives on writing children's literature. Speakers include Maureen Farrell, Fiona MacCulloch, Rhona Brown, Linden Bicket, Valentina Bold & Sarah Dunnigan. In the late afternoon we move to Moat Brae, Birthplace of Peter Pan, for a tour around the house and gardens and refreshments. The evening will close with a round table discussion featuring writer Liz Niven.

Attendance fee, including a ticket for the performance of *Bandelero the Bandit*, Saturday symposium, Tour of Moat Brae; coffee/tea and lunch: £40 for both days, £35 for Sat only. For students, £10 for both days, £5 for Sat only.

To book your place today: complete the registration form below and return it with payment to secure your place.

[Registration form Scottish Children's Literature 2015 WORD](#)

[Registration form Scottish Children's Literature 2015](#)

Full programme details will be available here from March 2015. For further information contact katie.nairn@glasgow.ac.uk or Tel: 01387 345 371

### **Margaret Oliphant in Context**

6 July 2015, Victorian Studies Centre, University of Leicester, Leicester, England

[Conference website](#)

#### **Call for Papers**

A conference on the Victorian novelist, biographer, literary critic and historian Margaret Oliphant (1828–97) is being held at the Victorian Studies Centre, University of Leicester, to celebrate the publication of the 25-volume *Selected Works of Margaret Oliphant*, (Pickering and Chatto, 2011–16) under the general editorship of Joanne Shattock and Elisabeth Jay.

Margaret Oliphant was a Victorian woman of letters, who wrote across multiple genres: fiction, literary criticism, history, travel writing, and biography. Her *Autobiography* (1899) is justly celebrated as a unique writing life. In her reviewing and in her wider journalism, her subjects included literature in English and European languages, philosophy, theology, art and current social issues, especially those affecting women. She was also a translator and a series editor.

Papers are invited on all aspects of Oliphant's writing from her subject matter to her use of a variety of genres. Comparisons with other Victorian writers are encouraged. Topics might include but are not confined to:

- serial fiction
- the short story
- life writing
- journalism
- reviewing
- travel writing
- translation
- literary history
- social history
- the supernatural
- independent women
- Scotland

- the prolific writer
- the professionalization of literature

Deadline for paper and panel proposals: 2 March 2015

### **Empires and Revolutions: R.B. Cunninghame Graham and Other Scottish Writers on Globalisation and Democracy (c.1850-1950)**

3-5 July 2015, Golden Lion Hotel, Stirling, Scotland – [Conference website](#)

The European age of empires is marked by encounter, exchange, conflict and mobility on an unprecedented global scale, which launched a process of globalisation that continues to the present day. However, the expansion of authoritarian empires and capitalist systems across the world is also inextricably linked with the birth and diffusion of revolutionary discourses (in terms of race, nation or social class): the quest for emancipation; political independence; economic equality.

R. B. Cunninghame Graham (1852–1936), in both his life and his *oeuvre*, most effectively represents the complex interaction between imperial and revolutionary discourses in this dramatic period. Of mixed Scottish and Spanish family background, he was bilingual in English and Spanish, lived in Britain, Belgium and Argentina, and travelled in South and North America, Spain and North Africa. His travels and migrations correspond with current interest in Scottish involvements with European imperialisms. At the same time, Cunninghame Graham's involvement in the Scottish Home Rule movement and the nationalist parties can be seen as part of an 'anticolonial' initiative which sets these Scottish political trends in relation to international anticolonial movements in Ireland, India and Africa.

This 2015 conference aims to promote inter-disciplinary scholarly engagement with Cunnighame Graham and his time, with particular emphasis on issues of globalization, empire, colonialism and postcolonialism, democracy, civil rights and social justice. We also invite papers on other Scottish writers and intellectuals who engaged with these themes between 1850 and 1950.

#### **Submissions**

We warmly welcome contributions from scholars and PhD students in the fields of Scottish Studies, English Literary Studies, Irish Studies or Postcolonial Studies. We also invite proposals from any other disciplinary backgrounds in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Abstracts (not longer than 300 words) for 20-minute papers should be submitted by 28 February 2015 by email. Please submit a short biographical note (c. 100 words) along with your abstract. Submissions should be made directly to both conference conveners:

Professor Carla Sassi (University of Verona, Italy)

[carla.sassi@univr.it](mailto:carla.sassi@univr.it)

Dr Silke Stroh (University of Muenster, Germany)

[silke.stroh@uni-muenster.de](mailto:silke.stroh@uni-muenster.de)

### **The 10th Biennial Symbiosis 2015 Conference: Transatlantic Literary and Cultural Relations**

9-12 July 2015, University of Essex, Colchester, England. A Symbiosis and Essex University Event

[Conference website](#)

#### **Call for Papers**

The editors of Symbiosis, the Conference Directors, and Essex University's Department of English invite proposals for panels and individual papers of twenty minutes in length, which engage a wide variety of transatlantic and/or transnational topics in the literatures and cultural histories of the Atlantic world. The conference is certainly not limited to any local concerns, although papers that treat issues related to the headline theme of conflict, trauma, and reconciliations in its transatlantic dimensions or a matter of cultural exchange and interrelationships are especially welcome, as are those examining the first fifteen years of transatlantic literary and cultural responses to the twenty-

first century. Additionally as ever submissions are actively encouraged from all scholars and students of literary *and* cultural history and representation from every period from the earliest settlement right through to the present. The headline conference theme is trauma, conflict, and reconciliations, although proposals on any topic relevant to any area of Transatlantic Studies are welcome. The event organizers invite submission of:

- 200–300 word abstracts for proposed 20-minute conference presentations
- Panel presentations comprising 3 presenters (please submit three 200 word abstracts and brief overall rationale)

Please send by email to both: [Prof. Philip Tew](#) (Brunel) / [Dr. Matthew Scott](#) (Reading).

Deadline: Sunday 22nd March 2015

Earlier inquiries are welcome; early acceptance may be possible if required for institutional or similar funding to facilitate attendance. *Symbiosis* cannot offer bursaries or fee waivers. Further details will be posted on the Essex University webpage, on the [conference website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

### **Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster (FRLSU)**

12-14 August 2015, University of the West of Scotland, Ayr, Scotland – [Forum website](#)

#### **Call for Papers**

Abstracts of no more than 250 words are invited. These should be sent to [Professor Robert McColl Millar](#) by 31 March 2015. The papers proposed may deal with linguistic aspects of any of the languages spoken, signed or written in Scotland or the nine counties of Ulster in the past or today. All theoretical approaches (or none) are welcome. Comparative studies will be considered as will discussions of the use of language in literature.

The conference fee will be £200 (£150 concession). This will include refreshments at breaks and lunch on all three days, as well as a drinks reception on the first evening. Day rates will also be available. There will also be a conference dinner; details of this will be made available closer to the time. A limited amount of accommodation will be available on campus.

Keynote Speakers will include Professor Jeremy Smith (University of Glasgow), Professor Wilson McLeod (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Warren Maguire (University of Edinburgh).

### **Place and Space in Scottish Literature and culture**

8-10 October 2015, University of Gdansk, Poland. Organised by the Scottish Studies Research Group at the University of Gdansk and the Society for Scottish Studies in Europe

[Conference website](#)

#### **Call for Papers**

The conference will address the subject of place and space in all forms of Scottish literature and culture. Any text constructs a place, permitting for a (re-)imagining of that locale. Many Scottish authors have written from or about a particular place. One thinks of: George Mackay Brown and the Orkneys, Edwin Morgan and Glasgow, Lewis Grassie Gibbon and the Mearns, Ian Rankin and Edinburgh. Can we consider Scotland in terms of its disparate constructs of place? How does place shape Scottish culture? What is the influence of Scotland's geographical situation on its literature and culture?

We wish to open up new perspectives on Scottish studies and examine how the traditional demarcations concerning space in all its aspects can be and are challenged. We aim to provide an opportunity for a discussion about the ever-changing relationship between place and space, as well as that between time and spatiality. We invite proposals concerning Scottish culture in its breadth as well as those concerning a particular writer or an individual text.

We welcome proposals for papers on place and space in any (but not only) of the following areas:

- forms of Scotland
- physical vs. imaginary spaces
- depictions of the natural world
- dwelling places
- the idea of North
- travel literature
- place-specific writing and art
- cartography/mapping
- psychogeography
- space and gender
- displacement and dislocation
- Scottish diasporas
- utopian spaces
- betweenness
- spatial relationships
- cityscapes
- borders

Confirmed keynote speakers include:

Professor John Burnside (University of St Andrews)

Professor Carla Sassi (University of Verona)

Proposals for 20-minute papers on these or other relevant topics should be sent by email to both [Monika Szuba](#) and [Agnieszka Sienkiewicz](#).

Please include the following information:

- the full title of your paper;
- a 200-word abstract of your paper;
- your name and e-mail address;
- your institutional affiliation;
- a short bio note.

Deadline for proposals: 10 May 2015

Notification of acceptance: before 31 May 2015