Abstract

My ethnographic research theorizes the multiple meanings of Scottishness and Scottish identity, the contradictions between these definitions and describes the development and functions of the National Piping Centre in Glasgow. This is a thesis that explores Scottishness—and the politics surrounding that identity—by way of a number of individual pipers and two key exponents in particular. It uses the tried and tested anthropological methods of microsocial fieldwork and case-studies to ground an appreciation of abstract concepts such as 'identity' and 'Scottishness' in particular lived lives. What this thesis demonstrates is that the new piping is about musicianship rather than iconic or symbolic national identity, synthesizes other musical traditions and is global—thus transforming traditional or stereotypical ideas of Scottishness.

Related URLs:  
- https://concordiauniversity.on.worldcat....
It could be argued that identity politics is inscribed in the very terms of the emergent Women’s Liberation Movement. If everyone’s opinion is equally valid, who is to mediate between them to form a shared agenda? For some groups the politics of identity is about making a direct challenge to the dominance of other interest groups within feminism. So the Combahee River Collective state that ‘[t]his focus upon our own oppression is embodied in the concept of identity politics. We believe that the most profound and potentially the most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else’s oppression’ (in Nicholson 1997: 65). bell hooks agrees that ‘sisterhood’ as a concept.

The figure below summarises how people in Scotland weigh their Scottish identity in comparison to their British identity. They have not become un-Scottish since the opening of the Scottish Parliament in 1999: The proportion of people in Scotland that says they identify as more British than Scottish or British only remains small at just over 10 per cent. At the same time, only just over one in five rated their Scottishness equally to their Britishness. To just make the point absolutely clear: Scottish identity or sentiment has not been increasing, but decreasing gradually since the advent of devolution. There has not been a higher relative level of emphasising Britishness in Scotland than in the year when the referendum on its independence was held. “Let politics look after itself - this is a moral and a spiritual decision”, and the sober citizenry broke into applause. At Galashiels, the night before the poll, Mairi Campbell sang “Auld Lang Syne” to the touching melody which was Burns’s first choice for it. Where were the scab-picking orgies, so dear to intellectuals, about Scottish identity? The pupils at Mintlaw Academy in the heart of Buchan knew just who they were, and only wanted their “Doric” speech - now taught in the school - to be better respected. Willie McIlvanney commented: “Scottishness is like an old insurance policy you can’t lay your hand on when you need it.” But the people we met on this journey knew exactly where to find it. It follows that the other thing we didn’t encounter was anglophobia.