

I hate the way we expect to fail  
And then we fail  
And then we get bitter because we failed  
Maybe it's Scotland I hate  
  
'I Hate Scotland', Ballboy

The Scottish Parliament in 1999 was the first step towards independence for Scotland, a movement growing in momentum in recent years. After Thatcher, the idea of innate difference between England and Scotland crystallized for the most recent generation, with many people still calling her anti-Scottish. Expressions of resistance multiplied at this time (Hearn 2001) allowing Scottish people to assert their own versions of their national identity.

**Comment [Office1]:** Clear hook that establishes contemporary relevance of topic.

In the past decade, examples of possible resistance can be found in Scottish popular music. What was once a realm of American or English impersonators has been replaced with successful musicians singing in their regional accent. Language has been a point of contention in the past in Scotland because of the powerful stereotype of English as the class-marked language of the educated. Showcasing the use of Scottish language has become a way for some Scottish people to challenge English elitism and unite in their difference (Symon 1997). By examining communities involved with the music, I plan to answer these questions: What motivates legitimizing Scottish language in music? Is this music a form of resistance to English politics? What effect does this music have on Scotland's political climate and identity politics?

**Comment [Office2]:** Concise explanation of what, who, and where of research project

*Background/Literature:* The material created by recent musicians in Scotland is distinctly political, not only because of the new choice between singing in a Scottish or English accent, but also because of the internal class issues the music discusses. The music is a non-traditional area

**Comment [Office3]:** Poses simple but clear research questions.

for people to explore Scottish politics and culture (Symon 1997) without becoming involved in (English) institutionalized participation. There is a layering of politics: the music is political because of its language, but its content also discusses Scottish problems. The music acts paradoxically, displaying both pride and dissatisfaction with Scottish identity yet using the same medium to resist English language and ideology. The work of anthropologist James Scott will provide a framework to analyze mechanisms of resistance in the day-to-day life of individuals (Scott 1987). However, Scott is not sufficient to explicate the identity making processes embedded in the language of the music (Gal 1995) and so linguistic theory will better facilitate this aspect of the production and dissemination of ideology. This project is unique in that it is an examination into a multi-layered political resistance beyond electoral politics, involving national and class identity through the non-traditional site of popular music.

**Comment [Office4]:** Demonstrate author has done research on topic but also builds on this research by identifying gap.

*Methodology:* I will perform my analysis through interaction with artists and fans; working closely with a specific successful artist and working through networks of musicians from there. Glasgow will serve as my site of study: it is the biggest city in Scotland, most music is created here, and is historically and symbolically linked to the working class stereotype which features strongly in the music. I will spend my time in Glasgow working closely with Gordon McIntyre, lead singer and songwriter of Ballboy, creator of Pony Proof Records and playwright; gaining insight into the motivations behind this movement and the music making process itself. This connection with Gordon and his band will allow me to ground myself in the musical community in Glasgow. From this starting point I can begin to trace the networks of musicians involved in this growing movement. This knowledge will help me to use participant observation, spending time in the popular music venues in Glasgow, watching artists and speaking with them and the audiences about their music. This will enable me to witness the relationship between the

**Comment [Office5]:** Establishes where research will be conducted, why site is important, and justifies use of ethnographic methods.

**Comment [Office6]:** Demonstrates that author has established network of informants and gives details of methodology.

Author's Name

audience and artist during the performances: the emotions evoked and topics of discussion. From these observations and interactions, I will be able to grasp the opinions of individuals participating in the consumption of the music and how they negotiate the paradox of national pride and dissatisfaction.

**Comment [Office7]:** Links her methodology to broader research question.

As a Scottish native, I already have native knowledge of the language and the culturally acceptable boundaries of interaction. My anthropology classes as well as the study of Scottish Gàidhlig means I am prepared to productively interpret my results. Thus, I will arrive in the field equipped with the tools required to access the evidence necessary for my project.

**Comment [Office8]:** Gives concrete examples of author's preparation.

My specific interest in Scotland is in large part due to my future aspirations in Scottish politics. The political climate of Scotland is in an exciting state of both frenzy and inertia: the excitement of the possibility of change countered by the resolve that nothing will come of it. This specific topic is of increasing interest as Scottish people move away from traditional politics because of past disappointments. Looking beyond the parliamentary politics to the interactions at concerts between these musicians and their fans is the perfect opportunity to analyze the complexities of a country on the verge of independence.

**Comment [Office9]:** Reiterates the timeliness of the project, the author's personal investment, and ends with a good hook.

## References

Peter Symon. 1997. Music and national identity in Scotland: a study of Jock Tamson's Bairsns. *Popular Music*, 16 (203-216). Cambridge University Press.

Cairns Craig. 1986. Sham Bards, Sham Nation, Sham Politics: Scotland, Nationalism and Socialism. *The Irish Review* 8 (21-33). Cork University Press.

James C. Scott. 1987. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. Yale University Press.

Susan Gal. 1995. Language and the "Arts of Resistance": Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts by James Scott. *Cultural Anthropology* 10(3) (407-424).